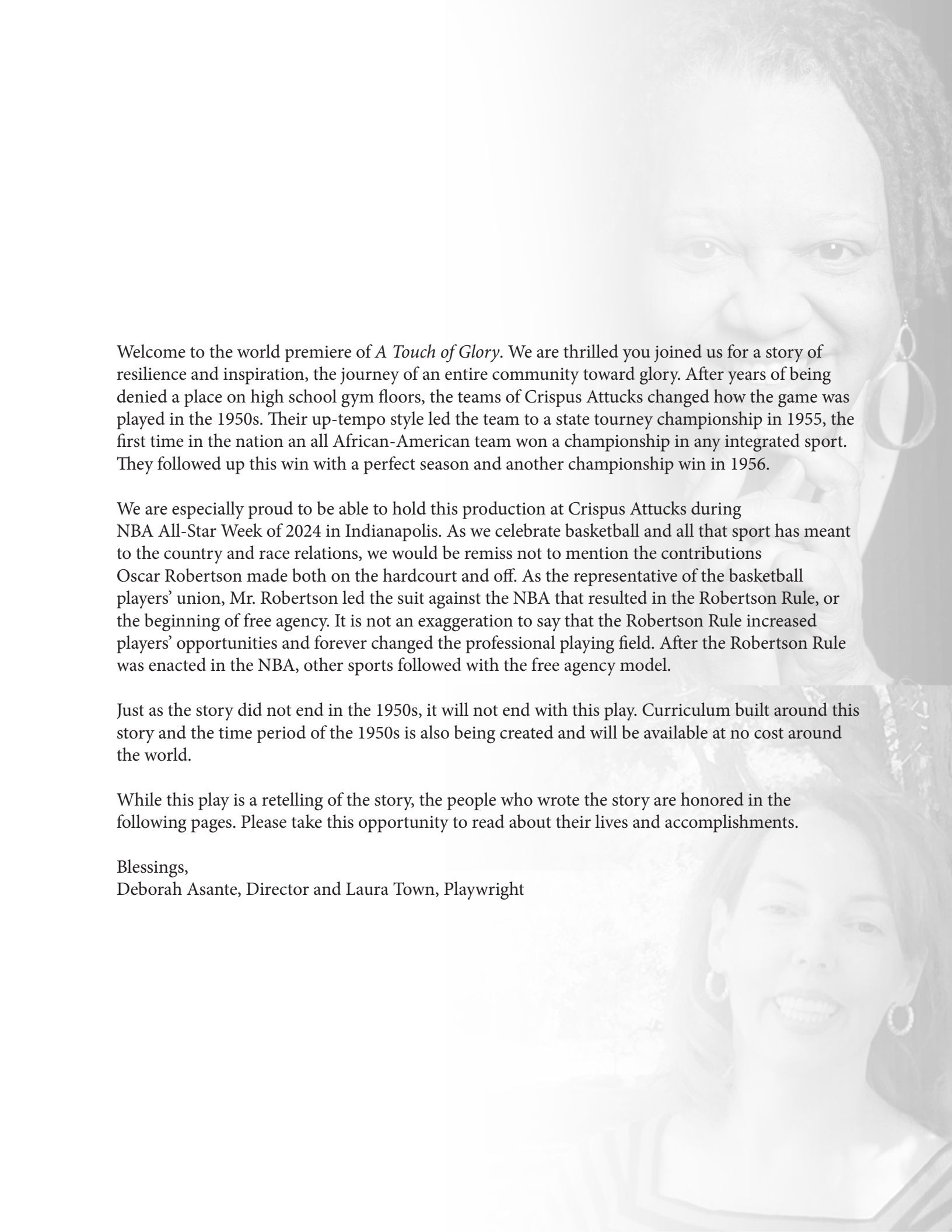


DEBORAH  
ASANTE &  
ARTISTS

# A TOUCH OF GLORY

PLAY BY LAURA TOWN





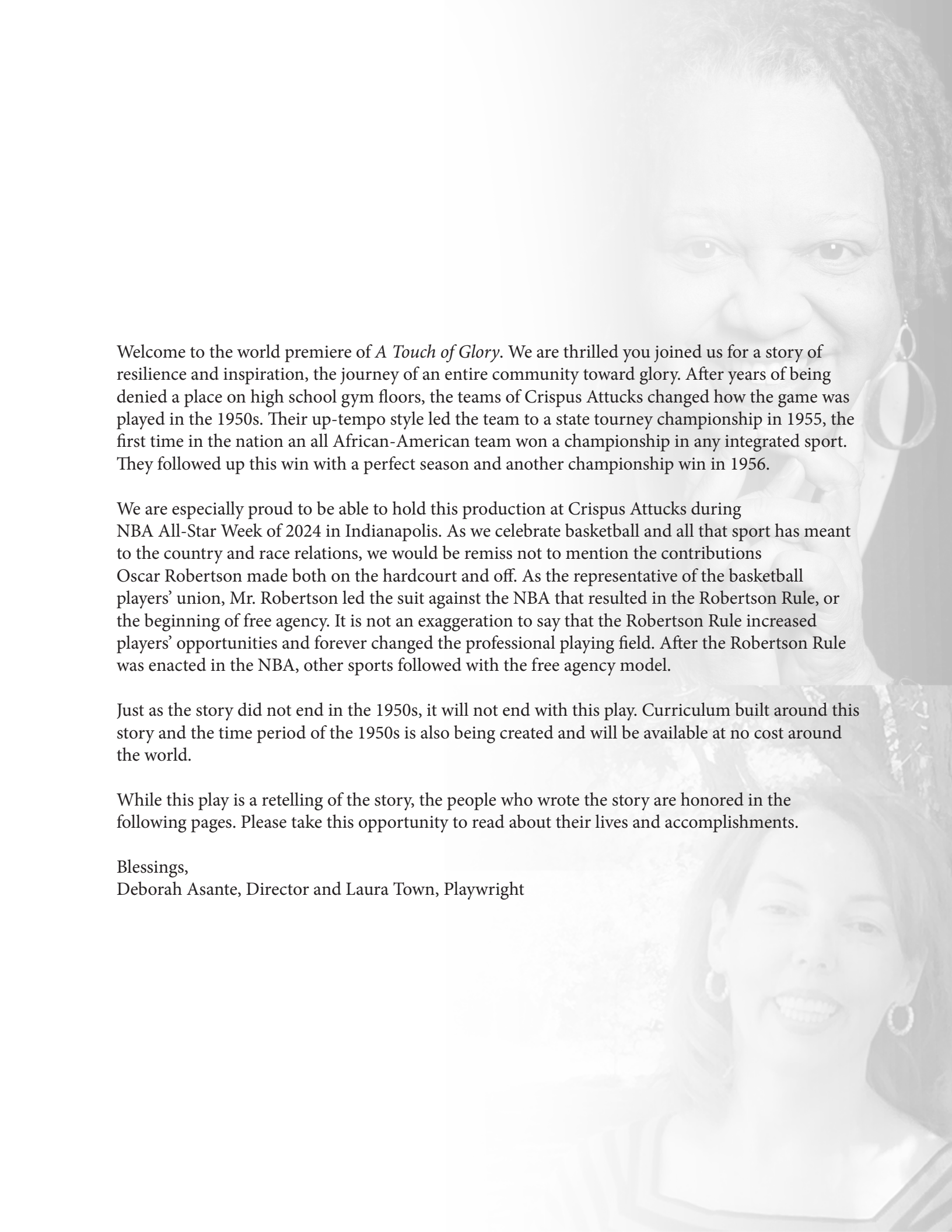
Welcome to the world premiere of *A Touch of Glory*. We are thrilled you joined us for a story of resilience and inspiration, the journey of an entire community toward glory. After years of being denied a place on high school gym floors, the teams of Crispus Attucks changed how the game was played in the 1950s. Their up-tempo style led the team to a state tourney championship in 1955, the first time in the nation an all African-American team won a championship in any integrated sport. They followed up this win with a perfect season and another championship win in 1956.

