RAISING THE VOLUME
with Marcus Amaker & Charlton Singleton

Raising the Volume
Episode VII
A Conversation on His Life and the Health of the Black Community with Dr. Thaddeus J. Bell

Sixth Grade and Up
Mastery of core subjects and 21st century themes is essential for all students in the 21st century. Core subjects include English, reading or language arts, world languages, arts, mathematics, economics, science, geography, history and government, and civics. In addition to these subjects, schools must move forward to include not only a focus on mastery of core subjects, but also an understanding of academic content at much higher levels by weaving 21st century interdisciplinary themes into core subjects.

**Global Awareness**
1. Use 21st century skills to understand and address global issues.
2. Learn from and work collaboratively with individuals representing diverse cultures, religions, and lifestyles in a spirit of mutual respect and open dialogue in personal, work, and community contexts.

**Civic Literacy**
1. Participate effectively in civic life through knowing how to stay informed and understanding governmental processes.
2. Exercise the rights and obligations of citizenship at local, state, national, and global levels.
3. Understand the local and global implications of civic decisions.

**Work Creatively with Others**
1. Develop, implement, and communicate new ideas to others effectively.
2. Be open and responsive to new and diverse perspectives; incorporate group input and feedback into the work.
3. Demonstrate originality and inventiveness in work, and understand the real world limits to adopting new ideas.
4. View failure as an opportunity to learn; understand that creativity and innovation is a long-term, cyclical process of small successes and frequent mistakes.
5. Implement innovations.
6. Act on creative ideas to make a tangible and useful contribution to the field in which the innovation will occur.
OVERVIEW

Everyone has a story. It’s our place to take a moment to listen. Once you listen, your eyes open. You can put yourself in someone else’s shoes and try to comprehend their experiences. You may be inspired, you may come away with more knowledge, or you may find a bit of yourself in someone else.

Raising the Volume is a series of Black stories. Stories about Black entrepreneurs, judges, authors, artists, and leaders in our community. Stories that need to be heard. Led by the Gaillard Center’s Artists-in-Residence, Charlton Singleton and Marcus Amaker, Raising the Volume gives a platform to Black community members and opens us all up to honest discussion.

As you introduce this series to your students, follow the bullet points below for discussion. Your students will find that they are challenged to think about uncomfortable things. Those conversations are what will help us change our world. In the words of Judge McFarland, “To break down racial barriers, start where you are.” Let’s start where we are and see what change we can bring to our community.

For each lesson, split your class into small groups for discussion or discuss as a whole. Choose the model that is the most comfortable for your students so they feel free to discuss opinions openly.

Teachers, if you are interested in scheduling a cross-school discussion on Raising the Volume Episode VII, please email Sterling deVries at sdevries@gaillardcenter.org. Through cross-school Zoom calls, we can offer students from one school a different perspective on the video with students from a second school. We will schedule class-to-class meetings where whole groups can discuss various topics covered in Episode VII.
Raising the Volume

Episode VII: A Conversation on His Life and the Health of the Black Community with Dr. Thaddeus Bell

(CLICK THE IMAGE TO WATCH EPISODE VII)
LESSONS

You may have heard of Dr. Thaddeus J. Bell before or at least heard his voice on the radio. He delivers radio “Moments of Health” on Magic 107.3, but there is so much more to learn about him. Watch Dr. Bell’s interview with Charlton Singleton on Raising the Volume and see how Dr. Bell “raises the volume” on healthcare for African Americans.

Dr. Bell is an accomplished athlete, winning the World Championship two times and the World Medical Games two times. Do you believe his eagerness to perform as an athlete led to his successful career as a whole?

In Dr. Bell’s interview, he recalls his father making him choose between academics and athletics. He chose academics and took a break from athletics. Do you believe this was necessary? As a student, can you be successful in both? Are there rewards and challenges for having one but not the other?

Dr. Bell states that as a physician, “We were taught to talk to doctors, but not to patients.” What does he mean by this statement? How would learning how to speak to your patients improve your ability for better care of that patient? Why did Dr. Bell’s medical training omit this crucial piece of training as a physician? Have you had a personal experience where you felt the physician you visited did not know how to communicate with you? Did it change your experience with that provider?

Up until 1965, MUSC was a whites-only school. The medical school was established in 1913, but it was not until 1971 an African American, Bernard W. Deas, became the first of his race to graduate from the school. In fact, Dr. Bell taught for several years waiting for the enrollment to open to Black students. Dr. Bell was admitted to MUSC in 1972 and graduated in 1976. He later became the Director of University Diversity and Associate Dean for Diversity in the College of Medicine at the Medical University of South Carolina and a Clinical Associate Professor of Family Medicine at MUSC.

