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Community News

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Native Son on a Mission to Empower the Country

J. Cole isn't the only Fayetteville native to help put the city on the national radar. Craig Stokes, a member of E. E. Smith High School's graduating class of 1999, was asked to join the national UNCF HBCU Empower Me Tour as a speaker and panelist in 2010.

The tour is headlined by Tatyana Ali (Ashley Banks on The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air) and Malik Yoba (New York Undercover, Why Did I Get Married) and travels to Historically Black Colleges and Universities around the country (www.empowermetour.org). The tour even made a stop in Greensboro, NC on February 12th at Craig's alma mater, North Carolina A&T State University.

"It was great to have the opportunity to bring the same messages to the students at A&T that I had been sharing with their peers all across the country", Stokes says. Craig was contacted by UNCF to deliver his signature sessions on personal branding called "Brand You" and one that focuses on personal and professional appearance for males (Style University: College for the Well-Dressed Man). "Everyone on the tour is able to empower and motivate the high school and college students in their own way. It's exciting to see the positive impact we're making as we travel from city to city, state to state."

Big break

Craig was asked to join the tour after producers discovered his hit web series called "Style Minute". "The producers were looking for another person to add to the tour and a friend of mine decided to forward them a few episodes of Style Minute. The producer called me the next day and offered me a spot on the tour", Stokes recalls. The power of the internet has enabled Craig's show to attract thousands of fans around the world.

Style Minute is a lifestyle fashion series for males that Craig launched in 2009. He always had a sense of style - one that he credits his parents for (he is the son of Attorney Steve Stokes and author and publisher D. Renee Gibbs) - and a love for the camera. "I've done some acting and just love working in front of the camera and on stage", he states. "I noticed that a lot of people long for the day when someone

Craig Stokes
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will spot them in a crowd, whisk them away to New York, and launch them as the next Denzel Washington or Will Smith. I decided to take the Tyler Perry approach which was to create my own show, cast myself in it, produce and direct it. Mr. Perry doesn't wait for the opportunities to come to him; instead, he creates his own." With the help of a friend, over 60 episodes were produced and broadcast on YouTube, StyleMinute.com and Facebook. The series is produced by Craig Stokes Productions and has garnered an international following and interest from national television networks.

Craig explains that "a major network reached out to me about being the face of style for their network and we are currently looking at different ways to introduce me to their audience. I've met with producers in Los Angeles and New York to explore ways to take the Style Minute series national." Stokes is also exploring opportunities with other major networks.

Aside from hosting Style Minute and being recognized as a 'brand architect' by helping to develop 'million dollar' personal brands for students, entrepreneurs, and celebrities, Stokes is focused on continuing to build his own brand. "I always have to be mindful of what I involve myself in and the impact it will have on my personal brand. I know that I am a brand and it's important to make sure the businesses and projects I launch are consistent with what my brand is. Everything I'm doing right now is centered on style, branding and entertainment," Craig says candidly.

What's next

As a 2006 graduate of the University of North Carolina at Greensboro with an MBA in brand management, Craig is busy booking speaking engagements as well as preparing to launch "Million Dollar Brand" - a talk radio show on personal branding. "I enjoy traveling to speak about things such as how style and appearance impact your personal brand and play an important role in how people perceive you. The radio show enables those who can't make it to one of my talks to tune in and listen to the same concepts I discuss with others around the country." He'll also be launching a new celebrity-based web series called "Celeb 180".

With all that Craig Stokes has going on it's a wonder that he has time for much else. Craig, who just turned 30, has been married for 6 years and has a one-year old daughter, London. He is a captain in the Air Force Reserves, a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Incorporated and a serial entrepreneur. Stokes can be found on the many social networks such as Facebook (facebook.com/craigstokes) and Twitter (twitter.com/craigstokes) and his own website (craigstokes.com).

"God has blessed me immensely and made it possible for me to be as successful as I've been in my short lifetime," Stokes says as he reflects on his recent accomplishments. "I believe that, with the continued support of my wife, family and friends, I am just scratching the surface on what God has in store for me."

NC State Beauticians & Cosmetologists Assoc.

72nd Annual Convention and Trade Show

Saturday April 9th-Tuesday April 12th

Holiday Inn Bordeaux Fayetteville, NC (910) 323-0111

12 Hours of Continuing Education

Pre-Registration \$125.00 by April 2nd / \$150.00 on site

Send pre-registration to:

Dr. Jennifer Baylock 762 Amber Dr. Fayetteville NC 28311
Or Mrs. Loretta Miller 5605 Sunset Circle Charlotte NC. 28269

For more information contact:

Dr. Jennifer Baylock 910-630-6147 * Ms. Allie Wiggins 910-988-4267
Dr. R.A. George 704-333-6512 * Mrs. Loretta Miller 704-596-0793

Sunday April 10th 4 hour classes

Dudley / Color & Cuts /Rejuvenate your business
How to press hair professionally
Application of Relaxer & Semi Permanent Color
Natural Hair/ Braiding, Plating, Locking

Monday April 11th 8 hour classes

It's Only Hair/ Hands on Haircutting
Bacteriology/ Sterilization & Sanitation
Believable (beweavable) Non-surgical hair replacement
Hair color, Relaxer, Cold wave

There are so many things to attend for the stylist that are **no charge!** On Sunday the trade floor opens at about 1:00pm and it is free to the public. Sunday evening is our Presidents banquet at 7:00 pm. Tickets for this event are 35.00 per person. On Monday we have our student competition at 3:00pm. This is always exciting and there is no charge to come out and watch our young innovative stylist work their magic. Then on Monday evening at 6:00pm we will have our Trendsetters professional comb out competition with our exciting Fashion Show following. There is **no fee** to be in our audience. We are inviting all stylists, barbers, nail techs etc. to come out and compete for **cash** and trophy prizes. Our fashion show is always exciting and fun to watch. On Tuesday we have our Jr. Executive Board luncheon and the tickets for this affair are 25.00. We hope that you decide to join us for an exciting, fun filled weekend all designed around our industry. You may decide that you would like to "Link up with us" and that would be fantastic!

North Carolina State Beauticians & Cosmetologists Association

Present

Hair Shaping Artist G-Wiz

World Champion Clipper Artist

Representing the Wall's Clipper Company

Pre-Registration \$25.00 • At the Door \$30.00



He will use the latest tools and techniques in hair shaping

Monday, April 11, 2011

1:00 pm to 5:00 pm

Holiday Inn Bordeaux

1707 Owen Drive

Fayetteville, NC 28304

910-323-0111

For More Information

(252) 977-1469 • (910) 630-6147 • (919) 247-9493