We are especially proud to be able to hold this production at Crispus Attucks during NBA All-Star Week of 2024 in Indianapolis. As we celebrate basketball and all that sport has meant to the country and race relations, we would be remiss not to mention the contributions Oscar Robertson made both on the hardcourt and off. As the representative of the basketball players' union, Mr. Robertson led the suit against the NBA that resulted in the Robertson Rule, or the beginning of free agency. It is not an exaggeration to say that the Robertson Rule increased players' opportunities and forever changed the professional playing field. After the Robertson Rule was enacted in the NBA, other sports followed with the free agency model.

Just as the story did not end in the 1950s, it will not end with this play. Curriculum built around this story and the time period of the 1950s is also being created and will be available at no cost around the world.

While this play is a retelling of the story, the people who wrote the story are honored in the following pages. Please take this opportunity to read about their lives and accomplishments.

Blessings,  
Deborah Asante, Director and Laura Town, Playwright



# SPONSORS

*Lilly*

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GANG**

*my***IPS**



# CAST LIST

Cheer Squad 1

Cheer Squad 2

Cheer Squad 3

Cheer Squad 4

Cheer Squad 5

Older Oscar Robertson

Kyra

Younger Oscar

Younger Oscar/Hallie Understudy

Bailey

Ray Crowe

Russell Lane

Dill

Hallie

Scotty

Betty / Ms. Marshall

Jep Cadou/Lee

Bob Collins

Abe Saperstein/Nick

Basketball Player

Basketball Player

Kia Robinson

Arika Casey

Naomi Turnipseed

Taylor Todd

Dominique Squires

Eric Washington

Chandra Lynch

Corey White

LaNel Muhammad

Josh Bruton

Daniel Martin

Ennis Adams Jr.

Jamaal McCray

Quinton Hayden

Reno Moore

Paige Neely

Tom Smith

Rick Drumm

Lukas Schooler

Daniel Squires

Asher Young



# PRODUCTION STAFF

Director

Assistant Director

Choreographer

Technical Director

Stage Manager

Costume Designer

Assistant Costume Designer

Set Designer

Light Designer

Sound Designer

Prop Master/ Stage Management Intern

Production Assistant

Back Stage Crew

Deborah Asante

Alicia Sims

Shawn Cowherd

Daniel McDowell

Onyea Cummings

Cory Young

Ashley Asante-Doyle

Ray Neufeld

Fritz Bennett

Sam Clapp

Jasmine Drake

Danielle Walker

Dre Robinson/Daniel Squires/LaNel Muhammad

## ORIGINAL MUSIC PRODUCED

Aaron Grinter

## PRODUCER/PRODUCTION MANAGER

Terrance Asante-Doyle

## PLAYWRIGHT

Laura Town



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Cynthia Cardona, *Lilly Foundation*

Danielle S. Nevels, *Lilly Foundation*

George Okpamen, *Lilly Foundation*

Alessia Johnson, *Indianapolis Public Schools*

Lauren Franklin, Principal, *Crispus Attucks High School*

Ruby Irby, Assistant to Principal, *Crispus Attucks High School*

Alan Bacon, *GANGGANG*

Nigel Long, *GANGGANG*

Malina Simone, *GANGGANG*

Central Indiana Community Foundation (CICF)

Hallie Bryant, '53 *Crispus Attucks Alum*

John Gipson, '56 *Crispus Attucks Alum*

Bill Hampton, '55 *Crispus Attucks Alum*

Willie Merriweather, '55 *Crispus Attucks Alum*

Henry Robertson, '56 *Crispus Attucks Alum*

Stanley Warren, '51 *Crispus Attucks Alum*

David Williams, '64 *Crispus Attucks Alum*

FIREFLY Children and Family Alliance

Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame

Indiana Historical Society

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Ben Hanna, *Indiana Repertory Theater*

Kisha Tandy, *Indiana State Museum*

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Justin Wade, *REACT*

Georgianna Wade, *REACT*

Ted Green, *Ted Green Films*

Dorothy J. Baker, *D's Place*

AshLee Baskin

Andrew Black, *Playwright and Playwrighting Instructor*

Charla Booth

Linda Crowe Knight

Lloyd Crowe

Ken Foree, *Actor*

Kevin Merriweather

Brian Payne

Brent Rockwood, *Affinity Licensing*

Esther Sandlin, *Ice Miller*

Dan Wakefield, *Author*

Julia Whitehead, *Kurt Vonnegut Museum*

# THE CAST







**Jasmine Nikia Robinson** (Cheer Squad), also known as Empressnikia, was born and raised in Indianapolis. Since a young age, she has thrived in performing arts. Her experience includes dancing, singing, playing flute, and acting as forms of creative expression.

“Having the privilege of being in the cast of *A Touch of Glory* has really allowed me to see my hometown from a perspective of a time that once seemed far away. Knowing the role Oscar Robertson had in impacting not only the local community, but basketball as we know it, I’m filled with so much pride.”





