



## BLOCK REPORT RADIO

The people's voice on the airwaves & the internet

### Hip Learning

*An interview with founder Naru Kwina by People's Minister of Information JR*

I have known the artist and teacher Naru from the streets of Oakland for over a decade, and within that time he has never ceased to amaze me with the creative necessity of his community projects to our community. His most recent and probably most important work to date, in my opinion, is Hip Learning, which is a Hip Hop based curriculum on human anatomy for elementary school youth.

After I interviewed Naru for my Wednesday Morning Show, I gave the Hip Learning audio cd to my daughter. And before long, she took to it – actually learning more facts about the structure of the human body than I even knew,



which brought me to the conclusion that Hip Learning is a vital tool to be used in the education of young people, especially Black youth. Check out Naru Kwina, the founder of Hip Learning, in his own words ...

M.O.I. JR: What inspired you to create Hip Learning? When?

Naru: I was inspired to create Hip Learning about nine years ago in 2003, when I was teaching a first grade science class at Walden School in Berkeley. The children seemed bored and I was looking for a new way to reach them. I heard some of them singing a song they had heard on the radio. I didn't really like the lyrics, but I was impressed that they had learned about three minutes of repetitive syncopation.

I asked them if I made Hip Hop songs for them about science, would that make class more exciting? They all thought it would be fun but doubted that I could even rap. In fact, they laughed at the thought.

M.O.I. JR: What made you want to integrate Hip Hop into teaching?

Naru: I have been an emcee since 1979, so it was very easy for me to use Hip Hop in the class. After hearing the children recite the rhymes I made for them back to me with so much excitement and enthusiasm, I knew it would work

well in the classroom.

M.O.I. JR: How have people responded to you using Hip Hop to teach youth?

Naru: I have had nothing but fantastic reviews from parents, students and other teachers who use Hip Learning. I have received a "Creative Work Fund" grant to produce the "Hip Science Human Body 101" play and companion CD. I also received a grant from the City Of Oakland Arts Funding Program to produce a companion booklet to the CD. The booklet is a story – part fact, part fiction – about how I started using Hip Learning in the classroom.

M.O.I. JR: How has Hip Learning affected the students who have used the curriculum?

Naru: I believe you would have to ask the student and parent this question, but from my vantage point I see the children become energized when the music comes

and they are very engaged and focused. They are able to maintain the information longer than if they had just read it in a book. Hip Learning locks in the information.

M.O.I. JR: What do you hope to get out of Hip Learning in the next five years?

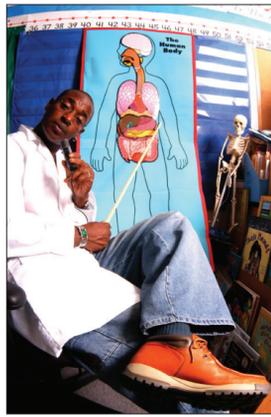
Naru: I plan to do another CD about space and maybe another one about physics. I am looking for



new ways to market and hope to be in all the school science curriculum books in the next two years. It is my desire to get into the Oakland public school system next year "by any means necessary."

M.O.I. JR: What schools have you worked with so far?

Naru: I have been working at Walden Center and School for about 19 years now. I took a four year break to raise my daughter



Naru is determined to show that Black students and all students can learn challenging scientific terms and excel in the "hardest" subjects in school.

and develop Hip Learning as well our nonprofit, Alternative Minds Foundation.

I have performed Hip Science at a few small private and charter schools but have yet to break into the public school area in Oakland, although not for lack of trying. I have also performed at Art and Soul, Chabot Space and Science Center, the Temescal Street Fair and the Green Festival, just to name a few.

M.O.I. JR: How could people get Hip Learning into their classrooms?

Naru: Just go to my website: <http://www.hiplearning.org>. You can download the songs, link on to videos, or contact me.

M.O.I. JR: How can people hook up with you?

Naru: They can call me at (510) 842-3324, which is my home-office number or email me at [hiplearning@hotmail.com](mailto:hiplearning@hotmail.com).

Thanks for the interview. It really means a lot to me and the work I want to continue doing for our community.

