

MGM GRAND DETROIT

Touching Communities. Touching Lives.™

A PUBLICATION OF MGM GRAND DETROIT

December • 2016



MGM Grand Detroit holiday parties spread joy and uplift key community organizations

By Scott Talley
Special to the Michigan Chronicle

On a Wednesday evening former Detroit Lions offensive lineman Larry Lee and the Back In The Day Band began performing a cover of Grover Washington Jr.'s "Mister Magic," and like magic, the Grand Ballroom dance floor at MGM Grand Detroit began to fill.

As the music played and the people danced, MGM Grand Detroit had kicked off the holiday party season, which is always precious at MGM because special members of our community are invited and served. On this special night, the guests of honor were veterans that receive support from the Michigan Veterans Foundation.

Continue on page 3

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- MGM Grand Detroit redefines holiday parties with special community guests
- Many answer the call to support the African American 490 Challenge
- Olympian Allyson Felix is headed to Detroit for Wayne State's MLK Tribute
- And much more!

Justice being served:

#GivingTuesday provided another opportunity to support African American 490 Challenge with help from MGM Grand Detroit



By Scott Talley

Special to the Michigan Chronicle

The power of caring is often displayed during the holiday season, as witnessed during a recent #GivingTuesday online fundraiser, which benefitted the African American 490 Challenge of the Enough SAID (Enough Sexual Assault in Detroit) campaign.

On this special day, people from all walks of life opened their hearts and pocketbooks to support a campaign to process all of the more than 11,000 unopened, untested rape kits that were found in a Detroit Police Department storage unit more than five years ago. Each kit costs \$490 to process, and with the help of the contributors on #GivingTuesday, which included a \$10,000 match from MGM Grand Detroit, enough was raised to process an additional 34 kits.

More than the money raised and the number of kits that will be processed, the #GivingTuesday fundraiser provided additional proof of what the entire campaign means to our community.

“We hope that our campaign is having broad impact for the city,” said Kim Trent, president of the African American 490 Challenge and a sexual assault survivor. “The residents of our city have undergone a lot of healing, but we had 11,000-plus women who did not get that chance to heal, with some of the kits being on the shelf for multiple decades. We didn’t want to turn our back

on those women and we wanted to demonstrate to them that their lives matter.”



Eighty one percent of the victims connected to the backlog of rape kits found in Detroit are African American women, and Trent said African American women across our region have definitely been up to the challenge of righting this wrong.

“Black women have really stepped up for this campaign—it’s been amazing,” said Trent, who is known around town for her warm smile, hearty laugh and ability to organize. “First ladies at churches, card groups, book clubs, sororities, Links Inc., Jack and Jill, every time we have asked any type of group of African American women to support us they have done so whole-heartedly. “\$79 is the average contribution, but we have received a six-figure donation from an African American woman.”

Among the more than willing supporters of the campaign has been MGM Grand Detroit.

“I wish I could say we did something really strategic or proactive to get MGM Grand Detroit to support our #GivingTuesday fundraiser but they came to us,” Trent said. “MGM Grand Detroit was one of our sponsors when we brought in Erykah Badu for our fundraising concert, so they were already familiar with our cause and we are just so grateful to MGM for supporting us and being our #GivingTuesday partner.”



Thanks to the efforts of Wayne County Prosecutor Kym Worthy, a state law enacted in 2014 mandates rape kits to be tested within 90 days, which will prevent future backlogs. Therefore, the all-volunteer organization behind the African American 490 Challenge is helping a finite group of people get some measure of justice. As this publication was going to press, Trent said the African American 490 Challenge needed to raise an additional \$257,000 by April 30 to reach its overall goal of raising \$657,090 to pay for testing the remaining kits that were discovered. To learn more, including how to make a donation, please visit aa490challenge.org.



MGM Grand Detroit holiday parties spread joy (cont. from cover)



It's a wonderful event and an astounding activity to be able to give back to these veterans who put their lives in danger for us," said Ernest Lewis, a former Marine who is now an Engineering manager at MGM Grand Detroit. "I think this event is dear to everyone's heart at MGM Grand Detroit and we never have a problem finding volunteers to help out, because everyone knows someone who is a veteran and we want to show our support."

A much appreciated addition to this year's party was the participation of more female veterans.

"Women are veterans too, that's my motto," said Maxine Lowe-Ellis, who served in the Women's Army Corps from 1972 to 1975. "Around the holidays we don't want people to forget about female veterans, so I told Tyrone Chatman (executive director and CEO of the Michigan Veterans Foundation) that I would be his go-to person in spreading the word about the party to female veterans. It's just all about celebrating the brotherhood and sisterhood of being a veteran and never leaving a veteran behind."