**Arika Casey** (Cheer Squad) is a native of Indianapolis, Indiana. She began her dance journey at IPS magnet schools for arts (Shortridge Middle School & Broad Ripple Humanities and Performing Arts High School). While in those formative years, she was also a member of Iibada Dance Company and Kenyettá Dance Company. She spent her summers in dance intensives studying under the guides of Deeply Rooted Dance Theater and Dayton Contemporary Dance Company. Arika then attended Indiana University Bloomington with a major in kinesiology with the focus in Modern Dance. She performed reverend repertoire *Esplanade* and was also a member of the African American Dance Company directed by Iris Rosa. Arika Casey was a member of DCDC2 2014-2015 season.

Arika is very much a teaching artist as well as a performing artist. She most recently completed her first professional musical, *'Sophisticated Ladies'*. Ms. Casey has been a teaching artist with Asante's Art Institute, Indiana Black Expo Performing Arts Academy, and Iibada Dance Company summer intensive.

“What surprised me about *A Touch of Glory* was that Oscar Robertson didn't get the recognition he deserved. Not only from the National Basketball Association, but the city of Indianapolis didn't honor his team with a parade, nor a key to the city. There's no way we talk about “Indiana Basketball” and don't recognize the passionate, astonishing athlete and trailblazer, Big O.”



**Naomi Camille Turnipseed** (Cheer Squad) is an 18-year-old actress, singer, dancer, writer, director, and choreographer. A fine arts major at Ivy Tech Community College, this is her fourth year working with Ms. Asante and she is extremely proud to be a part of *A Touch of Glory*. Naomi thanks Jesus every day for opportunities like this amazing production. Naomi has a compassionate heart and is unique with everything she presents or performs as she loves to be different!

“During my work on *A Touch of Glory*, I learned how much of an impact Oscar Robertson made in the NBA with the “Robertson Rule,” it secured free agency for all NBA players. I have gained a true understanding of this history and am excited to perform and educate others. Lastly, I want to say thank you *Deborah Asante & Artists* for this opportunity. Being able to be part of this production was phenomenal.”

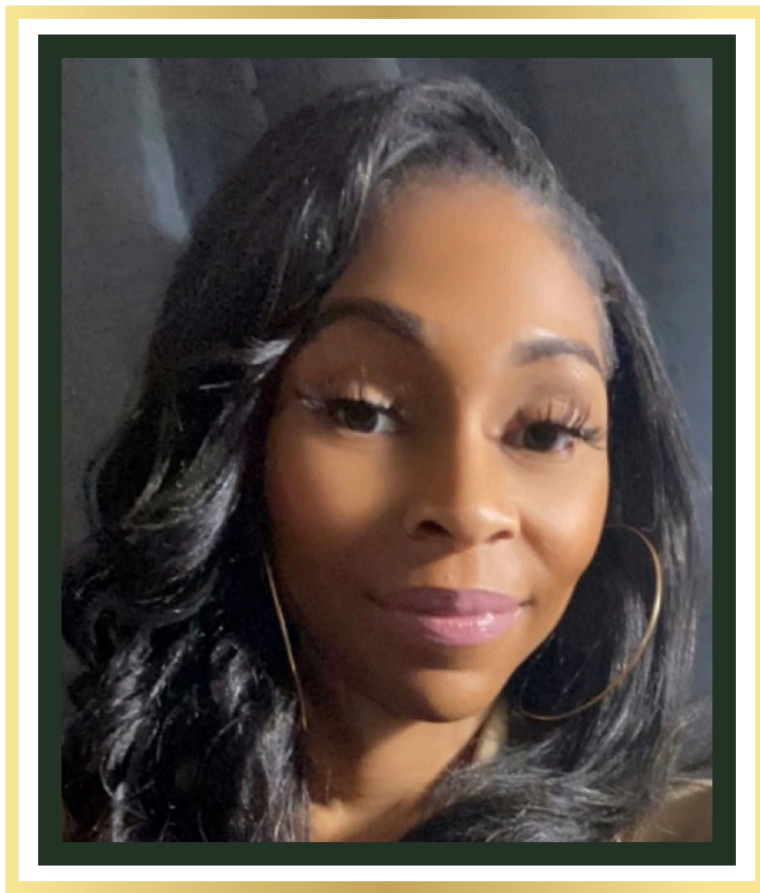


**Taylor Todd** (Cheer Squad) is a proud preschool teacher, with a love and passion for helping young minds grow into their full potential. Taylor is grateful to be a part of *A Touch of Glory* because it has given her the opportunity to reconnect with her other passion...performing! She is a part of the dance ministry at church but hasn't been in a play for six years. She almost forgot how much she loves being on a stage bringing stories to life.

“*A Touch of Glory* has motivated me to be a leader in my community and achieve my goals.

Oscar Robertson was intentional, bold, and vulnerable; he made history with his determination and leadership. This story is a testament of following your dreams.”





**Dominique 'Nikki' Squires** (Cheer Squad) is a 37-year-old from Indianapolis, Indiana. She graduated from Arsenal Tech High School in 2004, obtained a BA in Communications from Central State University in 2008, and then continued on to achieve an M.Ed, ID from Western Governors University in 2019. Dominique is a US Army Veteran (92A). She is a mother to Daniel and Diana, a teacher, and owner of 'CaptiviTea', an online herbal tea shop.

“To be in the presence of the esteemed Ms. Asante and friends is an honor and blessing! *A Touch of Glory* is compelling and speaks from the hearts of Hoosiers who have an undying love for basketball and an unending desire for equality and justice. I'm most encouraged, inspired, and impressed by how the play expresses this story surrounding the painful realities of racism and social injustice. It is a beautiful masterpiece and gift from true visionaries.”





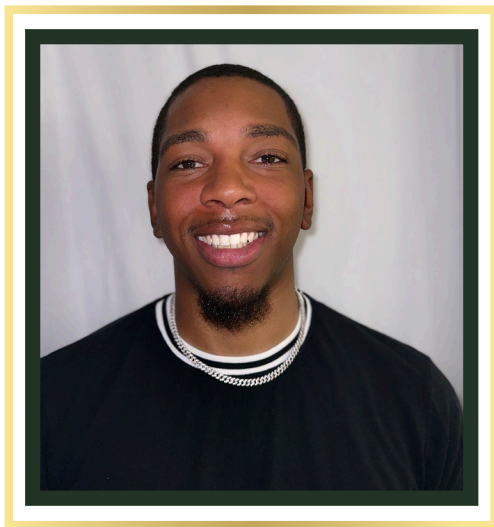
**Eric Washington** (Older Oscar) is a hard working playwright, actor, director, entrepreneur, and community leader. He is on the board of “*The Belmont Beach Project*” (an organization set up to revitalize the beach in Haughville and give back to the community). He owns his own clothing line and also has a hand in real estate. He is most known for his viral video series titled “*Maggie*” (that accumulated over 1 million views collectively), and captivating audiences with his creative writing, compelling acting, and consistent quality productions. Eric has written, produced, funded, and directed 16 productions within a 5-year span. His plan is to grow his entertainment company and continue to provide opportunities for not just the minority theater lovers, but also for the dreamers who love entertainment as much as he does.

