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## 'Do one thing'

Posted by Jane Sutter • March 2, 2013 • 7:55 am [Be the first to comment](#)

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Bruce Pollock, right, listens to Rev. Clifford Florence.

The command, "do one thing," has been going in and out of my consciousness since I attended the Susan B. Anthony birthday luncheon a few weeks ago.

Anthony, who is one of my heroines, told that to women looking for a way to help the suffragette cause.

I was reminded of it again this week when I attended a viewing and discussion of a documentary about the race riots of 1964 that occurred in Rochester. The League of Women Voters sponsored that event at Asbury United Methodist Church. After we watched the movie, we broke up into discussion groups. My group talked about actions needed to end racism, but the discussion focused on a number of problems — unemployment, teen pregnancy, the low high school graduation rate.

In my group was Bruce Pollock, a former IBM exec who founded FREE Partnerships, which recruits people to tutor in the city schools. I'm one of those tutors, and it just so happened I had been at School 22 that morning. I help fifth-graders who are Spanish speakers to learn to read. If I wanted to be cynical, I could think of my work as a tutor as being one drop of water falling into a desert. What good does it do in the big picture, with so many thousands of kids not reading at grade level? But that drop of water, when combined with many other drops, can become a raging river.

I only spend one hour a week at School 22. Some days it's rewarding, some days it's frustrating, depending on whether I think the kids benefited. But I've come to realize that this effort is not about me, and making me feel good. It's about being determined to be part of the solution, rather than wringing my hands that it's hopeless. What if everyone did one thing? We need more Bruce Pollocks, who can mobilize many to participate in a tutoring program, and we need more people to recognize they can handle one hour a week to "do one thing."

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### About this blog

This blog is part of a Democrat and Chronicle initiative designed to raise awareness about race and racism, and inspire a more inclusive and creative approach to solving community problems. See a series of special reports that began Jan. 13. Visit the [Unite Rochester](#) special section.

### Community contributors



**Quinisha S. Anderson:** is a self employed blogger, web developer & designer. Raised in the city of Rochester, she is an Urban Suburban alumnus, now entrepreneur. Join her as she discusses the impact race, education & politics has on our community.



**Kate Bennett:** is president of the Rochester Museum & Science Center, which is ranked in the top two most visited attractions in Monroe County serving children and families. The

## Comments Closed

Comments are closed.

RMSC offers unique hands-on experiences on 3 floors with more than 200 hands-on exhibits. During her tenure as President she has focused the museum on the visitor experience and on increasing exploration with a focus on Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM). Kate serves on many local and national boards and committees and is co-chair of the Facing Race, Embracing Equity (FR=EE) Rochester initiative. Having spent a year in the Philippines as a college student, she developed early on an appreciation and interest in people of various cultures and backgrounds. She leads the RMSC in hosting the RACE: Are We So Different? Exhibition, offering a safe environment for individuals and groups to hold conversations around race.



**Myra Brown:** is a parish minister of Spiritus Christi Church, a nurse and a trainer that works with groups and organizations on cultural competency and racial justice. Myra is the founder and organizer of SPARC (Spiritus Christi Anti Racism Coalition). She travels all over the country offering trainings to groups and organizations who are interested in creating more racially just structures and becoming more culturally aware of how our cultural stories shape us in everyday interactions.



**Fatima Bawany:** is a sophomore religion major at the University of Rochester. A native of Pakistan having grown up in Rochester, she is passionate about bridging gaps between people of different religious and cultural backgrounds. She has chosen to express this passion through organizing interfaith projects, learning about nonviolence through the M.K. Gandhi Institute, and serving the refugee community. In her spare time, she enjoys reading, writing and exploring different cultural cuisines.



**Jean Carroll:** serves as president and CEO of the YWCA, an organization dedicated to eliminating racism and empowering women. Jean is a founding member and past President of the Council of Agency Executives, a former member of the United Way Community Investment Division Cabinet, and former finalist for the Athena Award. Beginning in 2011, Jean provided leadership for the Stand Against Racism, a one-day event engaging more than 100 organizations in providing education and interaction for their employees and members in an effort to reduce intolerance and create a stronger community.



**Petrena Hayes:** lives in Greece with her husband, Kevin, and three teenage daughters. She enjoys volunteering for Greece Cardinals football and cheerleading as well as Honor Flight Rochester. Petrena formerly served as a community member for the Democrat and Chronicle Editorial Board. She also has blogged about Greece for DemocratandChronicle.com

and life as a mom for RocMoms.com.



**Christina Heyon Lee:** immigrated from Seoul, South Korea to Rochester almost 40 years ago with her parents and younger sister. She recently returned to Rochester after living in Buffalo, Boulder and the Boston area. She has an undergraduate and graduate degree in cultural anthropology but neither helped prepare her to parent three kids.



