

NAACP

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

NAACP Urges Voters to Vote "No" on Proposition A

NAACP President Cheryl Clay urges voters to go to the polls on August 7th to defeat Prop A. Prop A will weaken workers protections, weaken unions and benefit corporate interests in Missouri.

Black Women Run for Office in Greene County

Kaijuanda Sutton is running for Greene County Auditor and Jamille Jones is running for Recorder of Deeds. Both of these women are new to politics are untried and add diversity to the race.

Elected Officials Need Your Thoughts

Claire McCaskill:
(202)224-6154

Roy Blunt: (202)224-5721

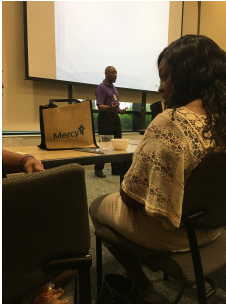
Billy Long: (202)225-6536

Meet Dr. Brenton Coger, Neurosurgeon

Where are you from? I was born in Xenia Ohio and moved to St. Louis at age two. My dad was a PhD medical educator for the Veterans Administration in St. Louis. My family moved into an all white neighborhood and I started first grade as the only black kid in the class. In 1985, kids from the city were bussed into my high school, Oakville, so I was no longer the only black kid. I graduated from high



school in 1990. I graduated from Central Missouri State University in 1994 with a degree in aviation. I became interested in medicine after getting an EMT license and working in the small central Missouri town of Windsor for an ambulance service. At that time I was still pursuing aviation as a career. As my career path moved towards medicine I became a paramedic and went to the University of Missouri St. Louis (UMSL) for my pre-med coursework. I went to medical school at the University of Tennessee in Memphis and graduated in 2003. I did my residency at the University of West Virginia in Morgantown and finished in 2009. I finished my neurosurgery residency in 2009 and saw the job here at Mercy Springfield in a trade journal and have been here since 2010.



Mercy Hosts NAACP Youth for Career Exploration and Tour

On July 14th, Mercy Vice President of Human Resources and her team hosted 12 NAACP youth and their sponsors for a presentation regarding healthcare professions and a tour of the hospital. Leslie Botchway, Physical Therapist, shared with the youth the types of activities he performs, the education required and the discipline needed to become a physical therapist. The students learned that the hospital hires people at 16 years old to work as pharmacy techs. Various job classifications were presented like doctors and nurses but also less thought of professions like teachers, lab technicians and jobs in Human Resources.

In answer to the question about how much money can be made in healthcare, "a doctor in some specialties can make millions and millions of dollars over their career." The Health Committee would like to thank the HR department for making our youth feel welcome, comfortable and challenged.

Tell us about your family. I have five children, three boys and two girls. My oldest, Chase, is at MSU studying Pre-Law and Physics. Chancellor, 18 is a hockey player and goes to school in Washington state. Colton 16, Audrey 14 and Jonny, 12 go to school in Nixa. I have one sister who is married with two kids. She is an account manager for AT&T. My mom was a teacher in the Special School District in St. Louis. She was always working on side businesses; AMWAY, clothing, Avon and then on to a bra line for larger women. Currently she and my dad have a soul food restaurant in St. Louis called "The Choice". *Who are your heroes?* I don't really think like that but I certainly admire Condoleezza Rice because of her many talents and abilities. She is an accomplished pianist, the highest ranking African American in government until Barack Obama's presidency, a recognized Russia expert and a full professor at Stanford University. I admire Colin Powell for similar reasons. I think people should lead by example.

What are your goals for the future? I hope to expand our neurosurgery practice to include 15 doctors and also expand into Arkansas. I currently do spinal surgery, deep brain stimulation, vascular surgery, trauma and tumors. I would like to continue to expand my knowledge and skills as technology develops. I am a commissioned officer (Major) in the Air Force and I would like to continue serving my country. *Have you ever experienced racism?* Yes, school was sometimes a lonely place for me as I was often the only black person. One of my teachers in high school said I was "unteachable". In a bicycle race I was participating in, a car rolled down the window and shouted the n-word at me for no reason. Although Springfield is less diverse than St. Louis, people generally appreciate my help. Our neurosurgery group is quite diverse with an Iranian, a Pakistani, a Finlander, myself and a guy from Iowa. *Do you have any advice for young people?* Yes, no one does anything by themselves, find support in family, friends, school advisors or whomever.

"The power of the vote is the ONLY place where the power of the poor man is equal to that of the rich man." Denise Lieberman Esq.