How do you believe his experience as a former student and the racial bias he experienced helped him to be a successful director in this role? Take a look at the timeline of MUSC here. Why do you believe each event listed is considered remarkable and memorable?
LESSONS

Dr. Bell has a mission to serve and educate the African American population, but he found as a student and physician there was a mistrust of the medical field. Dr. Bell mentions the Tuskegee Experiment and states, “Black folks had mistrust for 400 years of bad history of medicine and black people, with the Tuskegee Experiment being one of the bad experiences.”

Read the two articles below and discuss with your group why you believe the experiment led to a great mistrust of medical professionals by African Americans.

“Tuskegee Experiment: The Infamous Syphilis Study” Article by Elizabeth Nix for the History Channel.

“45 years ago, the nation learned about the Tuskegee Syphilis Study. Its repercussions are still felt today.” Article by Sarah Toy USA TODAY.

Now that you see the results of the Tuskegee experiment, do you believe there is a way to heal that mistrust? Dr. Bell founded the non-profit, Closing the Gap in Healthcare, for that purpose. The mission of the organization is, “… to decrease health disparities and increase the health literacy of African Americans and the underserved communities throughout the Carolinas. The organization accomplishes this by providing health education programs that promote wellness and healthy lifestyles and hopes to increase the number of African-American health providers in the state of South Carolina.”

Take fifteen minutes to visit the website for Closing the Gap on Healthcare here. List three things you see that contribute to better healthcare for African Americans. Discuss with your group.

Dr. Bell is one individual, but proof that one person can truly make a difference. How do you believe Dr. Bell has changed the world for better? List two things you can do to change the world and discuss with your group.

Participants of the Tuskegee Experiment
Photo from the National Archives.
ABOUT DR. BELL

Dr. Thaddeus J. Bell is a practicing Family Practice Physician in Charleston, South Carolina. He is a Fellow of the American Academy of Family Medicine and the Founder of Closing the Gap in Health Care, Inc. (CGHC), a non-profit organization created to decrease health disparities by providing health education for African Americans and other under-served populations. Closing the Gap in Health Care radio health tips, as well as the website, has received National Awards from the National Health Foundation as one of the best programs of its kind in the country in 2009, 2010, and 2011.

Dr. Bell is a 2013 recipient of the National Medical Association Distinguished Service Award, Toronto, Canada.

On November 11, 2013, he was inducted into the Richland One Hall of Fame for contributions made to Richland One, his community, profession, and society as a whole, by the Richland One Board of School Commissioners.

Dr. Bell writes a weekly newsletter that is received by 1500 readers online primarily in North and South Carolina. The newsletter is read by the lay public as well as physicians. He speaks at his Church (Olive Branch AME Church) each Sunday AM that he is in town, giving a short health tip to the congregation. He has been a frequent speaker to statewide AME Church conferences at the request of the Bishop of the AME Church. He is the recipient of the prestigious Richard Allen Award given by Allen University in 2005 for outstanding contributions in medicine.

Through CGHC, Dr. Bell presents radio health tips that are aired in the TriCounty area, other parts of the Lowcountry and in the Columbia, SC radio markets (most recently television health tips are also being aired). He also does a monthly radio show with Gary Posik (WGCV 95) in Columbia, SC for the past five years. The health information provided through the radio health tips and the CGHC website reaches over 300,000 people each week. The television program reaches about 12,000 people per day in the Charleston area. In May 2005, Closing the Gap in Health Care was the recipient of the South Carolina Department of Health and Human Service Award for Outstanding Contributions in Public Health.

Dr. Bell is the co-founder of the award-winning Closing the Gap in Health Fitness Festival for Children and Youth, an annual event that promotes life fitness for youth in the Charleston area. The program was the recipient of the Governor's Award for outstanding contributions to the community.

Dr. Bell was the Chairman of the Governor's Council on Physical Fitness under three different governors, during which time fitness and health was elevated to a new level in South Carolina. (Former Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger was the Chairman of the President's Council on Physical Fitness).

Also in 2007, Dr. Bell was a Physician Finalist for Health Care Heroes through the Charleston Regional Business Journal and in 2008. He received the Wanamaker Award given by the Charleston County Medical Society. In April of 2012, Dr. Bell received the James Clyburn Health Literacy Award in Public Health Communication and Community Service. CTCIHC has received numerous awards from sororities and fraternities for outstanding contributions to the African American Communities in Public Health (Health Literacy). In March 2013, Dr. Bell received the Humanitarian Award from the city of Summerville, South Carolina.

Recently, Closing the Gap in Health Care, Inc. received a major two-year grant from the Medical University of South Carolina to collaborate at looking at the effectiveness of radio health tips in the TriCounty area.

