

AROUND TOWN

The Downtown Cafe Hosts A Book Signing For Glen Cove Native

Shanequa Levin is an award-winning leader, who in her role as a public speaker shares her own powerful story about surviving childhood poverty and breaking generational cycles to inspire others to take actions that create change. Levin recently held her first book signing in her hometown at the Downtown Cafe in Glen Cove, for her memoir *Poverty's Phoenix*.

Poverty's Phoenix is the searing account of one child's struggle and how she summoned the courage to break the generational cycle of life in poverty. In this gripping memoir, Levin offers an inside look at the plight of a teen mother and how that child's child perceived the world.

Through young Levin's eyes, we see what it's like growing up with drug-addicted parents; we experience the trauma of having a father who was incarcerated for much of her life and a teen mother who is a product of her environment; and we feel Levin's pain as she learns that she is poor and what that means for her family. Levin gives a voice to children who were born into poverty and face its wrath on a daily basis. Each chapter depicts a jarring experience that helped shaped this

present-day community leader's life. This memoir is a testament to a mother's love, survival, and what it's like to be black and poor living on the Gold Coast of Long Island in the 1980s.

More than 40 people came out to get a copy of the memoir signed by Levin who resides on Long Island, with her husband and two children. Levin grew up in Glen Cove and went through the Glen Cove public school system. She is the founder and CEO of the Women's Diversity Network (WDN), a nonprofit organization that connects and mobilizes women of different backgrounds to create positive change through a more unified sisterhood. Through grassroots advocacy on Long Island, she played a part in helping the New York Paid Family Leave Insurance campaign get its law passed and worked to raise public awareness for the Raise the Age Campaign, which advocates raising the age of criminal responsibility in New York.

"Amazing afternoon at Shanequa's book signing," Christene Keller, an attendee at the book signing said. "Impactful chapter read from *Poverty's Phoenix* of what life was like from a child's perspective. Trauma caused by both family issues and social stigma related to teen pregnancy, poverty, addiction



The Downtown Cafe in Glen Cove recently held a book signing for author and Glen Cove native, Shanequa Levin. (Photo courtesy of Shanequa Levin)

and other challenges are balanced with love, strength and hope. Thank you for sharing your experiences to help others, Shanequa."

Participants left feeling like there was hope for children

raised in poverty to break generational cycles of negativity. *Poverty's Phoenix* is on sale on Amazon and at Barnes & Noble.

—Submitted by
Shanequa Levin

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