

From the Desk of the Inspector General

Fall 2025

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What's in a Name

My predecessor and dear friend Ellen Ha did an article in this newsletter a couple of years ago concerning her choice of name and identity. I knew then that if ever I had the opportunity and this platform, I would tell a similar tale, but from a different perspective. Her article can be found in the Summer 2022 Edition on our website.

So here goes my story: I was born and raised as David Jerome Marable. My Kentucky-born mother named my 6 brothers and sisters who preceded me, as she did with me. I was the youngest. From my recollection, her inspiration was King David of the Bible, however,

I don't recall the reasoning for my middle name, Jerome. So I carried this name through my childhood, adolescence, and early adulthood. I was fine with my name, it wasn't a Jr. or a 3rd, but David Jerome Marable rhymed reasonably well, was easy to pronounce, and gave me decent initials (DJM). So what motivated me to go from David Jerome to Kamau Chicha-Olusola, a difficult name to spell correctly, challenging to pronounce properly, but with still decent initials (KCM)?

Like Ellen, my naming decision originated while attending the University of Michigan. My parents did not possess the knowledge to educate me on African or African American history, and Detroit Public Schools only provided the most rudimentary information mainly focused on slavery and civil rights. However, I became involved in African American history and culture in and out of classes at Michigan. This provided me with a perspective I had never been exposed to. Although my personal origins were in Detroit, I was connected to the African Diaspora and to Africa. I was still an American, but one whose ancestors were African, therefore inheriting their culture and history. Because of the evils of chattel slavery and colonialism, I can not say from where exactly in Africa, but I am an African. I spent the first 20 years of my life without that realization, so I never wanted to forget it again. So I made the faithful decision to change my name to one of African origin in honor of my heritage.

I didn't make the decision lightly. I knew it would impact those who knew me my entire life as David. After months of prayer, reflection, and research, my new name revealed itself. I would become Kamau of Kikuyu (Kenya) origin. It means "quiet warrior". My middle names would be ChiCha, of West African origin, meaning beloved, and Olusola, of Yoruba (Nigeria) origin, meaning blessed by God. My hyphenated middle name is by my father's request. He and my mother accepted and supported my name change, but he solemnly asked that I keep his last name and I agreed. Since my name change became legal I have never once regretted the decision and to this day proudly carry the name Kamau Chicha-Olusola Marable. Every time I hear my name, say my name, or write my name, I remember who I am.



**Inspector General
Kamau C. Marable**





GOOD GOVERNMENT

Committed to Honesty and Integrity in City Government

Kasha Graves - Editor-in-Chief

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

By: Beverly Murray

MEET...LAKITA



Lakita Phoeson

Just the basics.

I am originally from Cleveland. I went to school in Ohio as well, undergraduate, then moved to Memphis, Tennessee where I met my first husband. From there I moved to Atlanta, and I stayed there pretty much the rest of my adult life. I am married with four boys; three boys and a stepson that I call my own son. They're all grown, thank goodness. So, I am a new empty nester and that's been challenging, just being in the house by myself. I also have a new grandbaby. Well, he isn't new anymore. He's about to turn two.

What brought you to Detroit?

I kind of got to a point in my career, after my kids were grown, where I wanted to get out of public accounting and get out of doing financial statements and taxes. I wanted to get into forensic work. So, I started carving out what that looked like. I received my CFE and then I started looking for opportunities to do forensic work, wherever I could go to do that type of work and just prayed about my direction. So, Detroit wasn't on my radar, but it had a job that I wanted to do, and I was just willing to go wherever the job was. I was successful in getting the position, so Detroit was it. And so that's kind of what brought me here. It's been great, honestly. The people have been nice, very nice and welcoming.



Lakita's three sons

You are new to our office. So, what are some things about our office that you enjoy?

I would say that I love the team. I absolutely love the fact that everybody is smart. I know that might seem really crazy, but I have not always worked with smart people. Everybody is very knowledgeable and they're helpful. Nobody is hoarding information. So, I love the staff, which is definitely the best part of the job from management on down to the ladies at the front desk.

What's something surprising that not many people know about you?

I would say my love for God. A lot of people do not know that about me. I am a fierce prayer warrior. I pray a lot. I'm definitely locked in on my spirit side and, a lot of people don't know that about me because I don't really talk about it a lot. I do have a rough edge to me. So, most people see that. People who have known me for a long time, they have definitely seen many sides to me, I would say. So, you got to be really close to me to know that I pray a lot and I definitely depend on my guidance from God a lot.

What is your favorite movie?

Favorite movie, I would say *The Burial* is at the top of my list right now as my new favorite movie. *The Burial* is about an unlikely lawyer that ended up taking a case he really didn't want, and didn't think that he was the right person for the case. I think Tommy Lee Jones

and Jamie Fox were in the movie and it was just really good. It was inspiring for me because I kind of always wanted to be a lawyer. So to see Jamie Fox um kind of operating in that when he didn't really set out to be a lawyer either; life circumstances kind of drove him into that and he ended up being a great lawyer. He took on monumental cases and it was based on a true story. So it was very inspiring to me and so that's kind of on the forefront of my favorites list right now.