“What has surprised me is everything about this story. I can’t believe I didn’t know who Oscar Robertson was when I grew up in a neighborhood that’s less than 6 minutes away from Crispus Attucks. I can’t believe he doesn’t have a statue and his story isn’t being told more throughout not only Indiana but the NBA all together. He changed the game forever, and he’s my favorite player’s (Michael Jordan) favorite player. He faced so much adversity, racism, and hardships. Through it all, he put the needs of others above his own and truly used his name and platform to make change.”



**Chandra Lynch** (Kyra) is an actor, international photographer, social media and brand strategist, and model. Recent stage credits include: *So, You're Soulless? Well, I'll be Damned!* (Storefront Theatre), *TJ Loves Sally 4 Ever* (Fonseca Theatre) and *To Kill A Mockingbird* (Booth Tarkington Civic Theatre). Chandra also co-owns the production company, Ankh Productions ([ankhproductions.org](http://ankhproductions.org)), @AnkhProductions on all social platforms.

“It was quite surprising to hear some people label Oscar Robertson as ‘bitter,’ especially considering his groundbreaking achievements at Crispus Attucks. His passion and drive on the court were undeniable, but it seems his outspoken nature, particularly on issues of racial injustice and inequality in sports, might have been misconstrued as bitterness. Society can often misinterpret the justified emotions and responses of those who have faced and fought against systemic injustices. It’s a reminder of how often strong, determined voices, especially those advocating for change, can be misunderstood, attacked, or labeled negatively, even when they’re pushing for necessary and positive change.”



**Corey White** (Younger Oscar) is 27 years old and *A Touch of Glory* is his acting debut! He graduated from North Central High School in Indianapolis, Indiana. He attended Vincennes and Ball State University where he studied Music and Criminology.

“With the love I have for the game of basketball, of course I knew of Oscar Robertson, however I didn’t know of this story. It was great to see the story come to life right in front of me. The play inspired me to chase my dreams no matter the obstacles or those who doubt me. Playing the role of Younger Oscar has taught me to stay humble, put in work and dedication to perfect my craft.”

Corey wants to shout out the cast and crew of *A Touch of Glory* for welcoming and accepting him with open arms. Also, he wants to shout out his family and friends for their love and support.



**LaNel Muhammad** (Younger Oscar and Hallie understudy, Basketball player, backstage crew) began dancing at age two and has continued his training throughout his adult life. LaNel is member of Kenyetta Dance Company in Indianapolis as well as a dance instructor at libada Dance Company. LaNel is a fierce lover of the arts and would like to thank everyone who has had a hand in his journey through the arts. This is his first performance with *Deborah Asante & Artists*.



**Josh Bruton** (Bailey Robertson) is an actor from Indianapolis, Indiana. Joshua has always had a passion for the arts, and as an entertainer, he is determined to continue perfecting his craft.

“What motivated me about *A Touch of Glory*, is how much perseverance these players displayed on and off the court despite all the challenges that they faced. Those young Tigers displayed leadership and integrity in the face of hate, turning poison into medicine and winning what they thought they couldn't: a championship.” #WeLearnin #WhatWeTalkinBout





**Daniel A. Martin** (Ray Crowe) is excited to take part in this historic story about a group of extraordinary people of color in his own hometown. Daniel has portrayed characters in many theaters over the years such as Sylvester in *Detroit 67* (Naptown African American Theatre), Costard in *Love's Labour's Lost* (Indianapolis Shakespeare Company), Ezekiel V in *Magnolia Ballet* (Phoenix Theatre), and Reggie in *Skeleton Crew* (Summit Theatre) to name a few. He's also been in films like *Night of The Unspeakable* and *Justice For All*. Maybe you've seen Daniel in

commercials like, Longhorn Steakhouse, Quit Now Kentucky, iDirect Technology, Indiana Disability Rights, Buckeye Broadband, Hamilton Recycling, Commuter Connect, Cummins Health Pro, LASIK, and GetReady. Daniel also is the Artistic Director of the improv group *Act A Foo Improv*, which he help start in 2010. When he's not performing, Daniel enjoys spending time with his daughter Alexis.

“Nothing has surprised me about the story. Despite being held back, people of color have blossomed. Despite being hated and mistreated, if you plant us in a desert we will grow and produce bountiful fruit. Our race is synonymous with strength and determination. Imagine what we would be able to do without the restraints the world puts on us.”



**Ennis Adams Jr.** (Russell Lane) is an accomplished and versatile entertainer, educator, and entrepreneur. Hailing from the city of Indianapolis, Indiana, and performing since the age of 8, he has over 150 credits in the performing arts industry as an actor of stage and film, producer and director. He is one of the four founding members of ACT A FOO' Improv Crew and his most recent works were as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in the 3-man stage production of “*The Meeting*” and as Lank in “*Detroit 67*”. With each performance, Ennis's commitment to his craft shines through, earning him a reputation as a consummate professional and a masterful storyteller.

“One thing that has inspired me about working on *A Touch of Glory*, has been learning MORE about the forgotten stories and faces of so many local legends. The courage it took for them to succeed despite the horrors and atrocities that put their lives in danger.”





**Jamaal McCray** (Willie “Dill” Gardner) is an actor, director, and writer. He studied at the Indiana University Theater and Drama Program where he received the David Howe award in 2008. He is co-owner of Ankh Productions. Notable roles: Delaware Washington “American Ma(u)l”; The Foundling Father “The America Play”; Mark “The Superhero” inspired “Prowess”; Clay “Dutchman” for Monument Theater. Most recently he played Felix in “No6” at the Indianapolis Repertory Theater.

McCray also is a writer for theatre and film. He premiered the first Installment of his play series “*Love You Reckless*” at the Indyfringe in 2018. Two of his plays “*God Barber of 49th Street*” and “*Small Boat*” were featured in the American Lives Theatre 2020 play festival. He directed the World Premiere of the Rachel Lynett’s Yale Award winning Play “*Apologies to Lorraine Hansberry You too August Wilson*” on the Fonseca Summer season 2021. So far, four of his original projects have been produced on the Storefront Indy stage including the world premiere of “*So You’re Soulless...*” in 2023. To catch his latest projects type Ankh Productions in your social media.

