

Christy F. Clark — I Hope You Dance!!

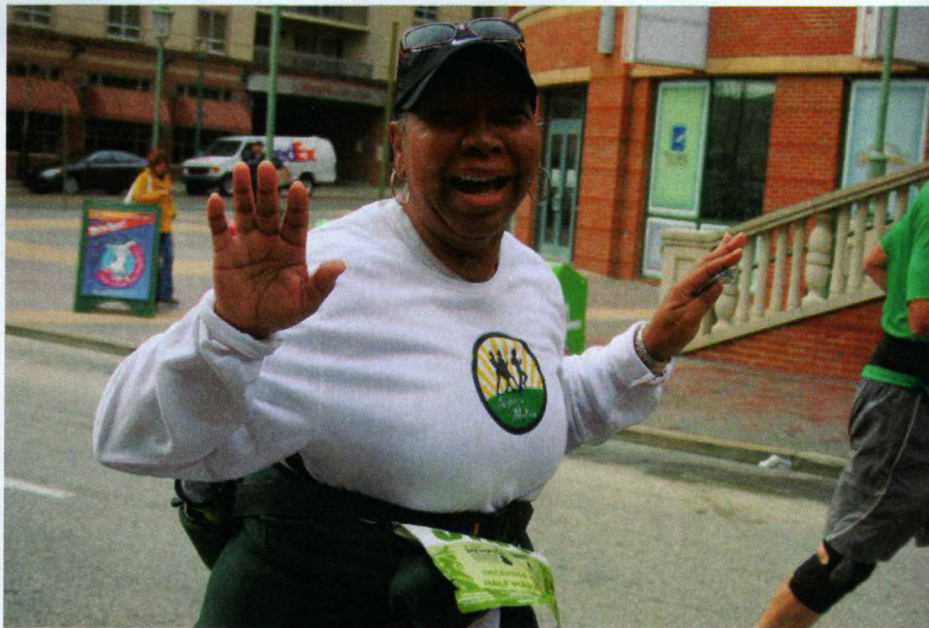
WHEN CHRISTY F. CLARK FIRST HEARD GLADYS KNIGHT SING "I HOPE YOU DANCE" IN THE TYLER PERRY'S MOVIE "THE FAMILY PREYS" IT REMINDED HER THAT WE SHOULD LIVE LIFE WITH VIGOR. As friends and relatives know, Clark has always lived life vigorously – it must be part of her DNA. She has led a full, active and productive life in advancing her career, pursuing higher education, serving her community and church, traveling to places in all parts of the world and, all the while, maintaining her physical well-being.

So, needless to say, a stroke was never an option on her busy agenda. But, on July 22, 2009, that is exactly what happened!!

In digression, Clark was born in Memphis, TN, the only girl with four (4) brothers. She has a Bachelor of Science degree in mathematics from LeMoyné Owen College and master's and doctoral coursework from the University of Memphis. Her career path demonstrates her abilities and skills starting with the Memphis City Schools as a teacher and guidance counselor and finally, transferring to the U. S. Postal Service where she moved up the ladder to top management in the Equal Employment Opportunity Southeast Area Office. After retirement, she became a Human Resources Consultant with CFC Enterprises, writing final agency decisions for several Federal agencies.

Her professional and civic activities are numerous and include membership in Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority; Memphis Chapter of the Links, Inc; National Association of Female Executives; and, Coalition of 100 Black Women (V.P). She is a graduate of Leadership of Memphis and has served in leadership positions on several boards of directors including, Habitat for Humanity of Greater Memphis; Meritan; Bethany Maternity Home; and Generations, Inc. (to name a few). She is active in her church, Mississippi Blvd Christian Church, where she is the immediate past Chairman of the Worship Commission, and serves on the Multi-Media Team Ministry and the Manna Outreach Ministry. Her honors and awards are too many to list.

The previous enumeration of her accomplishments and activities confirms how busy and energetic Clark has been, but none prohibited her from taking care of her own physical well-being. She exercises religiously and is a member of Sisters in Motion, Memphis



A Photographer takes a picture of Christy Clark during one of her recent 5k races.

and regularly works out at the YMCA with trainer Andrew Knight and other programs that help women become healthy through regular exercise. She participates in 5K races to benefit local and national charities.

Clark loves to travel and her favorite places are New York, NY; Ghana, Africa; and, the Holy Land. She has visited five continents and Australia is on her "bucket list." In fact, on July 22, 2009, before traveling to participate in the Jamaica Reggae marathon, she stopped by the hospital to get the required checkup and doing her examination, she had the stroke!! By the time they got her in a hospital room, she was paralyzed in her right hand and could not talk.

The doctor diagnosed the stroke as a carotid artery blockage in the neck. Amazingly, she had mostly recovered in six weeks, and was able to participate in the Dee Griffin Sunset 5K run on August 21, 2009. Even more amazing, she was able to participate in the Jamaica Reggae 10K. 6.2 mile run in December 3, 2009. Recently she completed the St. Jude half-marathon race. However, during a 14 month period that ended October, she received therapy to correct her speech. Clark was surprised when her Sisters In

Motion showered her with confetti at the end of one of her races. Clark's four brothers and their wives (Alvin (Joyce), Joel (Rita), Anthony and Keith, hosted a party and invited her friends to celebrate her remarkable recovery.

When asked who has inspired her most, she says, My parents, without a doubt! I could not have asked for, prayed for, or chosen better parents. They modeled honesty, integrity, and humility; and my daddy was big, big, big on moral character." Her faith in God has sustained her and her favorite bible verse comes from Ephesians 3.20, "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think,

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according to the power that worketh in us." Inspirational quotes that she lives by come from Life's Little Instruction Book, "Don't postpone joy," and, "Live your life as an exclamation, not an explanation."

But, during this crisis in her life, she is mostly reminded of the song "I Hope You Dance, especially the part that says ..." "Promise me you'll give faith a fighting chance and when you get the choice to sit it out or dance – I Hope You Dance, I Hope You Dance." **G**