

# Everyday Heroes

*Blood Centers of the Pacific's Diversity E-newsletter*

July 2011

## Remembering Erudis Steverson

Troy and Danielle Reese, owners of Queen's Louisiana Po-Boy Café, San Francisco, opened their restaurant to rave reviews in November 2009. The restaurant, which serves delicious Creole and Cajun food, keeps the couple very busy.



Danielle, a Louisiana native, is the head chef and the one with the flair for food, while Troy handles the office and

administrative side of the business. Few married couples look as happy together as these hardworking entrepreneurs. Now married for more than 10 years, Troy credits his late friend Erudis Steverson as being the Cupid who brought him and Danielle together. It was this same friend who also taught the couple about sickle cell disease and the need for African-Americans to donate blood.

In 2005, at age 36, Erudis passed away from complications of sickle cell disease. Troy and Danielle were shocked and grief-stricken by the loss of their good friend. Troy describes Erudis as an articulate man who was a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity and later a member of the Masons. He remembers Erudis as a very outgoing man, who loved family and was very involved in community service. Troy would often accompany his friend to the hospital when Erudis was having a "painful sickle cell crisis." He recalls Erudis as always sick and in need of lifesaving blood transfusions. While receiving a transfusion, Erudis would patiently share with Troy the challenges he was facing as a sickle cell patient.

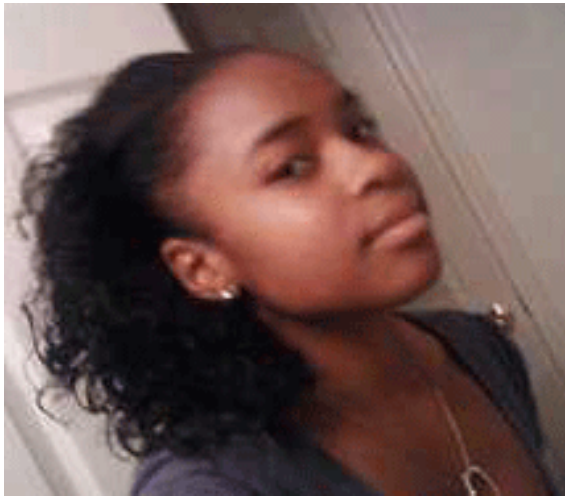
Troy and Danielle will always be grateful to Erudis for introducing them to each other. And, they will always remember their dear friend for his strength in the face of adversity.

In loving memory of Erudis, Danielle and Troy will host a [blood drive](#) at their restaurant on Monday, July, 25th, from 1:00 pm to 6:00 pm. Look for the bloodmobile in front of the restaurant. In addition to receiving a special "Our Blood Saves Lives" T-shirt, all donors who give blood at this event will receive a delicious two-piece Dark Meat Chicken Meal (leg and thigh), including fries and a soda!

For more information, visit [Queen's Louisiana Po-Boy Café](#). The restaurant offers catering with free delivery on orders of \$300 or more and is proud black-owned and operated business.

## Stepping Up To The Plate

In many ways, Johnika Carter-Kiel is just like any other 18-year-old. Not only does Johnika enjoy music, she also loves singing, and has even considered learning how to play the piano and writing her own music one day.



Unlike most other people her age, Johnika spends a great deal of time at the hospital. She relies on regular blood transfusions simply just to stay active. Johnika was diagnosed with aplastic anemia and Paroxysmal Nocturnal Hemoglobinuria (PNH). Aplastic anemia occurs when a person's own bone marrow does not produce enough red cells. This leaves them fatigued and at a higher risk for infections and uncontrolled bleeding. PNH occurs in approximately 30 percent of people with aplastic anemia. With PNH, the red cells are destroyed by the body as it becomes overly sensitive to the immune system. This is what is happening to Johnika's red cells, and why she needs regular blood transfusions to sustain her until she can get a bone marrow transplant.

Even with these health challenges, Johnika keeps a positive attitude and optimistic outlook on life. Volunteering as often as she can to feed the homeless and hungry, this young woman refuses to let these diseases get the better of her. Johnika continues to enjoy life and the love of family and friends. She takes pleasure in hanging out with her grandmother and hopes to see her nephew and cousins grow up to accomplish their dreams.

Johnika has dreams of her own. She would like to become either a family law attorney or a veterinarian. She loves animals and has a real way with them. Johnika is grateful to all the people who donate blood. Their selflessness allows her to continue to reach for her dreams.

There will be a [blood drive and marrow registry held in Johnika's honor](#) on Saturday, July 23, 2011, from 1:00 pm to 5:30 pm at the North Oakland Missionary Baptist Church at 1060 32nd Street, Emeryville. All blood donors at this event will receive an "Our Blood Saves Lives" T-shirt.



## **Saving Lives at a Blood Drive Near You**

Save lives by donating blood at one of these community-sponsored blood drives or at any of our [center locations](#):

1) Khadafy Washington Foundation for Non-Violence

Thursday, July 7, 2011

10am- 3pm

Oakland City Hall – Frank Ogawa Plaza

Location: Bloodmobile in front of Oakland Police Department Recruiting Unit @ 250 Frank Ogawa Plaza, Suite D, Oakland, 94612

For Appointments [Click HERE](#)

2) North Oakland Missionary Baptist Church, 1060 32nd Street, Emeryville, 94608

Saturday, July 23, 2011

1pm- 5pm

Bloodmobile in front of church

For Appointments [Click HERE](#)

3) Bay Area Black Expo

Saturday, July 23, 2011

11am- 4pm

Oracle Arena – Oakland Coliseum Complex

Location: Bloodmobile in front of entrance to Oracle Arena @ 7000 Coliseum Way Oakland, 94623

For Appointments [Click HERE](#)

4) Bay Area Black Expo

Sunday, July 24, 2011

11am- 4pm

Oracle Arena – Oakland Coliseum Complex

Location: Bloodmobile in front of entrance to Oracle Arena @ 7000 Coliseum Way Oakland, 94623

For Appointments [Click HERE](#)

5) Oakland Community Drive

Monday, July 25, 2011

2pm- 7pm

Children's Hospital Oakland

Location: Bloodmobile on 52nd Street next to Outpatient Hospital, Oakland, 94609

For Appointments [Click HERE](#)

6) Queen's Louisiana Po - Boy Café, 3030 San Bruno Avenue, San Francisco, 94134

Monday, July 25, 2011

1pm- 6pm

Bloodmobile in front of restaurant

For Appointments [Click HERE](#)



**Donate Blood. Save Lives. | 1-888-393-GIVE | [www.bloodcenters.org](http://www.bloodcenters.org)**