‘What excites me about this show is the amount of talent that has gathered around it. *A Touch of Glory* provides another chance for us to connect and pass along a piece of great history to new generations. - Peace’





**Quinton Hayden** (Hallie Bryant) was born January 5, 1982 in Ft. Wayne, Indiana. Primarily raised in Indianapolis, he is a graduate of Pike High School class of 2000. Following graduation, Quinton joined the Marine Corps, serving 14 years he has traveled to over 25 different countries. Quinton returned to Indianapolis in October 2020. He has 3 children, Joshua, Zion, and Isaac. The following year he was afforded the opportunity to pursue his dream of acting when he was casted in “*Dreamgirls*” with Kaidydid Productions. He later started working with Director & Producer Eric Washington to perform in several stage plays,

*What Happened To Love, Kea’s Cover, Turkey Day, Christmas Carol In Da Hood,* and many others. When you don’t see Quinton on the stage for a play you can catch him at local open mics doing stand-up comedy as “Indyboy.” His goal is to ultimately be on the BIG SCREEN and work alongside some of the industry’s best comedians.



**Reno Moore** (Scotty) is a graduate of AMDA College and Conservatory for Performing Arts. Prior to landing back in Indy he traveled the country performing in various shows. He is thrilled to bring this production of *A Touch Of Glory* to life. His love of theatre extends beyond the stage and into the classroom. Reno has been a teaching artist with the Asante Art Institute for the last four years.

“*A Touch of Glory* has impacted me in the sense that I had no idea about this amazing story. I used to be bashful about my Indiana heritage but being involved with this show has shown me that historical events have happened and continue to happen, right under our feet. I’m proud to be a part of this and I hope you enjoy!”



**Paige Neely** (Betty Crowe) is an American actress, dancer, and filmmaker born in Indianapolis, Indiana. She started acting at age 16 and officially began her career while studying theater and broadcast journalism at Clark Atlanta University. While in Atlanta, Paige directed and produced her first black box production and was cast as Alice in the play *Go Ask Alice*. Paige is most recently known for her role as Abby in *The Body* at The Phoenix Theatre Cultural Center. She has performed on stage in various productions, including *Flyin' West* at Indiana Repertory Theater, *The Rise and Fall of Holly Fudge*, and *Two Mile Hollow* at Phoenix Theatre, *Hype Man A Break Beat* play at Fonseca Theatre, and *Black Is My Color* at *Onyxfest*'22. In 2022 she played the role of *Shaunie* in the short film *Angela's Tale*, which was nominated by Indie Film Fest in Phoenix, Arizona, and Black Film Festival Atlanta. Paige is a classically trained actress with experience in musical theater, dance, film, directing/screenwriting, stage production/tech, hosting, and improv. She is currently the Associate Artistic Director at Phoenix Theatre Cultural Center.

“The production of *A Touch of Glory* has been a truly inspiring experience for me. It’s a powerful story about a community’s resilience and success against all odds. Through their determination and hard work, they overcame countless obstacles and left a lasting impact on the history of basketball. It’s a reminder that we can overcome any challenge with perseverance and a strong sense of community.”



**Tom Smith** (Jep Cadou/Lee) has spent most of his retirement years performing in theaters throughout the Indianapolis area. Some of his favorite roles have included Judge Taylor in *To Kill a Mockingbird* for Booth Tarkington Civic Theater; the Narrator in *The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance* at the Basile Westfield Playhouse; and Mr. Stanley in *The Man Who Came to Dinner* for the Belfry Theater. The chance to take part in *A Touch of Glory*, the inspiring story of Oscar Robertson, his teammates, and Crispus Attucks High School, was once-in-a-lifetime. As the only cast member who was alive during the events

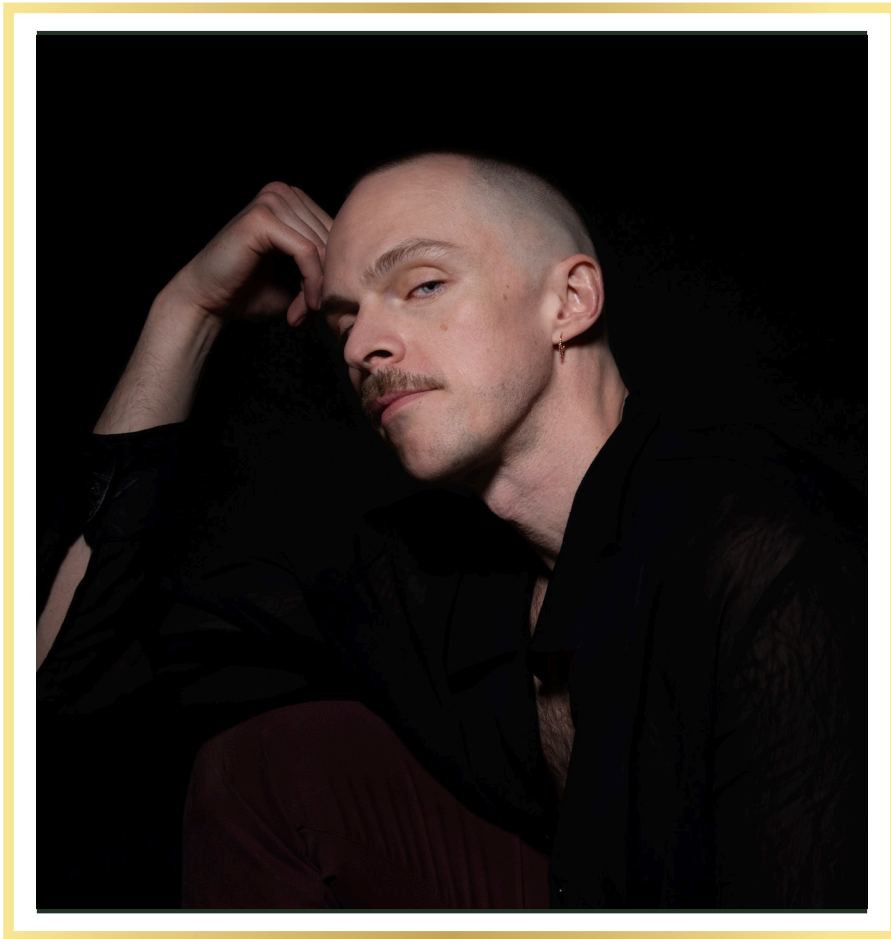
depicted, Tom has some memories of the Big O and the victories of Crispus Attucks. He would like to thank *Deborah Asante & Artists* for this chance. Making this decision was a SLAM DUNK!