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DON'T GET TAKEN... SMISHING VISHING

By: Jennifer Bentley



Smishing is the fraudulent practice of sending text messages pretending to be from reputable companies in order to convince individuals to reveal personal information, such as passwords or credit card numbers.

Vishing occurs when the fraudster calls the victim saying they are from their bank or another institution and informs them that there is a problem with their account or credit card. The false alert may also arrive by SMS. The victims are then asked to call a toll-free number to resolve the issue. When they call the number, they are prompted to enter personal information using the phone's keypad.

Red flags of these schemes include the following:

-  **Unexpected calls.**
-  **Pressure tactics where the person is trying to force a quick decision.**
-  **Generic greetings that say things like "Dear Customer."**
-  If a caller provides a number for you to call back to verify your information, don't call it without verifying the number is real. Look up the official contact information on the company's website- but don't use any links provided in the text to take you to the website.
-  Beware of a request for unusual payment such as gift cards or cryptocurrencies. Legitimate companies will always have standard payment options.
-  Bad script or dialogue are a sign of a scam. Legitimate companies typically use clearly scripted language for customer service interactions.
-  Ask the caller to verify information that the organization should already have such as the type of services they are providing for you.
-  If you receive a call shortly after receiving a two-step verification request that you didn't initiate, this may be someone trying to access your account.

You should report all suspicious contact to the Federal Trade Commission by going to www.reportfraud.ftc.gov.

[INTHEMEDIA]

Famously Frauded: Raining Fraud on Your Wedding Day...Or Something Like That

By: Tiye Greene



Pop-rock legend Alanis Morissette, best known for teaching a generation that irony is not rain on your wedding day, found herself in an actual textbook case of financial irony: her business manager turned her finances into a one-man fraud factory.

Jonathan Todd Schwartz, a CPA at a celebrity management firm, was supposed to safeguard Morissette's millions. Instead, he committed a brazen embezzlement and wire fraud scheme, siphoning off about \$4.8 million from her accounts and disguising the theft as "personal expenses." When pressed for an explanation, Schwartz invented a story that the money went toward illegal marijuana investments. Not so surprising plot twist: It didn't. The money actually went toward his own lavish vacations and expensive personal items.

Federal prosecutors revealed that from 2010 to 2014, Schwartz defrauded multiple celebrity clients, stealing a total of about \$7.2 million from Morissette and others, falsifying tax returns, and concealing income. He eventually pleaded guilty to wire fraud and filing false tax returns, earning himself 6 years in federal prison. In addition, he must pay roughly \$8.6 million in restitution.

Forensic accountants later noted that Schwartz's fraud succeeded for years for two reasons: access and trust. He controlled Morissette's accounts, issued checks, and provided financial reports that looked polished enough to avoid suspicion. It was a classic case of occupational fraud—inside access abused for personal gain. Morissette said the betrayal hit her harder than a breakup song. "It wasn't just about the money," she explained. "It was about trust, transparency, and the cost of misplaced confidence."

Out of this financial fumble came a hard-earned lesson: oversight, oversight, OVERSIGHT! Experts say that celebrities (and really, everyone) should review their statements personally, and insist on third-party audits, regular account reviews, and personal signoffs for large transactions. Or, in musician's terms: check your instruments, tune them frequently, and don't let anyone hold your mic without supervision.

For more on this story and other stories about financial managers defrauding their famous clients, check out the Oh My Fraud Podcast available on numerous platforms including YouTube, Spotify, and iHeartRadio.

<https://youtu.be/v5RUm5sPF5c?si=meGBorSlu0jLPP7J>



Kasha Graves - Editor-in-Chief



If you are a Detroit resident, City of Detroit employee, contractor, or are considering doing business with the City, the Office of Inspector General will be conducting employee training as well as community events throughout Detroit. We will present information including what we do, who we investigate, and how to submit a complaint. This is an opportunity for you to ask questions and address concerns involving fraud, waste, abuse, and corruption within the City of Detroit.

Previous OIG Community Outreach Events:

Saturday, September 27, 2025 - Gratiot Findlay Neighborhood Association, Franklin Detroit Library, 13651 E McNichols Rd, Detroit, MI 48205

Wednesday, October 8, 2025 - City of Detroit Employee Resource Fair, 8431 Rosa Parks Blvd, Detroit, MI 48206

OIG Upcoming Community Outreach Events:

Thursday, November 20, 2025 - Virginia Park Estates Homeowners Association Block Club, Joseph Walker Williams Recreation Center, 8431 Rosa Parks Blvd, Detroit, MI 48206

If you would like to schedule an event for your department or community group, contact us during regular business hours at 313-628-2517. We look forward to meeting you!

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