*The People's Minister of Information JR is associate editor of the Bay View, author of "Block Reportin'" and filmmaker of "Operation Small Axe" and "Block Reportin' 101," available, along with many more interviews, at [www.blockreportradio.com](http://www.blockreportradio.com). He also hosts two weekly shows on KPFA 94.1 FM and kpfa.org: The Morning Mix every Wednesday, 8-9 a.m., and The Block Report every Friday night-Saturday morning, midnight-2 a.m. He can be reached at [blockreportradio@gmail.com](mailto:blockreportradio@gmail.com).*

### Oakland's City Girl Farmstore

*An interview with owner Abeni Massey by People's Minister of Information JR*

One of the newer interesting and unique storefronts to open up in downtown Oakland within recent weeks is City Girl Farmstore, owned by Abeni Massey. The store, at 1740 San Pablo, is a new and welcome neighbor to the rebellious Bay Area, which has a very vibrant urban farming community. Read this new up and coming entrepreneur in her own words ...

M.O.I. JR: Can you tell the people where the concept for City Girl Farmstore came from?

Abeni: The concept for City Girl Farmstore was born from my desire to make it easier for folks in the city to grow their own food. As an urban farmer, I found it difficult to source many of the basic supplies I needed for my garden, bees and livestock. I wanted to offer a wide range of supplies at a reasonable price in a central location easily accessible by public transportation.

M.O.I. JR: What do you sell at City Girl Farmstore? How long has it been open?

Abeni: City Girl Farmstore is about the basics: food, clothing and your shelter!

We carry indoor and outdoor farm and garden supplies, animal feed and animal husbandry supplies. Seeds, seedlings and tools.

We also offer a range of urban homesteading products like cheese making supplies, natural dyes, beer and kombucha making supplies. We have some great books on farming, gardening and lots of how to books. We also feature locally crafted apparel and responsibly and sustainably produced products for the home.

M.O.I. JR: Why do you feel like this type of store is needed in this community?

Abeni: I truly believe that self-sufficiency is the cornerstone of a healthy community. Our store provides tools and information to foster community and individual self-sufficiency. Downtown Oakland is a point of convergence for a number of communities in Oakland and it gives us an opportunity to be a meeting place as well as a resource for all of these communities.

M.O.I. JR: What is your perspective of the urban farm movement in the Bay?

Abeni: I have been in a number of urban farming organizations throughout the Bay and through my experience I have seen lots of things that inspire me – and some things that trouble me. What I have come away with is that this "movement" is positive and needed. I just want to spread it and remind my people that self-sufficiency is in our blood.

My granddaddy was the first urban farmer I knew. He lived in Queens, New York City, and he grew everything in his backyard. I remember snapping beans on his porch as a little girl, then eating



Abeni and her husband, Tajai Massey, are growing not only a garden but a family.

them with potatoes and hot water cornbread for dinner. I can't let those kinds of traditions die. Not on my watch!

M.O.I. JR: How do people get in contact with you?

Abeni: People can contact me at the store. We are open Monday through Thursday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Friday 12-9 p.m.. Our email is [citygirlfarms@gmail.com](mailto:citygirlfarms@gmail.com). Like us on Facebook: 510farmstore. Follow us on Twitter @citygirlfarms.

Thank you for the support, JR!

*The People's Minister of Information JR is associate editor of the Bay View, author of "Block Reportin'" and filmmaker of "Operation Small Axe" and "Block Reportin' 101," available, along with many more interviews, at [www.blockreportradio.com](http://www.blockreportradio.com). He also hosts two weekly shows on KPFA 94.1 FM and kpfa.org: The Morning Mix every Wednesday, 8-9 a.m., and The Block Report every Friday night-Saturday morning, midnight-2 a.m. He can be reached at [blockreportradio@gmail.com](mailto:blockreportradio@gmail.com).*

### Go Tell It!

Take a musical journey with Harriet Tubman & family along the Underground Railroad and discover how Spirituals helped guide the way!



Come celebrate the joyous occasion of this successful escape during the Christmas of 1854.