**Rick Drumm** (Bob Collins) was a member of the drama team at Grace Church for 20 years and is recognized as “the tall, goofy guy.” At Grace, he was in the cast of *It’s a Wonderful Life*, *You Can’t Take It With You*, *An American Christmas*, *Blue Like Jazz*, *Our Town*, *Little Women*, *Miracle on 34th Street*, *Les Mis*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, and *The Crucible*. At Carmel Community Players, Rick has been a bit nuts (Elwood P. Dowd in *Harvey*) and a bit slow (Lennie in *Of Mice and Men*). Neither of these roles his friends considered a stretch. Although his day job involves saving lives as a highway safety engineer, Rick continues to have dreams (delusions?) of becoming a writer and public

speaker. Rick’s greatest earthly gifts are his wife, Susan, and their three children – Eli, Abigail, and Hannah. Susan continues in her unconditional love, endless support, and constant encouragement. These are not taken for granted, and Rick is so incredibly thankful for her. Rick considers being a part of *A Touch of Glory* to be a rich blessing. He was a basketball player in high school and has always loved the game.

“To help tell the story of how this sport became more inclusive, through all the struggles and trials, all the pain and hurt, and has helped our culture move, however slowly, toward an equitable society (no, we are not there yet) – is an honor and privilege beyond measure.”



**Lukas Felix Schooler** (Abe Saperstein/Nick), (he/they) is a theater artist and fitness instructor based in Indianapolis. Having spent most of his younger years in Pennsylvania and not much of a sports buff, he knew very little about the story behind *A Touch of Glory*. He has been consistently impressed by the talent in the cast and crew and inspired by the candid conversations during rehearsals. Special thanks to Ms. Asante for providing an open and welcoming community to tell this important story! Schooler's recent stage credits include "Frederick Nietzsche" in *Seeking Nietzsche* (Southbank Theatre), "John D'Agata" in *The Lifespan of a Fact* (American Lives Theatre), "A" in *Bed Play* (StageQuest), and "Rodney" in *Small Mouth Sounds* (American Lives Theatre). Lukas is an accomplished visual artist, props and set designer, as well as a 12-year company member with NoExit Performance. In 2022, Lukas teamed up with performance artist Ventiko. Together they were awarded a Power Plant Grant from the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts and a Creative Risk Grant from the Herbert Simon Family Foundation. Their partnership yields innovative performance art in Indianapolis— *ontogenesis* debuted in summer 2023 and *nervosity* debuts in Fall 2024. Lukas sends mountains of gratitude to Jonathan, Marco, and his friends and family— their support and encouragement means the world to him.

# THE CREW



**Deborah Asante** is a Dream Farmer, Child Charmer, World Traveler, Jazz Gatherer, Blues Chaser, Hope Placer, History Keeper, Justice Seeker. There are so many ways to say Storyteller! She grew up traveling the world as the oldest child in an Army family. From an early age, Deborah kept her younger siblings entertained by telling them stories in exchange for doing her household chores. Storytelling is still at the root of everything she does. Coming of age in the San Francisco/Oakland Bay Area at the height of the Black Power Movement colored her perspective, focused her attention to history, and activated her passion for justice. Accepting a job offer from playwright Crystal V. Rhodes, she migrated to Indianapolis, Indiana, in the late 1980s. In 1990, Deborah founded The Asante Children's Theatre, which has expanded its work in the community as the Asante Art Institute. Deborah Asante & Artists (DA&A) was founded on the principle of ART by any means necessary. For over 30 years, Deborah Asante has been a creative force on a mission to expand the Indianapolis theater space, one artist at a time. With relentless passion and commitment, DA&A aims to provide opportunities for home-grown artists while intentionally influencing future generations of creatives in this community. For more information about DA&A, email [artbyanymeansnecessary70@gmail.com](mailto:artbyanymeansnecessary70@gmail.com).



**Alicia Sims** (Assistant Director) Alicia “The UnCuT Diamond” Sims is a multidisciplinary artist gifted in vocals, performing arts, creative writing, and visual arts. An uncut diamond is a stone that has not been shaped in any particular form by a professional cutter and has not undergone any polishing. The UnCuT Diamond uses spiritual guidance, life experiences, and mentored training to lead creative exhibitions that transform lives, communities, and cultures! Never settling for her successes to be final or her failures to be fatal, The UnCuT Diamond uses each creative opportunity to present raw and authentic pieces of art. This open-minded artistry has allowed spaces for performances such as *Snatched* (Madame Walker Theatre) and *Stoops* (Theater at the Fort) directed by Deborah Asante, *Mama You’ve Let Us See Too Much* and *Not All Men Are Dogs* (both VTV Productions) directed by Tikilia Martin and Toshia Howard, *Good People* directed by James Lamonte, *Fly Babies* directed by Melissa Devito and Matt Spurlock (both Buck Creek Players), *Your Love Will Be Judged* (Onyxfest/IndyFringe) directed by Gabrielle Patterson, and in March 2024, she will mount *Ma Rainey’s Black Bottom* (NAATC) directed by James Solomon Benn. Alicia is the published author of “*Resilient Faith*,” a memoir about rejection and rebellion. The UnCuT Diamond is a recipient of the 2022 Best Supporting Artist in a Drama (Encore Awards), 2022-2023 Creative Renewal Fellowship, (Indy Arts Council), 2023 On-Ramp Creative Entrepreneur Accelerator Fellowship and 2023 Lifelong Arts Award (both Indiana Arts Commission). Alicia is extremely honored to be the Assistant Director of this historic and influential production.

“*A Touch of Glory* has been a valuable experience to me in multiple ways. I am not a native of Indianapolis and each time I have attended a reading, watched a rehearsal, listened at a meeting, or read a book about the story, I have been inspired and encouraged. Of course, this story comes with the challenges and barriers that attempt to taint hopeful pursuits and dreams, but they are far overshadowed by the resilient triumphs of passion, comradeship, and legacy! I will carry this story with me as a reminder to keep moving forward!”



**Shawn Cowherd** (Choreographer) Shawn is a motivated and passionate individual skilled at building strong dance relationships with Individuals to help cultivate any arts community. Creative, energetic, and enthusiastic with 30 plus years of outstanding dance/choreography experience. Shawn has worked with a countless number of National Recording Artists along with appearances on the WORD Network, Dr. Bobby Jones Presents and The IMPACT Network with a viewing audience reaching over 80 million homes around the world. Shawn participates and contributes to events with The American Heart Association Power to End Strokes, World AIDS Day, Breast Cancer Awareness, Gifts of Grace, and Sickle Cell. In taking dance to the masses, Shawn has been afforded many television, radio, newspaper, and music video opportunities to spread the message of love and creativity through dance. While dancing and training, Shawn encourages all people to dare to be different and in being different, make a difference! His goal remains to have Kingdoms Restored and Souls Healed through dance.