Dr. Bell is currently in private practice in family medicine Charleston, SC. He retired from MUSC in 2010 after serving as Director of University Diversity and Associate Dean for Diversity in the College of Medicine at the Medical University of South Carolina, and a Clinical Associate Professor of Family Medicine at MUSC. While serving as director of the office of diversity, Dr. Bell authored and helped initiate diversity plans to increase the number of African American programs in all six colleges at MUSC.
ABOUT DR. BELL

Dr. Bell was invited to be the second only African American to be an Assistant Dean of Minority Students at MUSC by Dr. Layton McCurdy, the Dean of the College of Medicine and Vice President of Clinical Affairs at MUSC. At the recommendation of Dr. McCurdy, Dr. Bell was recommended to Dr. Jim Edwards, President of the University at that time, to serve as interim director of the Office of Minority Affairs. After three months, Dr. Bell was named the director of the office, which he promptly changed the name to the Office of Diversity. He was elevated to Associate Dean of Minority Affairs in the College of Medicine and was the author of many programs to improve the recruitment, retention, and graduation of minority students at MUSC. He was a member of the admission committee as well as the progress committee for the College of Medicine. While he was Associate Dean of Medicine and Director of the Office of Diversity, the university experienced a significant improvement in the number of African Americans in all six colleges at MUSC.

He is the founder of the annual very prestigious Earl B. Higgins Diversity Award given in honor of Dr. Earl Higgins to the person at MUSC who has done the most for promoting diversity. The award continues to be given at MUSC. He was also the founder of the Earl B. Higgins Scholarship given to minority students in need of financial support in all six colleges at MUSC. He was the founder of the HBCU Collaboration Program with MUSC to help increase the number of African American students from HBCU colleges and universities in South Carolina into MUSC (College of Medicine).

He was named Physician of the Year in 1996 by the South Carolina Academy of Family Physicians (the first African American Physician given this honor). He was named to the South Carolina Bell South Calendar for Outstanding African Americans, the first South Carolina State College calendar for outstanding graduates, and in 1992, he was recognized as an outstanding graduate from MUSC. In 1993, Dr. Bell was selected as outstanding graduate of South Carolina State College for contributions made to medicine, track and field, and the military.

Dr. Bell received an honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters from Charleston Southern University in 2003 for outstanding service to the university and the community.

Dr. Bell was a Major in the US Air Force Reserve from 1983 to 1993. He is a graduate of the US School of Aero Space Medicine and was a Flight Surgeon in the Air Force Reserve. He served in Operation Desert Storm after which he retired.

In April 2007, Dr. Bell was honored by Select Health Insurance Inc. with an endowed scholarship named in his honor at the Coastal Community Foundation of Charleston, South Carolina. The scholarship will provide support for African American students attending MUSC in all six colleges. Dr. Bell started the annual Low Country Jazz Festival, which is in its fifth year and has been recognized as one of the best Jazz Festivals in the Southeast. The festival is sponsored by Closing the Gap In Health Care INC for the purpose of raising funds to support the radio and television programs as well as the endowed scholarship at the community foundation. We have reached our goal of $250,000.

The Thaddeus J. Bell Scholarship has been endowed for $250,000 for African American students at MUSC in all colleges in good standing with their prospective college. He is a frequent lecturer on health disparities for MUSC, local radio, and television. He has been featured in several newspaper articles in Charleston, Columbia, and Greenville, South Carolina. He is a frequent speaker at the annual Greenville Health Disparity Conference and recently wrote an Op Ed on Obesity in the African American Community that appeared in the Greenville Newspaper. He is the recipient of the Golden Pen Award from the Post and Courier for a letter he wrote to the editor regarding the Apology of the American Association to African American Physicians for 100 years of Discrimination in 2008.

Dr. Bell is a well-respected lecturer on health disparities and is a frequently requested speaker throughout the South for both physicians and public groups. His Barbershop and Beauty Shop talks have been well received throughout South and North Carolina. The talks have been credited with saving the lives of many African American Men and Women. These lectures are given through Churches, civic and social groups. They are free to the public. Dr. Bell is currently the Chairman of the Health Initiative Committee of the Sixth District of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity and has been recognized locally and regionally for outstanding contributions to the health literacy of African American Men in Omega Psi Phi Fraternity. He is the 2011 recipient of the Citizen of the Year award given by the Mighty Sixth District of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity.
ABOUT DR. BELL

Dr. Bell was inducted into the Columbia Housing Authority Wall of Fame in 1989 as an outstanding physician who was raised in the projects (Allen Benedict Court) of Columbia, South Carolina.