Linda Thompson, an Army veteran, was in total agreement with Lowe-Ellis.

"It's just nice—a lot of camaraderie," said Thompson, one of the earliest party arrivals. "I'll be happy with just eating and mingling."

Indeed there was an abundance of scrumptious cuisine, hearty fellowship and music to groove to, and

the same could be said a couple of weeks later when MGM Grand Detroit hosted a holiday party for Covenant House Michigan.

Just as the Michigan Veterans Foundation helps homeless veterans regain their stability and return to self-sufficiency, Covenant House Michigan provides a sanctuary for young people in our community who have nowhere else to go. But on the Tuesday evening of the party for Covenant House the only objective was for every young person to have a good time, in the true spirit of the holidays.

"It's very admirable for MGM Grand Detroit to reach out to the community like this, and especially to young people," said Cynthia Adams, associate executive director of Covenant House Michigan, of the more than 10-year holiday party tradition between MGM Grand Detroit and her organization, which began on the grounds of Covenant House before coming to MGM.

Adams added: "MGM just treats our youth like kids. Not only does MGM invite them but they appeal to our young people through the music, and games and everything and because of that they were all (70 in attendance) excited to come tonight.

"Our young people often get bad press, but my message to our community would be don't stigmatize them and don't give up on them because the more support they receive the better off they are. And with support, some of our youth can go on to have opportunities that some kids don't even dream about, we've seen that happen before at Covenant House."

As was the case at the party for the Michigan Veterans Foundation, music was the great unifier. Once the disc jockey locked into the tastes of

the special guests, two people on the dance floor quickly transformed into 10 and then the flood gates were open, which led to a crowded dance floor for the remainder of the evening. Joining the youth from Covenant House Michigan were MGM Grand Detroit team members, who matched the young people on the dance floor step for step.

"I actually look forward to the holiday party for Covenant House, said Angela Warfield, a Count Room



team member at MGM Grand Detroit. "It's a great tradition and I just look forward to bonding with the kids."

While the Grand Ball Room dance floor provided a wonderful space for fun and bonding, some of the guests from Covenant House also used the party as a time for deep reflection.

"I'm here at this event at MGM Grand and I feel blessed," said Jalen Lavell Browner, a 21-year-old aspiring boxer with a profound voice, which was used to bless the meal at the beginning of the night.

Browner added: "Covenant House is a blessing, too. Some people don't see it that way but it is a blessing because it gets us to focus. Covenant House is not a



program where you move back; it's a program where you build a foundation and move forward. I'm here tonight with all of these people smiling and sometimes that's all it takes to keep moving you forward—a smile and a little positivity."

To learn more about the organizations featured in this story, please visit michiganveteransfoundation.org and covenanthouse.org.

“Welcome Inside the World of

Getting to Know: Warren Black



Warren Black is a Vietnam veteran who was awarded a Bronze Star and Purple Heart. During the holiday season and always, Black says he is thankful for the support of his wife, Dr. Sabrina D. Black, and his MGM Grand Detroit family whom have played hugely significant roles in his career success.

When did you join MGM Grand Detroit?

“My first day on the physical property was July 29, 1999 (the date MGM Grand Detroit opened its doors to the public) and July 29 is also my birthday.”

What is your job title and primary job duties?

“I am a table game floor supervisor. I watch and supervise dealers and handle anything on the floor that the pit manager is unable to attend to.”

What do you most enjoy about your job?

“I most enjoy working with the people. I am a serious people person. You have to know your city, know your environment and know your cultures. MGM Grand Detroit is my home and first impressions are lasting impressions, so it’s very important that each person and each culture is greeted warmly and appropriately.”

You are the outgoing chairman of the MGM Grand Detroit’s Veteran Network Group. What did you most enjoy during your time as chairman?

“It’s been therapeutic because as Vietnam veterans, we did not receive the welcome home parades and all the accolades, so being embraced by my fellow veterans has meant more to me than anything. We are a family within a family, and I always know that someone has my back.”

Is there anything about MGM Grand Detroit that may come as a surprise to some people in our community?

“I would have to say our philanthropy aspect. We give to the community and what we do impacts the community including youth, seniors and veterans. I couldn’t be a part of a corporation that doesn’t care.”

Addressing the critical needs of our youth is the MGM Grand Detroit way:

MGM Grand Detroit team members can smile knowing they came together in 2016 to help sort and pack 2,400 winter coats, hats and gloves for children in need.



MGM Grand Detroit™



Getting to Know: Ernest Lewis



When did you join MGM Grand Detroit?

"I began working for MGM Grand Detroit in May 2010."

What are your primary duties as Engineering manager?

"As Engineering manager I am responsible for about 40 to 45 engineers, as well as four supervisors. My primary responsibility is for the aesthetics of the property to make sure the property is pleasing to all of our guests."