**Onyea Cummings** (Stage Manager) is an Indianapolis native. She studied theatre and drama with an interest in stage management and will receive her BA from Indiana University Bloomington May 2024. Onyea has stage managed two Mainstage IU productions as well as other projects. During the 2022-23 school year, Onyea did a study abroad program in Canterbury, England at The University of Kent Canterbury where she was involved in the Musical Theatre Society, specifically the Production sector. Onyea would like to thank her family, friends for supporting her theatre dreams (even the late-night manic calls), *Deborah Asante & Artists* for inviting her to be included in the telling of such an important story.

“What has inspired me about *A Touch of Glory* is the fact that I have lived in Indiana my entire life and only knew small piece of the history of Attucks. Learning the story of these glorious, beautiful, strong black men and the hardships they endured is heartbreaking yet awe-inspiring. There is so much history in Indiana, both good and bad. Being a part of this process makes me yearn to learn more.”

**Cory Young** (Costume Designer) Cory is a Columbia, Tennessee native and Western Kentucky University graduate. He worked for Fruit of the Loom, Inc. as the Licensing Manager for all its brands, including Russell Athletic and NBA equipment partner, Spalding. He started his own upcycled clothing brand, Shiny Objects ([www.wearshinyobjects.com](http://www.wearshinyobjects.com)). For Cory, *A Touch of Glory* inspires him with the lesson that freedom can occur virtually anywhere, including the hardwood.

“In all that we do, there are opportunities to uplift and blaze a trail.”

**Ashley Asante-Doyle** (Assistant Costumer) Born and raised in Indianapolis; Ashley enjoys spreading her creativity in every direction. As a multi-talented woman with love for community connection, advocacy, and addressing challenges related to systemic racism, poverty, and the justice system, her creative side has emerged with the help of Deborah Asante. Ashley has helped on numerous projects with *Deborah Asante & Artists* and the Asante Art Institute ranging from volunteer to stage crew, and now costumer.

“Being a part of *A Touch of Glory* has pushed me creatively. I’ve been able to assist with telling a story through the language of fashion. In doing so I’ve had to think through the characters, social positions, contributions, personality, and emotions. My goal is to provide an experience for the audience in which they will feel transported back to the era of the play.”



**Ray Neufeld** (Set Designer) is a visual artist and set designer originally from New York, but currently living in Indianapolis. Over the years, he has designed sets for regional theater Stonington Opera House in Maine and off-off Broadway houses, HERE Arts Center, and House of Candles. In addition to his set design work, Ray has exhibited sculptures, drawings and video work throughout the United States, Asia, Australia, and Europe. Ray taught art and design at the collegiate and graduate levels in New York. Currently he is teaching at Brebeuf Jesuit Preparatory School where he has also designed several productions. Ray would like to thank *Deborah Asante & Artists* for this opportunity, as well as his wife Julia for her support and his kids Liam, Gregory, and Grace for their physical and artistic participation in this project.

[rayneufeld.wixsite.com](http://rayneufeld.wixsite.com)

**Fritz Bennett** (Lighting Designer) is excited to be working with *Deborah Asante & Artists*. His career has spanned the arts including theatre, dance, opera, and exhibitions. This diverse experience has given Fritz the opportunity to collaborate with numerous organizations, including Purdue University, Children's Theatre of Charlotte, Wagon Wheel Theatre, Butler University, University of Indianapolis, Children's Museum of Indianapolis, Dance Kaleidoscope, Arts Council of Indianapolis, and the Indiana Repertory Theatre. Some of his favorite productions as lighting designer have been *The Ghost of Splinter Cove*, *Love Song*, *Miracle on 34th Street*, *Always*, *Patsy Cline*, *The Crucible* and *And in This Corner, Cassius Clay*. Fritz is a graduate of Butler University and currently works as a freelance designer, production manager, and technician.

[www.fritzbenett.com](http://www.fritzbenett.com)

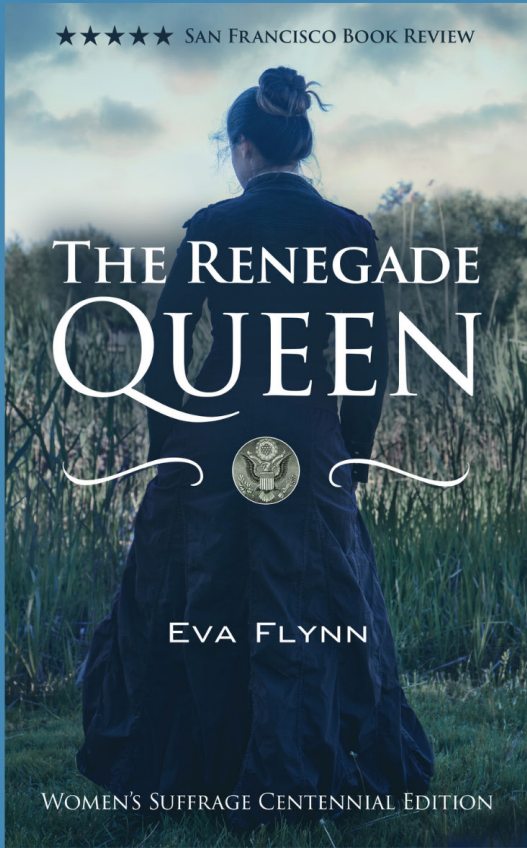
“Growing up in Indy I was generally aware of the story line of *A Touch of Glory*. My work on the show has begun to reveal some of the details and relationships that are not often highlighted. Some words that come to mind as I process the information are persistence, survival, faith, and community.”

**Sam Clapp** (Sound Designer) Sam is a video and audio producer, musician, and arts worker living in Chicago.

“I am inspired that *A Touch of Glory* tells an extraordinary underdog story in the place where it happened (a city that happens to be my hometown!). Plus, the talent and ambition of our cast and crew.”