**Kayla Jenkins:** is a health project coordinator at Charles Settlement House. Kayla sits on the Community Technology Advisory and Assessment Board and other steering committees and boards focused on improving the quality of life in Rochester. The oldest of five siblings, this Detroit native holds an MBA from the Simon School and is HITPro Certified. She is also the 2012 AALDP Class Representative and an observer on the United Way of Greater Rochester Board.



**Janet Lomax:** Janet Lomax is a news anchor at News10NBC and has been in the business for nearly four decades. Janet has covered a variety of stories and conducted one-on-one interviews with prominent newsmakers including First Lady Michelle Obama.

Janet is active in our community and is a member of several service-oriented organizations including the Rochester Chapter of The Links, Inc., Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, the National Association of Black Journalists and Rochester Association of Black Journalists. She is a past president of the Rochester chapter, Jack and Jill of America. When not working, Janet loves to read, travel, watch old movies and spend quality time with her family and friends.



**Jennifer Leonard:** serves as president and CEO of Rochester Area Community Foundation, a \$250-million grantmaking foundation built by people across our region. She has led her field nationally, worked on local and national boards, and frequently spoken and published on the charitable sector. Among her many awards are the 2010 Athena Award; the Center for Teen Empowerment's Youth Leadership Champion; Ibero-American Action League's Friend of the Year; and, in her very first job, a national American Heart Association diversity award.



**Nathalia Martinez:** is an Upward Bound

Program Academic Advisor at the University of Rochester. She is the 2012 LLDP Class Representative and an observer on the United Way of Greater Rochester Board.



**Morgan Martins** serves as marketing and public relations coordinator for diversity and inclusion at Rochester Institute of Technology: a university that has committed itself to Inclusive excellence and fostering a living, learning and working environment that supports and incorporates principles of equity, diversity, inclusion and community. She is a member of the Facing Race, Embracing Equity, Rochester's racial equity initiative (FR=EE) and blogs on its behalf. FR=EE is dedicated to bringing the community together to discuss, collaborate and change the issue of racial inequities in Rochester.



**Jermayne Myers** is the vice president of the Rochester West Indian Festival Organization Inc., which is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to promote the Caribbean culture throughout Rochester and the surrounding area. I'm also employed at the University of Rochester Medical Center and serve on many community boards. I live in the City of Rochester and as a Unite Rochester contributor, I'm looking forward to having an interactive, open, transparent and civil conversation about race, racism, diversity, inclusiveness and the many educational, economic and social disparities that has plagued Rochester and Monroe County for decades in hopes of fostering change and progress.



**Wade Oliver** is the executive director of the Native American Cultural Center (NACC) in Rochester. Wade's main focus at NACC is providing career training for Native Americans. A SUNY Geneseo graduate, Wade is also a veteran who served in Iraq. Wade enjoys nature hikes, kayaking and wildlife photography.



**Daisy Rivera Algarin** is an economic development marketing specialist-bilingual Spanish for the City of Rochester. In her role, Daisy provides outreach, technical and zoning support to small businesses. In addition, she is the project manager of the planning team for the North Clinton Avenue revitalization project. Daisy also is past president of Latinas Unidas, which she helped found. She was born in Bronx, N.Y., and educated in Rochester, coming here in 1971. She is married to Albert Algarin and has three children.



**Amanda Rodriguez:** is a college freshman at Rochester Institute of Technology studying journalism. She was born and raised in Rochester and currently lives in Greece. She has a passion for reading and creative writing and hopes to someday have a novel on The New York Times bestseller list. Follow her on Twitter @acr1159.



**Rochester Police Department Chief of Police James Sheppard:** began his career with the RPD in 1981; he was appointed chief in 2010. As police chief, he has fostered a culture of "policing in the spirit of service," with the goal of inspiring the entire department to embrace this philosophy. The chief encourages all employees to embrace engagement; many officers have taken this concept to heart and have volunteered their own time to engage youth and establish community trust. Sheppard holds a bachelor's degree in criminal justice/community service from Empire State College (State University of New York) and is a 1998 graduate of the FBI National Academy. He and his wife, June, reside in the city and have three grown children, James, Tamara and Stephanie, and two grandchildren.



**The Reverend James C. Simmons** is the senior pastor of Baber African Methodist Episcopal Church and chairman of Rise Up Rochester, Inc., a nonprofit committed to empowering the community to establish and maintain a nonviolent culture. A native of Waynesboro, Pa., Simmons is a graduate of Howard University and Wesley Theological Seminary at American University, both of Washington, D.C.



**Tariq Spence:** is "Wake-Up Club" host, music director and sports director for WDKX-FM (103.9). A native of the Bronx, Spence is a graduate of the College of Brockport with a bachelor's degree in communications. While in college, Spence discovered a love for radio and interned at WDKX. Now at the station for 13 years, Tariq's leadership, creative mind and warm personality has been an asset to the station's morning show, helping to give WDKX the highest ratings in the station's 39-year history. "The Wake-Up Club," which airs from 5:30 a.m. to 10 a.m. weekdays, is Rochester's No. 1 morning show.



