We are in the midst of one of the most important moments in the history of Atlanta and Fulton County: the unprecedented widespread transfer of political power that will re-shape the future of this region for years to come.

Discerning citizens have had a chance over an extensive election season to determine their choices for mayor, members of city council, school board and county commissioner. They have been able to carefully monitor the candidates as they declared where they stood on the issues in debates, speeches, public appearances and media sound bites. Prior to casting their ballots, responsible voters have heard their positions on issues that affect them, including civilian oversight of law enforcement. We hope citizens keep a watchful eye on those newly elected officials, make sure that they fulfill their campaign promises and do more than spend their time gearing up for the next election cycle.

It is our expectation that those in office, be they newbies or incumbents, will not only respect and appreciate their office and the will of the voters who put them where they are, but also the progress that has been made by the ACRB to improve relations between citizens and sworn local officers by offering our various services free of charge, 24/7.

Ideally, years from now, as we look back and assess the 2017 elections, we would like to see the decisions that were made this fall create a sense of unity and civility in our communities, resulting in safer streets and better relationships between citizens and those sworn to protect them. Given the many challenges we face as a city, we citizens must all roll up our sleeves and get back to work!

So remember, if you ever have a question about the agency and/or a complaint about an Atlanta police or corrections officers’ action, contact the ACRB at 404-865-8622. Email us at acrb@atlantaga.gov. Visit our website at www.acrbgov.org. ACRB is here to serve you!

Throughout the summer and into the fall of 2017, ACRB has been meeting twice a week with sworn officers of the APD to address any and all questions or concerns they may have about the ACRB Mediation Program. The free service gives citizens a chance to sit with an officer in a neutral and supportive environment before a professional and impartial mediator to express concerns about an incident. ACRB Project Manager Myola Smith, who has met APD officers about mediation, says it has been well received. “Besides being able to relate to the citizen on a personal level and promote trust, the officers seem to appreciate...an opportunity to resolve a complaint much faster than a looming investigation which could potentially remain open for months...” Smith explained. APD Chief Erika Shields also approves. “The Atlanta Citizen Review Board’s Mediation Program provides a good opportunity before an impartial audience for both officers and citizens to work out complaints in a timely manner. The process ensures citizen complaints will be heard and also creates a vital communication channel to ensure that there is open dialogue between the police and the public, allowing us to continue building bridges of trust and positive relationships.”
ACRB ON THE MOVE: Summer Festivals, Block Parties, Contests & Reading Programs

Clockwise from upper left: Summer Reading Kickoff at the MLK Library Branch, Outdoor Block Party at the Buckhead Library Branch, the 3rd Annual Legal AID event on the Atlanta University Center Promenade, Praise in the Park 2017 at Lakewood Amphitheatre, Media Day for 2017 ACRB ART & ESSAY CONTEST, Greenbriar Mall.
Your Story: “When I think of ACRB...”

“The Board did a pretty good job dealing with my complaint....”

Michael Styles was a tax collector at the Fulton County Government Center on Pryor Street in Downtown Atlanta. He was in the back of the building on his lunchbreak on the afternoon of July 8, 2015 when he noticed a number of sworn officers from the Atlanta Police Department (APD) converging upon a storefront directly across the street from where he was sitting.

Styles, an Atlanta native and a married father of four children, had always found it “rather strange” that a spot that had a reputation among observers for drug activity would be located so close to a local police precinct and major buildings that are headquarters for law and justice for the city, county, state and federal governments.

“As I finished my lunch on my lunch break...across the street, there’s a storefront there. Some police officers pulled up...like something was going on,” said Styles. It was at this point that an officer crossed the street and approached him.

“The officer, he approached me and told me to lift up my foot. I was actually on the phone at the time, so it kind of caught me by surprise,” the former Army Sergeant explained.”

“And I lift my foot up, and when I lift my foot up then he grabbed my pants leg. After that, he just walked off. A couple of my co-workers that were sitting there, they were like ‘What was that about?’”

The unusual incident sparked a bunch of questions in his mind also. Styles wanted to know from the officer why he was the only one searched among his co-workers and what prompted the officer to approach him in the first place. “Of all the people that were sitting there, he comes for me as if I was a part of what was going on across the street...I’m actually at work with my work badge...

I don’t know what the whole situation was with that, but they made an arrest. And I asked the officer what was going on, you know, like why did he come across the street. He really didn’t say nothing then, he just said ‘You lifted your foot up and you complied.’”

Styles asked for and received the officer’s badge number and went back to work. But the incident bothered him so much that Styles decided to file a formal complaint about it with ACRB against Atlanta Police Officer Sherrick Morrison. Styles claimed that he was unlawfully detained when Officer Morrison ordered him to lift up his leg, grabbed his pants leg and looked under his foot.

When ACRB finished its investigation and adjudication of the case, it stated in a complaint letter to then Chief George Turner that “The Board determined that the false imprisonment allegation against Officer Morrison be assigned a finding of sustained and recommends that he receive a Written Reprimand as penalty.”