**Jasmine Drake** is a teacher, artist and creative. She is originally from Louisville, KY but moved to Indianapolis after graduating from IUPUI in 2022. She has been working with the Asante Art Institute for 3 years now. She began her journey as an intern with Prep4Life and Prep Upper Class and is now an official teaching artist for the literacy program Zora’s Daughters. where they teach young girls the importance of literacy and self-love. *A Touch of Glory* is her second production with *Deborah Asante & Artists*. “Something that surprised me so much about this story is the fact that it happened right here, in our own backyard. The story itself is beautiful and transcends what we typically hear about Indiana. From the struggles the team faced and the fearlessness, determination, and perseverance of Ray Crowe. It should be told for generations. I know people from Indianapolis who don’t even realize the trailblazers that originated from their city.”





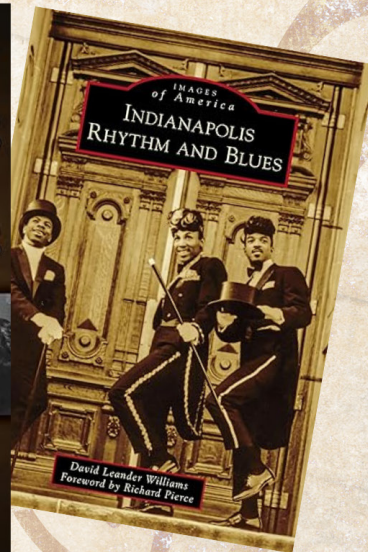
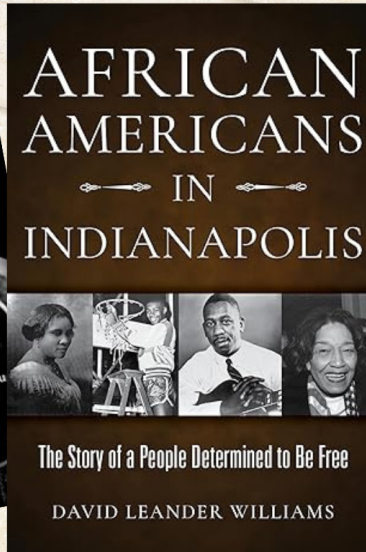
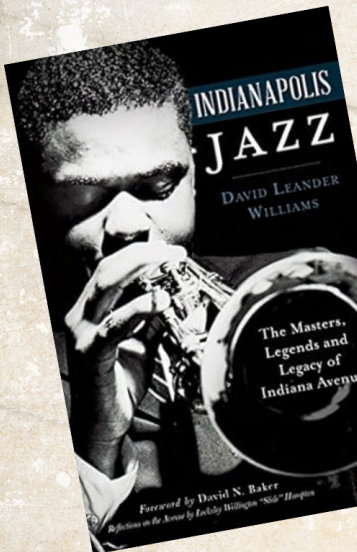
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A historical novel about  
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## BOOKS AVAILABLE BY DAVID LEANDER WILLIAMS

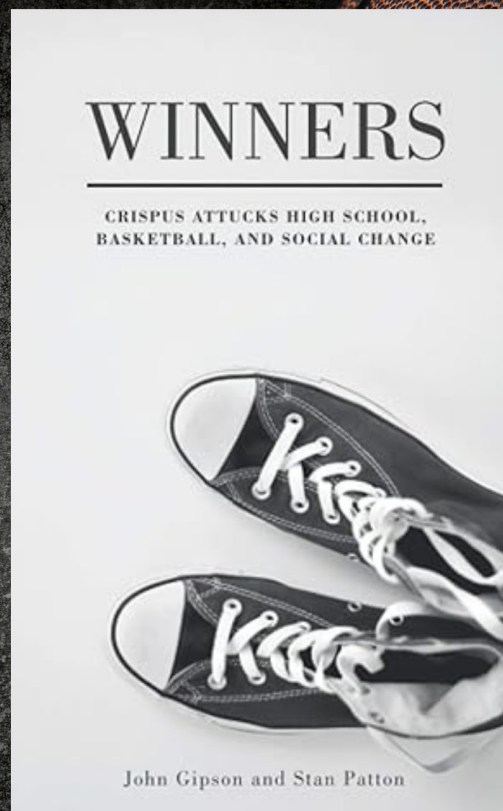


David Leander Williams is a collector of historical artifacts and information about African-American history, particularly slavery and African-American music history.

**Praise for *African Americans in Indianapolis*:** This book must be placed in libraries and classrooms throughout the city, state, and country so teachers, parents, and children will learn the authentic truth about the unrelenting trials and tribulations faced by a people who refused to allow systemic racism to break their spirit and dismantle their goals. - Patricia Payne, Indianapolis Public Schools

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Museum Highlights

- Attucks High School: Legends & Legacies
- Indiana Avenue Jazz Legends
- The Tuskegee Airmen Story
- Ancient African Egyptian History



Painted Mural: "Legends" Early 20th Century Attucks Educators. (lower left)  
Photo: Crispus Attucks High School, 1930 (upper right)

Museum Location  
1140 Martin Luther King, Jr. Street  
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*NYT bestselling author of *Giannis**

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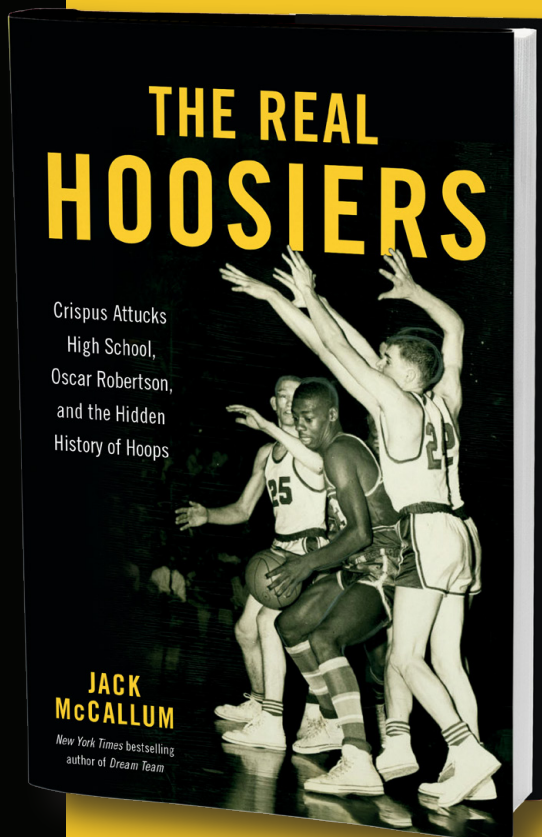
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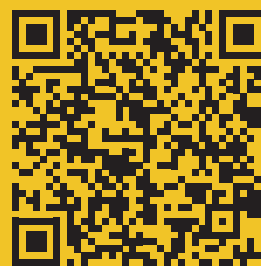
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