BIO CHERYL WILLS—JANUARY 2016

Cheryl Wills is an anchor and senior reporter for Time Warner Cable’s Flagship national news network New York One News. She joined the cable news network during its launch in 1992. Cheryl is the only journalist in the nearly 25-year history of her television network to conduct a one-on-one interview with a sitting President: Nobel Laureate Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia. The first woman President of Africa exclusively told Cheryl Wills about her administration’s controversial handling of the recent Ebola Epidemic. She also conducted an exclusive sit-down interview with United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon.

The award-winning journalist is the author of “Die Free: A Heroic Family Tale.” The acclaimed biography is about her great-great-great grandfather Sandy Wills’ extraordinary transformation from a Tennessee slave into a courageous Civil War Soldier – who honorably served with the United States Colored Troops from 1863-1865. Her second book is an illustrated children’s version of her biography called “The Emancipation of Grandpa Sandy Wills.”

As a busy anchor and correspondent, Cheryl Wills has traveled extensively, covering breaking news events. She has reported from The White House and other headline making interviews include Maya Angelou, Harry Belafonte and top tier fashion designers including Betsey Johnson and Carmen Marc Valvo. She has been a reliable guide during major breaking news events from The Terrorist attacks of September 11th, where she reported from ground zero and she has moderated televised discussions about the historic Presidency of Barack Obama. Along the way, Cheryl has picked up awards from The New York Press Club, Newswomen’s Club of NY Front Page Award, The Associated Press and The United Nations Foundation Prize for Broadcasting which UN Secretary General Ban ki-moon personally presented a medal to her in 2015 at the United Nations Correspondents Association gala.

Cheryl has also received The YMCA National Black Achievers in Industry Award, The Carl T. Rowan Leadership in Media Award and in 2010, McDonald’s honored her as a broadcasting legend and in 2015 McDonald’s again honored her with their first ever “Harold Dow Lifetime Achievement Award” in recognition of extraordinary and unparalleled contributions to broadcast media. In recognition of her career, she received an Honorary Doctorate from New York College of Health Professions in May of 2005.
As an acclaimed author, Cheryl Wills was the first journalist invited to speak before the General Assembly of The United Nations in March of 2011 about the impact of slavery on her family during the UN’s International Remembrance of Victims of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. A frequent speaker, moderator and host at The U.N., Cheryl has led events with the UN Secretary General and U.S. Ambassador David Dunn. Cheryl also takes great pride in being the Founder and Commander of The New York State Chapter of the Sons & Daughters of the United States Colored Troops – a national organization based in Washington D.C. With that platform, she enjoys teaching students of all ages about the contributions of the 200,000 black soldiers who valiantly fought during The Civil War.

With more than two decades on the air, Cheryl is often invited to perform cameos in major films and television shows. Her film credits include Spiderman 2, The Brave One with Jodie Foster and Terrance Howard, Freedomland starring Samuel Jackson, Ghostbusters and many others. Her television credits include “Limitless” on CBS, The Strain on FX TV, The Preachers of LA on Oxygen, Law & Order: Special Victims Unit on NBC and The Golden Boy on CBS.

Cheryl Wills is a graduate of the Newhouse School of Public Communications at Syracuse University where she majored in Broadcast Journalism. She is a member of The New York Association of Black Journalists, The New York Press Club, The Inner Circle of City Hall Journalists, The Screen Actors Guild, The Links and The Women’s Forum.

In addition to her Civil War roots, Cheryl’s father, Clarence Wills, served as a paratrooper during The Vietnam era and was among the first wave of black firefighters to integrate the oldest engine company in New York – Engine 1, Ladder 24.