

Haile Thomas

Youth Health Advocate, Motivational Speaker, Jr. Chef
 Founder and Executive Director, The HAPPY Organization, Inc.

Tucson, Arizona



Haile Thomas proves that having a passion for health and nutrition doesn't have an age restriction. At 15 years old, Thomas already is one of the most influential youth health advocates in the country. She is an executive director, a sought-after speaker and an intern at Canyon Ranch Institute. She's been on countless television shows and even introduced First Lady Michelle Obama at the 2013 Kids State Dinner at the White House.

And it all started when she was only 8 years old. That's when her father was diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes. "My family was shocked. Together, we began to research ways to improve his health," Thomas said. "We quickly saw how eating healthful food and limiting processed food could affect health and wellness. Over time, my dad was able to reverse his condition."

During her research, Thomas was surprised to learn that youth are affected by nutrition-related diseases such as diabetes and heart disease. "I realized I could have ended up with a health condition if we hadn't turned around our lives. I didn't think a lot of kids knew about this, and I wanted to do something about it."

With her mother's help, Thomas applied and in 2010 was accepted onto the Youth Advisory Board of the Clinton Foundation's Alliance for a Healthier Generation. This gave her a national platform to speak about youth health and nutrition.

The experience inspired Thomas to start The HAPPY Organization, Inc. in 2012. HAPPY stands for Healthy Active Positive Purposeful Youth.

The organization provides healthful programs for young people in Tucson, Arizona's, underserved communities. It offers HAPPY Chefs cooking classes and summer camp, the HAPPY to Play fitness program, and HAPPY to Serve community service projects.

Through HAPPY, Thomas has helped or educated more than 5,000 youth. "We teach kids that it's up to them to make healthful food taste good. We want them to get creative; to get into the kitchen; and see that healthful food can be easy, nutritious and tasty," Thomas said. "As a community, we have to become educated together. That's what worked in our family. If my dad had tried to change his habits on his own, he would not have been successful. It happened because we all worked together."



BBQ Jackfruit Sloppy Joe Sandwich with Apple Slaw

This healthy take on the Sloppy Joe sandwich replaces meat with jackfruit for a unique yet satisfying comfort meal.

For recipe, visit AAHCalendar.com/recipes/september.



September 2016

"We teach kids that it's up to them to make healthful food taste good. We want them to get creative; to get into the kitchen; and see that healthful food can be easy, nutritious, and tasty."

– Haile Thomas

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|--|
| | | | | 1 1993: Condoleezza Rice named provost at Stanford University, becoming the youngest person and first African American to hold this position. | 2 1958: Frederick M. Jones patents control device for internal combustion engine. | 3 1979: Robert Maynard becomes first African American to head a major daily newspaper, <i>Oakland Tribune</i> , in California. |
| 4 1957: Arkansas Governor Orval Faubus calls out the National Guard to bar black students from entering a Little Rock high school. | 5 1960: Leopold Sedar Senghor, poet and politician, elected president of Senegal. Labor Day | 6 1848: Frederick Douglass elected president of National Black Political Convention in Cleveland, Ohio. | 7 1954: Washington, D.C., and Baltimore, Maryland, public schools integrated. | 8 1981: Roy Wilkins, executive director of the NAACP, dies. | 9 1968: Arthur Ashe, Jr. wins men's singles tennis championship at U.S. Open. | 10 1855: John Mercer Langston elected township clerk of Brownhelm, Ohio, becoming first African American to hold elective office in the U.S. |
| 11 1959: Edward Kennedy "Duke" Ellington wins Spingarn Medal for his achievements in music. | 12 1992: Dr. Mae C. Jemison becomes first African American woman to travel in space. | 13 1886: Literary critic Alain Locke, first black Rhodes Scholar, born. | 14 1921: Constance Baker Motley, first black woman appointed federal judge, born. | 15 1963: Four black girls killed in Birmingham, Alabama, church bombing. | 16 1923: First Catholic seminary for black priests dedicated in Bay St. Louis, Mississippi. | 17 1983: Vanessa Williams becomes first African American crowned Miss America. |
| 18 2015: Willie Mae Seaton, legendary chef and recipient of the James Beard America's Classic Award, dies. | 19 1893: Albert R. Robinson patents electric railway trolley. | 20 2015: Viola Davis becomes first African American to win an Emmy for Best Actress in Drama. | 21 1998: Florence Griffith Joyner, Olympic track star, dies. | 22 1862: Emancipation Proclamation announced. | 23 1863: Civil and women's rights advocate Mary Church Terrell born. | 24 1957: Federal troops enforce court-ordered integrations as nine children integrate Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas. |
| 25 1974: Barbara W. Hancock becomes first African American woman named a White House fellow. | 26 1962: Sonny Liston knocks out Floyd Patterson to win heavyweight boxing championship. | 27 1912: W.C. Handy publishes <i>Memphis Blues</i> . | 28 1991: National Civil Rights Museum opens in Memphis, Tennessee. | 29 1910: National Urban League established in New York City. | 30 1962: James Meredith enrolls as first black student at University of Mississippi. | |



Joseph Lee patented the bread-crumbling machine in the late 1800s, which automated the creation of breadcrumbs.⁹



Scan code to watch **Haile Thomas** video.