

# NAACP

**"Of all the forms of inequality, injustice in healthcare is the most shocking and inhumane." Martin Luther King jr.**

## Voting

Black voters were targeted during the 2016 election cycle by intentional misinformation. Russian operatives masquerading as legitimate black American grassroots organizers tried to stop blacks from going to the polls. In addition to creating divisions in the black community, the operators pushed out a steady stream of hate and fear in order to align with white nationalists. The 2016 election was the first decline in black voter turnout for 20 years.

## Voter Registration

You can register to vote in Greene County by going to the office of the county clerk, Shane Schoeller on the first floor of the county courthouse Room 114. The website [greenecountymo.gov](http://greenecountymo.gov) is a great source of information. The County Clerk, Shane Schoeller can be reached at [SSchoeller@greenecountymo.gov](mailto:SSchoeller@greenecountymo.gov) or (417) 868-4060

## Dr. Martinique Cherise-Hawkins MD

*Tell us about your background.* I come from a large family. I am one of 11 children, the middle one. My family lived on the East Coast in Maryland, Delaware and Pennsylvania. My dad was an



engineer, electrical/environmental, who worked for the EPA. He had gone to school at Drexel University. My mom was also college educated, she went to school at Fisk University (a historically black college/university, HBCU). She was academically talented, had studied math, English and worked until she had her first child. My mom was a Phi Beta Kappa key holder. My siblings are beautiful, powerful and driven in mind and spirit. Four of my siblings have PhDs, one is an MD, one has a Masters degree and the other four all have Bachelors degrees. We all take work,

education and play seriously. We grew up poor, we sometimes went to bed starving and got up starving but we kept our spirits and imaginations up. No family however, is perfect, and disagreements happen. I feel like my siblings are my lifeline.

*How did you become interested in medicine?* At Christmas when I was 4 or five years old I got a doctor kit. I was intrigued with being a healer and used it on my brothers and sisters. My mom was really in tune with her children and began sending all of the other kids to me for healing, splinters or wounds. As an undergraduate

## Principles to Live by all Year Long

The principles of Kwanzaa were developed in response to the blatant commercialism seen during Christmas. The values represent reverence, commemoration, re-commitment and celebration.

- Unity: Umoja
- Self-Determination: Kugichagulia
- Collective Work and Responsibility: Ujima
- Cooperative Economics: Ujamaa
- Purpose: Nia
- Creativity: Kuumba
- Faith: Imani

There are many reasons to consider these principles as we plan our actions through the year. Purpose (Nia) driven lives means we are not just reacting to events but creating events. As we work together to accomplish a goal (improved literacy for example), we practice Ujima, collective work and responsibility. When we support black owned businesses we practice Ujamaa or cooperative economics. When we pause and raise our faces to the heavens in gratitude, we practice Imani, faith.

These principles can be used to guide our actions throughout the year, not just seasonally.

student I realized I wanted to work with kids. Even though I put all of my effort into being a doctor, it wasn't until shortly after starting medical school that I realized I was actually going to become one. Up until then it was just a pipe dream to me. As I progressed in school, I thought I might like family medicine but after working with adults realized family medicine was not for me. I began thinking about pediatric neurosurgery but after one lecture realized that that specialty was too much and didn't fit with my other goals of being a wife and a mother. After my first pediatric rotation I knew I had found the right place and was uplifted when walking through the door. I graduated from Penn State Medical School In 2004 and completed my residency in 2007. I worked in Cape Girardeau for five years and have been a Pediatric Hospitalist for Cox since 2012.

*What are your goals?* I want to be a good steward of the life I have been given which includes my spiritual life, my work life, my time and resources. I want to be a good wife and mother and I want to continually improve.

*What do you like to do when not working?* I love watching football, playing fantasy football, working out in the gym, playing X-Box, sewing, knitting, cooking and baking.

*Have you ever experienced racism?* Yes, as a young person I experienced bullying. I was once dating a white guy but he stopped dating me because of race. As a doctor, some people refuse to acknowledge me as the physician or want a second opinion based on a lack of trust. I have not been called the "N" word in the hospital, but everything but that. It is essential that I know who I am in God and be secure despite of being thought of poorly. You have to think about their ignorance, fear and anger. For youth, think about what our previous generations went through and fought for. Just do the work, keep pushing and believing, find time to worship, remember God and allow him to help you overcome barriers.

*Can you tell us about your family here in Springfield?* My husband Colt and I met at the gym and bonded over working out, watching football and God. He is ex Army/Airborne and appears gruff but is unexpectedly vulnerable and giving. My 7 year old stepdaughter Lucy is a girly tomboy who is fierce. She also likes to get dressed up and do girly stuff. She goes "all in" on everything in life and is fearless.