What do you most enjoy about your job?

"I love the ever-changing aspect of my work. There's something new everyday working with our team members and guests. It's also very pleasing to hear comments from the guests that the property seems like day one."

You are the incoming chairman of the MGM Grand Detroit's Veterans Network Group. Why did you assume this responsibility and what does the Veterans Network Group mean to MGM Grand Detroit?

"Being a veteran myself (former Marine) it's something that's very near and dear to my heart. I think it's very important for us to stick together. I enjoy the camaraderie, I enjoy hearing all of the different stories—it's all great."

"As a company, the Veterans Network Group is huge for us. It's one of the ways we can reach out as a company to people who served and put themselves on the line for our freedom. We also have job fairs for veterans. Our entire commitment to veterans is huge throughout our property and the company itself."



Spreading the gift of sustainability:

Heading into 2017, MGM Grand Detroit and the entire MGM Resorts International family remains strongly committed to caring for our planet. In doing so, we strive to reduce waste in many ways, including educating team members and guests on the importance of recycling. Through these efforts, we help divert thousands of tons of materials from landfills, and save natural resources for future generations.



The Future Is Now:

During 2016, MGM Grand Detroit hosted the "Dream Kings," a group of distinguished students who attend Frederick Douglass Academy for Young Men. The group, which participated in an etiquette workshop at MGM Grand Detroit, is part of The Future Project, whose mission is to "work with schools to unlock the limitless potential of every young person in the country." To learn more about The Future Project, please visit thefutureproject.org.

North American International Auto Show kicks off at MGM Grand Detroit with 'The Gallery,' which benefits C.S. Mott Children's Hospital



As the images show, in recent years, the MGM Grand Detroit Grand Ballroom has welcomed some of the most exotic automobiles in the world as part of "The Gallery." More of the same can be expected from this year's event, which benefits C.S. Mott Children's Hospital.

The North American International Auto Show (NAIAS) has announced the lineup for its ultra-luxury automotive salon, The Gallery, including a display of over \$10 million worth of exotic nameplates and a silent auction of world-class experiences to benefit C.S. Mott Children's Hospital.

Marking its 10th year, The Gallery has become the official kick-off event of the NAIAS and will be held Saturday, Jan. 7, 2017, from 6:30 – 11 p.m. at MGM Grand Detroit, which is also one of the official sponsors of the event.

"Partnering with C.S. Mott Children's Hospital is another way for us to support our community's most precious commodity – our children," said 2017 NAIAS Chairman Sam Slaughter. "For over 100 years, Mott has touched the lives of and given hope to so many children and their families. With this in mind, we look forward to a successful night of fundraising for the hospital, while showcasing some of the finest luxury automobiles in the world."

A silent auction during the event will offer an array of coveted luxury experiences, but the biggest beneficiaries will be the children and the families that are served by C.S. Mott Children's Hospital.

"The University of Michigan C.S. Mott Children's

Hospital is thrilled to partner with the North American International Auto Show, and we are honored to be the beneficiary for The Gallery this year," said Paul King, Executive Director, University of Michigan C.S. Mott Children's Hospital. "Proceeds from The Gallery silent auction will support our most pressing needs at Mott – which includes everything from patient care, research and education, all of which allows us to provide the best care for our Little Victors."

The Gallery, which will be on display in the MGM Grand Detroit Grand Ballroom, features some of the most prestigious automotive marquees around the globe, including:

- Aston Martin
- Audi
- Bentley
- BMW
- Bugatti
- Cadillac
- Falcon
- Ferrari
- Ford
- Jaguar
- Karma
- Lingenfelter
- Lamborghini
- Maserati
- Porsche
- Range Rover
- Rolls-Royce



The evening also includes a strolling dinner prepared by world-renowned chef Wolfgang Puck, served at Ignite inside the MGM Grand Detroit.

Now in its 29th year as an international event, the NAIAS is among the most prestigious auto shows in the world, providing unparalleled access to the automotive products, technologies, people and ideas that matter most – up close and in one place. To learn more about the North American International Auto Show and C.S. Mott Children's Hospital please visit naias.com and mottchildren.org.

