



**“AFRICAN AMERICAN GOLFERS HALL OF FAME”
“AFRICAN AMERICAN COLLEGIATE & YOUTH
GOLFERS HALL OF FAME”**

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Informational Press Release

For Immediate Use

“Ben Davis - ‘100 Years’ - Formally Inducted

Into the African American Golfers Hall of Fame A Special Ceremony”

West Palm Beach, Fla. (August 26, 2012) - The “8th Annual African American Golfer’s Hall of Fame (AAGHOF) Conference, Tournaments, Reception, Dinner, Auction & Awards Celebration” & “2nd Annual African American Collegiate & Youth Golfer Hall of Fame (AAC&YGHOF) was held at The President Country Club, West Palm Beach, FL during the period May 24-28, 2012. The Annual AAGHOF Black Tie Optional Reception & Awards Dinner Celebration” was held on May 27, 2012. “We were excited and very pleased to partner with and have the support of the Palm Beach County Sports Commission & Palm Beach County Sports Hall of Fame this year”, said Malachi Knowles, Founder. “This is a great opportunity to support our premier international organization dedicated to the history of African Americans in the sport of golf” said George Linley, Executive Director, Palm Beach County Sports Commission.

Inducted but not present was Michigan Golf Legend Erellon Benjamin “Ben” Davis who celebrated his 100th birthday on February 19, 2012 at a Southfield, Michigan nursing care facility. President Barack H. Obama (United States of America) sent him a special birthday letter.

Ben Davis was born in Pensacola Florida, and reportedly was an excellent player as a youth. As you might expect, however, he had few opportunities to play golf in the Jim Crow South. Davis traveled to Detroit in 1925 on the advice of his instructor, Tony Penna. He graduated from Northern High School in Detroit and launched his professional golf career at the Pine Crest Driving Range in Ferndale, Michigan in 1936. He began teaching at Rackham Golf Course in Huntington Woods, Michigan in 1952, where he eventually became a Class ‘A’ head professional, *the first Black head pro at a municipal course in the United States of America*. He taught at Rackham for many years and held their course record. “In 1966, Davis became the first African American admitted to the Michigan PGA. In 1968, he also became the first African American head pro at Palmer Park Golf Course in Detroit. Continuing to play excellent golf as a Senior, Davis won the Michigan Senior PGA Championship in 1974 and the U.S. National Senior Tournament in 1979 in Las Vegas. Davis was inducted into the Michigan Golf Hall of Fame in 1992.” His students included boxing legend Joe Louis and Detroit Pistons Hall of Famer Bob Lanier.”

“He still hit the links until just a few years ago”, Thomas said of his great-uncle. “He was always a friendly man, very social, and had a lot of friends. He was always respected as a professional, and that’s what he always wanted to be, and he was,” Thomas said. “It was his tenacity, his ‘I’m going to do this regardless of how people feel,’ and his ‘stick it to it-ness.” In his own words, Davis has his late wife of 56 years to thank for his accomplishments. “I owe it all to my wife, Ruby, because she (insisted) on breakfast every morning, some rest at night, (regularly) get your check-ups from your doctor, and keep a cool head,” Davis wrote some years ago.

Today, “2011 AAGHOF Youth Golfer of the Year” Evette F. Booker, Junior at the Detroit International Academy formally inducted Mr. Davis into the African American Golfers Hall of Fame during a special ceremony at the Southfield nursing facility with family members and friends attending. Founder Knowles stated afterwards that “he asked Miss Booker to perform the ceremony because she truly represents the future of golf.” Evette plans to join the Adams Golf Junior Tour in the spring of 2013. Evette stated that “it was truly an honor for her to perform the ceremony for the entire membership of the African American Golfers Hall of Fame, especially the African American Collegiate and Youth Golfers Hall of Fame.” Anna Booker, Evette’s mom, shared with Ben’s niece, Dorothy King that “she hopes that the African American Golfers Hall of Fame continues to honor those who blazed the trail before them and include the youth so that they will always have their history in perspective.”

“2012 African American Golfers Hall of Fame, Inc.”

AAGHOF 2012 Members: Erellon Benjamin Davis, Detroit, Mich. (100 years old); Richard “Jelly” Hansberry, Washington, D.C.

2012 Pioneer of the Year: Jesse James Parker, Bethesda, MD

2012 Inaugural Corporate Award: Paul G. Alexander, Boston, Mass. (Liberty Mutual) & Don Butler, Detroit, Mich. (Cadillac)

2012 Leadership Award: Mitchell J. Landrieu, Mayor, New Orleans, LA

2012 Legacy Awardee: Herbert Dixon, Bartow, FL & Albert “A. B.” Hill, New Orleans, LA

2012 College Golf Coach of the Year: Marvin E. Green, Jr., FAMU, Tallahassee, FL

2012 Founders Awardees: Dorothy Johnson, Cantonment, FL; Rushern L. Baker, III, Upper Marlboro, MD; Frank Reese, West Palm Beach, FL; Arthur “Art” Shell, Monroe, GA

2012 Inaugural Path Finders: Stanley Alexander Wilson, Lake Worth, FL; Horace Brown, San Diego, CA

“2012 AAGHOF Collegiate & Youth Golfers Hall of Fame, Inc.”