**Melisa Vega,** born and raised in Rochester, is currently an independent media consultant providing writing, public relations and marketing to local businesses. She is also currently the newsletter writer for Latinas Unidas, the LOPI (Latino of Positive Influence) chair for the City of Rochester's Hispanic Heritage Month Planning Committee and an event singer. She is of Puerto Rican descent and in 2008, she co-created and helped to launch the bilingual Rochester publication La Voz. She is married to Dan Vega,

her husband of almost 10 years with whom she has two children, a little boy named DJ and a baby girl named Xciana (X-cee-ana). In her spare time, she enjoys singing, dancing, reading, writing, dining out and traveling.

## Staff contributors



**Karen Magnuson** is Editor and Vice President/News at the Democrat and Chronicle. Before coming to Rochester in 1999, she served as the managing editor of the Wichita Eagle in Kansas. She worked in California as an editor for the Daily News of Los Angeles and top editor of the Valley Times in Pleasanton and Press-Courier in Oxnard. She spent seven years with United Press International, a wire service serving newspapers and broadcasters. She started with UPI as a reporter in Chicago, opened a bureau in Davenport, Iowa, managed news bureaus in Springfield, Ill., and Salt Lake City and served as a regional executive for California. She recently completed a master's degree in innovation management in the Saunders College of Business at Rochester Institute of Technology. She is a member of the Women's Leadership Council of United Way and Hope Lutheran Church. She and her husband, Tod, and live in Greece.



**Cynthia Benjamin** is Social Networking Manager in Digital Strategy and Development at the Democrat and Chronicle. She's a wife and mother of three who co-pastors at Rebirth Ministries, Inc., in the city. A former suburbs reporter and editor, and a member of the Editorial Board, Cynthia helped launch the D&C's first citizen blogs and reader-submitted photo galleries in 2006. She is a 2012 Minority Fellow of the Newspaper Association of America in Mobile Strategy and was the Professional Award honoree of the Rochester Genesee Valley Club's Negro Business and Professional Women's Club. She is also content editor and lead writer for social gaming projects, including Let's Move, RockKids! Follow Cynthia's updates on Twitter at [@cynthiabenjamm](#).



**Mary Chao** is the style and real estate reporter and serves as the co-chair of the newsroom Diversity Committee. A native of Taipei, Taiwan, Republic of China, her family emigrated to the U.S. in 1974 after President Nixon's historic visit to the People's Republic of China. After traversing through Southern California and New York City as well as a stint back in Taiwan, Chao has made Rochester her home for the past 16 years. She lives in Brighton with her Marine husband and fashionista daughter. Follow her on Twitter [@MaryChaoStyle](#).



**James Lawrence:** has, for the past 20 years as Editorial Page editor, been responsible for producing more than 5,100 daily Editorial and Speaking Out pages. He started his journalism career in Cleveland shortly after graduating from Howard University in Washington, D.C. Along the way, he has had career stops in Denver, Orlando, Fla., and White Plains. But unquestionably, he says, some of his most rewarding years as a journalist have been here in Rochester, being a part of positive change. That change has included reforms that followed an aggressive "Challenging Albany" campaign, greater public awareness and pushback against the coarsening of our culture, and strides being made to make this region a destination community.



**Gary McLendon:** a night public safety reporter, has covered crime and other breaking news at the Democrat and Chronicle since 2008. He has reported on city issues, K-12 education, and suburban communities since leaving the Queens Tribune in 1999.

Gary is an Associate Minister at Antioch Missionary Baptist Church at 304 Joseph Ave., and is president of the Rochester Association of Black Journalists, an NABJ affiliate chapter founded in 2004. He is married, a father of one, and lives in Rochester.



**Dick Moss** is investigations editor, guiding the public service investigations team. Moss has bounced around among half a dozen editing jobs at the Democrat and Chronicle since 1987. His longest stint was as the newsroom's copy desk chief from 1996 to 2005. He is a 1980 graduate of Washington and Lee University in Lexington, Va. -- where he studied under muckraking journalist Clark Mollenhoff -- and worked as a reporter and editor at several smaller newspapers in Virginia and New York state before joining the Democrat and Chronicle.



**Jane Sutter:** became editor of community partnerships and niche content in November 2011. She is charged with increasing community engagement across all platforms, web and print. Jane also has served as deputy editorial page editor, managing editor and general manager/custom content. She has worked as a reporter or editor for newspapers in Iowa, Illinois, Florida, South Carolina and Elmira. A native of Burlington, Iowa, she holds a master's degree in media management and a bachelor of journalism degree from the University of Missouri School of Journalism.

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