In 1980, Dr. Bell founded the Cross Family Health Center in Cross, SC, which was a free clinic for the underserved people in Cross, South Carolina, which is now a federal health center for the underserved population and is a major part of the Franklin C. Health Clinic Network in Charleston, South Carolina. He worked at that center for 10 years as the only physician in the rural community of Cross, South Carolina.

He has expertise in fitness and health and often lectures on these subjects as well. Dr. Bell is a former World-Class sprinter in Master Track and Field. He won the title of World Champion in 1987 and 1989 in the 100m sprint. He has also been a two-time World Medical Games Champion in the 100m and 400m dashes. He has been on two master world champion sprint relay teams (1996 and 2001) at the Masters World Games. He has been a gold medal winner at the Penn Relays and has been guest physician at the relays. He has been invited to participate in famous Modesto Relays where he won the 100 and 200m dash for Masters Athletes (1988).

Dr. Bell holds all of the South Carolina Records in the sprint events (100m and 200m dash) in Master Track and Field for South Carolina.

He has been a guest physician at the Olympic Training Center in Colorado. He has been a physician for USA Track Field for a world championship. He was a physician for the Olympic Festival for USA Track and Field in St. Louis, Missouri in the early 1990s.

The Post and Courier of Charleston, South Carolina selected Dr. Bell as one of the best athletes of the 20th Century in track and field for the State of South Carolina.

Dr. Bell is a graduate of CA Johnson High School (1962) Columbia, South Carolina, South Carolina State University (BS) 1966, Clark Atlanta University 1970 (Masters in Science Education), Medical University of South Carolina (1976) MD, School of Aero Space Medicine (Flight Surgeon) 1983, and is currently a Fellow of the American Academy of Family Medicine.

Dr. Bell is the father of 3 children Thaddeus J. Bell, II (deceased), Tiffany Bell, and Tonisha Bell-Alston. He is the proud grandfather of a granddaughter, Julia Alston, grandsons, Kaidyn Snipe and Edmond James Alston.

Dr. Bell is a life member of the Alumni Association of the Medical University of South Carolina, Life Member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Life Member of the South Carolina State College Alumni Association, a member of Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity, the National Medical Association, the Charleston County Medical Association (currently Co Chairman of the Health Disparity Committee). In February of 2012, the Charleston County Medical Association gave a $1500 scholarship to an African American student in the College of Medicine at MUSC in honor of Dr. Thaddeus John Bell.
ABOUT CHARLTON SINGLETON

A native of Awendaw, SC, Charlton Singleton began his musical studies at the age of three on the piano. He would then go on to study the organ, violin, cello, and the trumpet throughout elementary, middle and high school. In 1994, he received a Bachelor of Arts in Music Performance from South Carolina State University. Since that time, he has taught music at the elementary, middle, and high school levels, as well as being an adjunct faculty member at the College of Charleston. In 2008 he co-founded and became the Artistic Director and Conductor of the Charleston Jazz Orchestra: an 18-piece jazz ensemble of some of the finest professional musicians in the Southeast and the resident big band in Charleston, SC. Mr. Singleton is also the organist and choir director at St. Patrick Catholic Church in Charleston, SC. In November of 2016 he was named the inaugural Artist-in-Residence at the recently renovated Gaillard Center in downtown Charleston. He remained in this position until July 2019; at that point he was named Artist-in-Residence Emeritus. In this position he continues to lead the Summer Youth Jazz Orchestra Camp as well as lead the “Jazz Through the Ages” assembly, which attracts a capacity crowd of students at the Gaillard Center.

As a performer, Charlton leads his own ensembles that vary in size and style. He has performed in France, Great Britain, Scotland, Spain, Germany, Austria, Italy, Switzerland, Norway, Canada, the Netherlands, as well as many great cities throughout the United States. He is a founding member of a new ensemble called Ranky Tanky. The group is a quintet that interprets the sounds of Gullah from the Southeast Coast of the United States. In 2017 Ranky Tanky reached the top of the Billboard, iTunes, and Amazon Contemporary Jazz charts with their self-titled debut recording. In 2019 they accomplished the same feat with the release of their sophomore effort, “Good Time”, which recently won the 2020 Grammy Award for “Best Regional Roots Music Album”.

In addition to performing, he is in demand as a speaker, clinician, composer, and arranger. He has also shared the stage with and/or worked with some of most talented entertainers in the world, including Bobby McFerrin, Jimmy Heath, Slide Hampton, Houston Person, Darius Rucker, Fred Wesley, and Cyrus Chestnut to name a few. Outside of music and entertainment, he and his wife, Maryjo, are the proud parents of Shalamar and D'Marcus, as well as their pets…Sassy, Jango, Mojo, Kota Bear, Pumpkin, and Ginger.
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