Marcus Byrd, Waldorf, MD; Pearlissa Harris, Harvey, LA; Norman Fidel Blanco, New Orleans, LA; Anthony Long, University of Maryland Eastern Shore; Matthew McKnight & Kimberly Wong, Bethune Cookman University, Daytona Beach, FL

“CELEBRATING THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF YESTERDAY WHILE PAVING THE WAY FOR TOMORROW!”



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This celebratory event has institutionalized the historic involvement of African Americans in “the growth of the game of golf” since the 1800’s. The African-American golfing community is at no loss for stories documenting its struggles, tragedies and ultimate triumphs. Little has been done however to recognize the accomplishments of those who really paved the way for today’s “Black Golfers.” It feels strongly that golf’s future cannot be passed from its “Legends” to our “Youth” unless they are included and honored annually during this event. Inner City Youth Golfers’, Inc. established the AAGHOF annual event in order to give the African-American Legends of Golf an opportunity to be recognized for their contributions to the sport, to continue being role models to our youth, to network with their peers, to interact and share their own stories about golf “then and now.” The ultimate purpose of the AAGHOF is to honor the legacy and achievements of African Americans in the game of golf and build a permanent place for the world to see their collective contributions.

The AAGHOF believes in its youth! It feels strongly that golf’s future cannot be passed from its “Legends” to the “Youth” unless they are included and honored annually during this event. ICYG therefore established the African American Collegiate & Youth Golfers Hall of Fame.

2012 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The “2012 Highlights” follow: May 25, 2012, 12:15PM, AAGHOF/ICYG & Palm Beach County Sports Commission (PalmBeachSports.Com) Scholarship Golf Tournament, Auction & “Skins Game”, The President Country Club followed by an awards dinner w/music by “DJ Lady D”. The two person team winners were: Charles Anderson & Frank Reese (1st); Nathaniel Clark & Charles Johnson (2nd) and Kena Wright & Clewis Wright, Jr. (3rd).

The conference/educational portion at the Holiday Inn on May 26, 2012 included an 8:30AM, Roundtable - 1: “Golf Then, Now & In The Future” led by James Garvin, Chair, AAC&YGHOF, Washington, DC and 10:30AM, Roundtable - 2: “How To Prepare For College; College Golf Scholarships; Careers” led by Dr. Ernest P. Boger, University of Maryland Eastern Shore & AAC&YGHOF Vice Chair and 1:30PM, Legends “Say NO To Drugs – Say YES To Education, Culture & Golf” Youth/Parent Golf Orientation, Fun Festival & Clinic featuring Clewis Wright, Jr., ICYG Golf Director & all of our youth golf awardees - hosted by PalmBeachSports.Com/ICYG @ Palm Beach Gardens Municipal Golf Course (PBGMGC), Palm Beach Gardens, FL. More than 100 youth and parents participated in the roundtables and clinics. Special thanks to all of the participants in the clinic, especially Paula Pearson-Tucker, Founder, Fore Life, Inc., Miami, FL.

The “Legends Celebrity Invitational Golf Tournament” was held at the PBGMGC Sunday, May 27, 2012. The winners follow: Men’s Division - Deo Rampersad (1st), Deon Riley (2nd) & Rayon Angell (3rd); Women’s Division: Kimberly Wong (1st), Paula Tucker (2nd) & Kayla Williams (3rd); Boys Division: Marcus Byrd (1st), Adrian Stewart (2nd) & Rajiv Rampersad (3rd); Girls Division: Jada Mozie (1st), Halia Braynon (2nd) & Taylor Robinson (3rd).

The AAGHOF Reception, Auction, Awards Dinner & Induction Celebration was held on Sunday evening with Scott Walker, Golf Channel serving as Master of Ceremony. Dr. Tyrinda I. Dixon blessed the occasion. Executive Director, George Linley, Palm Beach County Sports Commission was the guest speaker. His subject was “Golf in Palm Beach County.” Mr. Linley was excellent. Coach Joe Ceravolo, President, Palm Beach County Sports Hall of Fame told Founder Knowles, “it was a great event.”

Founder Knowles formerly congratulated and inducted all of the awardees and they received their official pins. Several gave their own testimonies. Of course, 92 year old Herbert Dixon beat everyone on the golf course, then he stole the show when the dancing started. Netta Finley “brought the house to their feet” with the singing of “His Eyes Are on the Sparrow” to her grand daddy, Frank Reese. INDEED, “the spirit was truly in the house!!”

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ALL activities were open to the PUBLIC!!! Don’t forget to visit [www.africanamericangolfershalloffame.com](http://www.africanamericangolfershalloffame.com) to view some of the photos and the entire schedule from May 24-28, 2012 Celebrations.

Make Your Arrangements NOW for May 23-27, 2013- NOW!! **Please Join Us!!!**

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