



Media Advisory
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Philadelphia Neighborhood Organization Celebrates The Life of Deceased
Member, Recruits Scholarship Recipients, at 24th Annual Reunion**

*Original Richard Allen Committee, Inc. Continues Its Tradition At Fairmount Park, Honors Thomas "Blood"
Vessells*

TO: City Editors, Feature Editors, Education Editors, Photo Editors, Assignment Editors, Online Content Managers, Managing Editors, News Directors and Broadcast Editors

WHAT: **Philadelphia, PA, July 30, 2015** – On Saturday, August 1, [Original Richard Allen Committee, Inc. \(ORAC\)](#), a community organization founded in 1991 by a small group of former residents of the North Central Philadelphia-based public housing development, will host its 24th Annual Reunion at Lemon Hill, Fairmount Park, in the Brewerytown section, at 33rd and Poplar Streets, here.

More than 2,000 original and current residents of the Richard Allen housing development, guests, community members, and civic leaders, are expected to attend the reunion, which will provide attendees, and their children, free food, donated school supplies, access to a "moon bounce" attraction, and a host of other recreational activities.

Last fall, the organization lost a vital member, Thomas "Blood" Vessells, in an unexpected accident. As a founding member of the organization, Vessells, who went on from being raised in the housing development to become a computer systems analyst, regularly attended meetings, events, and the annual reunion, providing support and encouragement to Richard Allen community members, until his death. His legacy will be honored with a plaque presented to his daughter, in his memory, at the reunion.

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Through the donations of its members, each year, ORAC has traditionally contributed \$500 in scholarship funds for students pursuing higher education. In honor of Vessells, the organization will announce, at this year's reunion event, that it is seeking additional applicants for a larger scholarship, which will be presented in the fall, in the amount of \$1,000. Those funds, over the years, have aggregated to \$20,500 in academic scholarships to descendants of current and former Richard Allen Homes residents.

WHO:

- Original Richard Allen Committee, Inc. members
- Philadelphia Councilwoman Jannie L. Blackwell, former Richard Allen Homes resident
- More than 2,000 Richard Allen Homes residents, guests, community members, and civic leaders

WHEN:

Saturday, August 1, 2015
12:00pm – 7:00pm
Memoriam for Thomas "Blood" Vessells – 4:00pm

WHERE:

Lemon Hill, Fairmount Park
33rd and Poplar Streets
Philadelphia, PA 19130

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