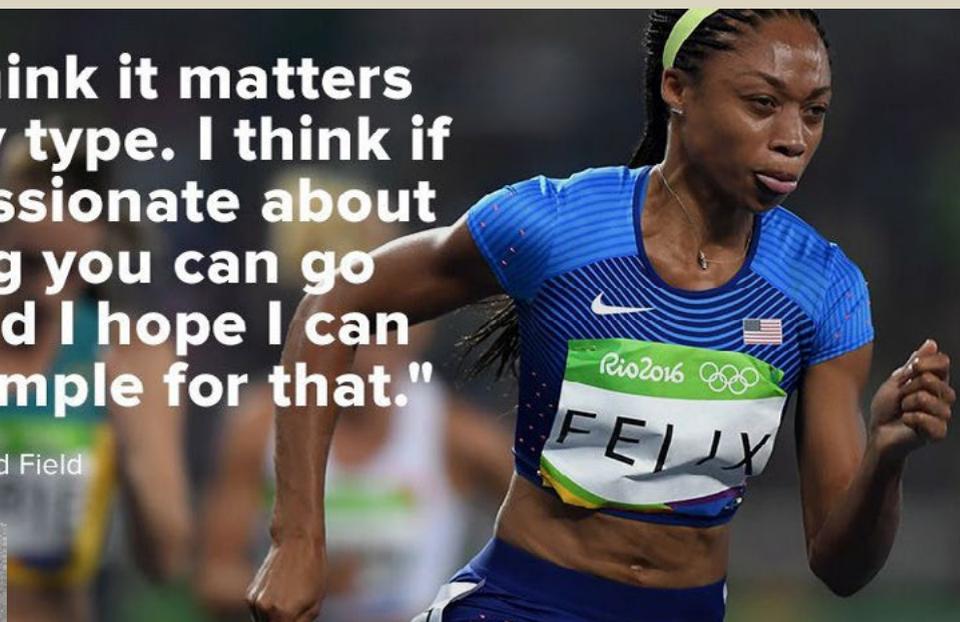


The Gallery

Queen of Speed will stop in Detroit to rev up the dreams of local youth

"I don't think it matters your body type. I think if you're passionate about something you can go after it and I hope I can be an example for that."

Allyson Felix, Track and Field



Allyson Felix, a legendary figure in track and field, will share lessons about athletics and life, as the guest speaker of Wayne State's annual Martin Luther King Jr. Tribute. MGM Grand Detroit is a sponsor of the event.

By Scott Talley
Special to the
Michigan Chronicle
.....

Wayne State
University's annual Dr.
Martin Luther King, Jr.
Tribute will take place

Friday, January 13, 2017 at the Max M. Fisher Music Center. The Tribute brings together the metro Detroit community to celebrate and honor the life and legacy of Dr. King.

The Tribute also has become well known for bringing in national speakers to inspire Detroit students that are invited. This year's featured guest is Allyson Felix, a four-time Olympian and one of the most successful sprinters in the history of track and field with six Olympic gold medals (including one individual title, 200 meters in 2012) and nine World Outdoor Championships gold medals (including four individual titles) in her possession.

More than her athletic prowess on the track, Felix is known worldwide for her grace and exemplary sportsmanship regardless of the outcome of a race.

An announcement of the event posted by Wayne State University said: "Allyson has proven herself a force on the track, but has still made time to graduate with an elementary education degree from the University of Southern California. She also has a heart for her

community and serves as an ambassador for Right to Play and Play Works, as well as being a member of The President's Council on Fitness, Sport, and Nutrition. Felix has recently turned her attention to helping former NFL player Nnamdi Asomugha provide Los Angeles area teens with tools to prepare themselves for higher education through their ACTS College Summit."

Net proceeds from the Tribute support Adopt-A-Classroom, a nationally recognized organization that invites the community into classrooms to increase opportunity for student success by empowering teachers with community partnerships and funds to purchase resources for their classrooms.

Since 2008, more than 35 school classrooms in the Detroit area have been able to attend the Tribute thanks to the support of event sponsors. One of the longtime Tribute sponsors is MGM Grand Detroit.

"This is always a special event because you can literally see students turned on right before your eyes," said Dee Dee

McKinney Odom, director of Public Affairs for MGM Grand Detroit. "Athletes always have a way of capturing the attention of our young people, and to have a woman from Los Angeles who has not only been a top athlete but an ambassador for her sport and country sends a message to our youth that they, too, can shine on a world stage."

Other highlights of the program include the announcement of the 2017 Dr. Arthur L. Johnson Community Leadership Awards, which will honor an individual and an organization whose contributions affect our community in a positive way. Another must-see portion of the program will be performances by InsideOut's Citywide Poets, which is an intensive after-school program for aspiring high school poets. For the



past seven years, poets from this program have received standing ovations as they performed pieces crafted especially for the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Tribute program. The Citywide Poets have won numerous awards including the prestigious Coming Up Taller Award given by the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities. For additional information, please visit communityoutreach.wayne.edu



2016
New Year's Eve
Bash

The Music of
PRINCE

With the Detroit Symphony Orchestra

December 31, 2016 8pm - 2am

At the Max M. and Marjorie S. Fisher Music Center

www.dso.org/nye