An original musical drama by Taiwo Kujichagulia-Seitu

**Friday December 21st at 7pm  
Saturday December 22nd at  
\*3pm and 7pm**

**Kids N Dance  
3840 MacArthur Blvd.  
Oakland, CA 94619**

\$15 in advance, \$20 at the door

Purchase tickets online at:  
[gotellit.eventbrite.com](http://gotellit.eventbrite.com)  
[gotellitmatinee.eventbrite.com](http://gotellitmatinee.eventbrite.com)  
[brownpapertickets.com/event/294057](http://brownpapertickets.com/event/294057)

\*Free matinee (tickets required and can be reserved online)

To find out more about the show, visit us at:  
[gotellit2012.wix.com/gotellit](http://gotellit2012.wix.com/gotellit)

Contact information:  
[Gotellit2012@gmail.com](mailto:Gotellit2012@gmail.com)  
(510)434-6773

#### NOTICE OF RECORD OF DECISION HUNTERS POINT NAVAL SHIPYARD PARCEL E-2 (INCLUDING THE LANDFILL)

The U.S. Department of the Navy announces the availability of the Record of Decision (ROD) for Parcel E-2 at Hunters Point Naval Shipyard in San Francisco, California. The ROD was signed by the Navy, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, California Department of Toxic Substances Control, and the San Francisco Regional Water Quality Control Board in November 2012.

Parcel E-2 includes a landfill along the shoreline at Hunters Point Naval Shipyard in San Francisco, California. The remedy selected to address contamination at Parcel E-2 is described in the ROD, and includes the following actions:

- Remove and dispose of contaminated soil in selected areas
- Install a soil cover over all of Parcel E-2, with a protective liner where needed to minimize water seeping into the contaminated material
- Install below-ground barriers to limit groundwater flow from the landfill to San Francisco Bay
- Remove and treat landfill gas to prevent it from moving beyond the Parcel E-2 boundary
- Build a shoreline rement
- Build new wetlands
- Monitor and maintain the different parts of the selected remedy to ensure they are working properly
- Use institutional controls to restrict specific land uses and activities on Parcel E-2

The remedy was one of several alternatives evaluated and presented in a Proposed Plan to the public for review. The remedy was selected after comments were received from the public. When this remedy is complete, Parcel E-2 will be available for recreational use.

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION

The Parcel E-2 ROD and other site documents are available for public review at the two Information Repositories:

**City of San Francisco Main Library**  
Government Information Center, 5th Floor  
100 Larkin Street  
San Francisco, CA 94102  
(415) 557-4500

**Hunters Point Naval Shipyard Site Trailer**  
(Located across the street from the security entrance to the Shipyard)  
690 Hudson Avenue  
San Francisco, CA 94124

It is also available on the Hunters Point Naval Shipyard website: <http://www.bracpmo.navy.mil>.

Click "BRAC 2005," click on "Prior BRAC Installations" drop-down menu, and then select "Former NSY Hunters Point."

For more information about the Parcel E-2 ROD, please contact Mr. Keith Forman, Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Environmental Coordinator, BRAC Program Management Office West, 1455 Frazee Road, Suite 900, San Diego, CA 92108-4310; [keith.s.forman@navy.mil](mailto:keith.s.forman@navy.mil); (619) 532-0913 phone; (415) 308-1458 cell phone; (619) 532-0995 fax.

### METRO ARTS & TECH HIGH SCHOOL

**There is Now a Free College-Prep High School  
RIGHT HERE IN THE BAYVIEW!**

Come and meet our community of students, teachers, and administrators who make this small, college-preparatory, public high school a **safe, inspiring, and supportive place to learn.**

**Visit us at our Upcoming Information Sessions:**

Saturday, December 15, 11 – 12:30 pm

Wednesday, January 16, 6 – 7:30 pm

**For more information and to RSVP, please call us at  
415-550-5920.**

1195 Hudson Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94124 • 415.550.5920 • [www.es-metro.org](http://www.es-metro.org)



**New Book  
By Minister  
of Information  
JR Valrey  
Coming Soon!**

By The People's Minister of Information JR VALREY  
Listen online @ [www.blockreportradio.com](http://www.blockreportradio.com)