Chief Turner, following an APD investigation, rejected the ACRB recommendation. “The Office of Professional Standards has concluded its investigation and it has determined from evidence to not sustain Officer Sherrick Mor-

rison for the Atlanta Police Department work rule 4.1.1 Appropriate Action Required.”

Nevertheless, “I think the Board did a pretty good job dealing with my complaint, you know, as far as the whole situation was concerned. I mean, I really didn’t know what else to expect from this because it was the first time something like this happened to me like that,” Styles explained. “From an innocent standpoint...I think the situation could have been handled better.”

Styles has a theory that he was singled out because he was the youngest looking person in his lunch crowd that day. So as he observes more young people working at the Fulton County Government Center and other downtown government buildings, “I think it (his complaint to ACRB) might be something that will help in the future just in case they run into that situation...especially with that same officer.”

FLOURNOY HOOKS JR. ARTWORK IS CENTER OF ATTENTION AT THE ACRB ART & ESSAY CONTEST

Out of hundreds of entries, Flournoy Hooks, Jr. holds the distinction of being the oldest citizen ever to participate in the ACRB Art & Essay Contest.

This year’s contestants had to create works based on the theme, “How to bring police and citizens together.” Although Mr. Hooks’ painting was not chosen by the judges, it became the centerpiece of the entire exhibition at Atlanta City Hall’s Old Council Chamber as the winners were chosen. Clearly, the contest for the 77 historic photo taken of the first eight African American officers of the Atlanta Police Department.

According to historyatlanta.com, “Throughout the 1940’s the African American community in Atlanta made advancements through leveraging their voting power, increased public protest and high-level negotiations. By 1948, seeking reelection and needing votes, Atlanta Mayor William B. Hartsfield consented to African American leaders a historic demand. In re-

turn for hiring eight African American police officers, these leaders promised Mayor Hartsfield their neighborhoods and their voting blocs.” They were initially only allowed to work in mostly Black Atlanta communities.

Clearly, of all the many works of art created by Flournoy Hooks, Jr. this one is especially meaningful to him.

(Continued on page 4)
KNOW YOUR RIGHTS AND BE HEARD!

ATLANTA CITIZEN REVIEW BOARD

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The keyword in the Atlanta Citizen Review Board is CITIZEN. The agency is only as effective as the level of Citizen involvement. This is why ACRB urges all Citizens to regularly monitor, question and support its work. This is why ACRB urges all Citizens to know where your elected officials stand on civilian oversight of police and corrections. This is why it is so important for Citizens to be registered and vote. This is why Citizens need to join and be active in community groups. Get involved in Neighborhood Planning Units (NPUs). Attend Public Safety meetings, Atlanta City Council meetings and KNOW YOUR RIGHTS TRAINING WORKSHOPS. Become a member of the ACRB Board. Currently there are two vacancies. Contact ACRB for details. Be an ACRB Volunteer through our Community Outreach Volunteer Ambassador Program (COVAP). Fill the chambers to capacity when Council votes to fund issues that matter to Citizens like you. Thank you, Citizens of Atlanta, for your continued support.

Welcome Kabral Brathwaite to the Staff of ACRB

Kabral Brathwaite was born and raised on the twin islands of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago where upon his high school graduation he migrated to the USA. Shortly thereafter, he enlisted in the United States Marine Corps where he was attached to a Marine Airwing Squadron and deployed both nationally as a recruiter assistant and internationally to Northern Italy in support of a NATO led mission for the former Yugoslavia.

Kabral Brathwaite is the newest addition to the ACRB family. Brathwaite, a Senior Investigator, joined the ACRB in August of 2017.

Kabral Brathwaite earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Criminal Justice from Georgia State University, an internship with the Fulton County solicitor’s office CID division and later was certified by the Georgia Peace Officer Standards and Training Council (POST) as a peace officer, field training officer and a classroom instructor.

Kabral has also worked in the retail sector for a major retailer where he developed multi-store loss prevention and lead detective experience.

Kabral Brathwaite indicated he is eager to help inform the many citizens who are still unaware about ACRB. “I’m looking forward to getting out into the community and really allowing them to see the services that we offer, and get their side of it...be able to take what they give us and provide them with a service that I feel like is lacking when it comes to (civilian) oversight in law enforcement.”

FLOURNOY HOOKS JR. COMBINES HISTORY AND FAMILY AT THE ACRB ART & ESSAY CONTEST

(Continued from page 3)
One of the first eight Black APD officers was Henry Hudson Hooks, Jr., the uncle of the artist.

What does the artist recall about his father’s brother? “He was a good uncle, I liked him very much... We were close.”

He said Henry Hudson Hooks, Jr. also earned the reputation of being the best dressed, in and out of uniform. Colors of everything had to match, from hats to shoes. “Oh, he was sharp,” said Hooks.

Henry Hudson Hooks, Jr. was pensioned from City of Atlanta after 30 years of continuous service, having been among the first to bring citizens and local law enforcement together.