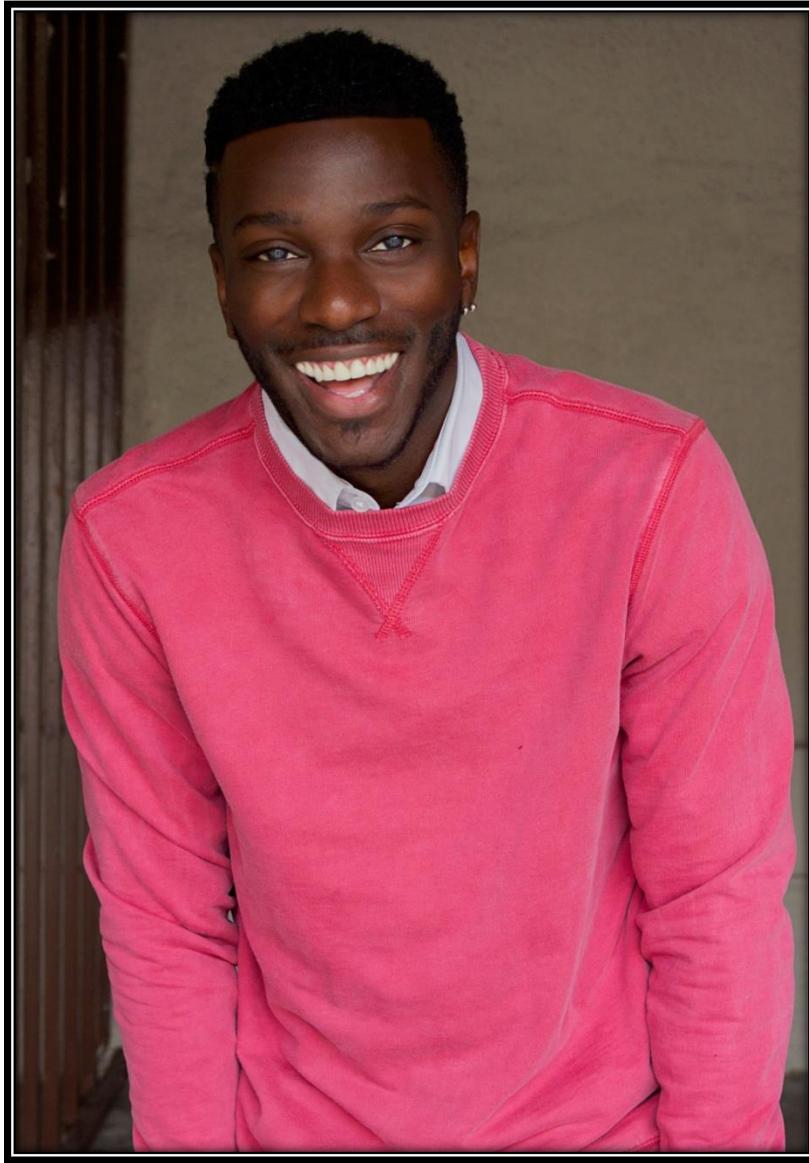




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## Bernard David Jones





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## Bernard David Jones Bio

Rising star Bernard David Jones had garnered many roles in the comedic TV world – perfected during his time spent at *CollegeHumor*, most recently starring on the primetime ABC comedy series *The Mayor*. The critically acclaimed show revolved around young rapper ‘Courtney Rose’ (Brandon Michael Hall), who toiled for years in a small inner-city apartment making his music while looking for his big break. Tired of waiting for opportunity, Courtney cooked up the publicity stunt of the century: Running for mayor of his hometown in California to generate buzz for his music career. Unfortunately for Courtney, his master plan goes wildly awry, ending in the most terrifying of outcomes: an election victory. With the help of his mother (*Community*’s Yvette Nicole Brown) and best friends ‘Jermaine Leforge’ (Bernard David Jones) and ‘T.K. Carter’ (Marcel Spears), as well a rival foe turned allied partner ‘Valentina’ (*Glee*’s Lea Michele), Courtney faced challenges to overcome his hubris to transform the struggling city he loves.

Born and raised in Paterson, NJ, Bernard David Jones realized, at a young age, that he was born for greatness. He started acting and singing in church, and he later joined a performing arts company. With this company, he traveled the USA sharing his gifts with everyone. Bernard attended high school at Rosa L. Parks School of Fine and Performing Arts. After graduating, he continued his education at Morehouse College in Atlanta, GA, where he joined KΑΨ Fraternity and received his B.A. in Theatre. While in college, Bernard was given the opportunity of a lifetime joining an international tour singing backgrounds for Grammy nominated singer Lyfe Jennings.

Bernard’s first professional show was at the Alliance Theatre in Atlanta where he played ‘Lil D’ in Andre 3000’s *Class of 3000*. From there he went on to play ‘Mushu’ in Disney’s stage production of *Mulan* and originated the role of ‘JB’ in *The Real Tweenagers of Atlanta* at the Alliance Theatre. Around this time, Bernard also started working in television, taking advantage of the booming Atlanta TV industry, appearing as ‘Milo’ on Tyler Perry’s *Meet The Browns* (TBS) and *House of Payne* (TBS). He has also appeared on *Single Ladies* (VH1) opposite Isiah Washington and Lisa Raye. After a nearly decade stint in Atlanta, Bernard made the move to his current location in Los Angeles, where he soon booked the feature film *THE LOOKALIKE*, opposite Justin Long, Jerry O’Connell and Gillian Jacobs. From there Bernard finetuned his comedic chops, joining forces with indie powerhouse *CollegeHumor* and starring in Refinery29’s YouTube series *Shitty Boyfriends* opposite Sandra Oh.

Bernard currently resides in Los Angeles where he has a penchant for fashion and is an accomplished photographer.

###

# THE WRAP

## The Mayor' Star Bernard David Jones Says the Series Is 'What Our Community Needs Right Now' (Video)

"If you see a chance to make a change, go ahead and do it," actor tells TheWrap



Although ABC's new series "The Mayor" has some parallels with the 2016 election, star Bernard David Jones says that the outcomes couldn't be any more different.

"They're completely different in the sense that as a result of the election, the people are coming together on our show," Jones told TheWrap. "The people are saying, 'Hey, you're different, we need you,' and that leader is saying, 'OK, I got you, so let's figure out how we can make all of your situations better.' And that's a person that has a heart for the people."

# THE WRAP

“The Mayor” starts off with aspiring rapper Courtney Rose (Brandon Micheal Hall) running for mayor of fictional Fort Grey, California. No one really thinks he’s serious about it — mostly because he isn’t. Rose doesn’t really want to be a political leader, but he’s putting himself in the spotlight to promote his musical career. In a twist, Rose actually ends up winning.

“I think it’s an intentional response to what our community needs right now,” said Jones, who plays one of Rose’s friends and cabinet members, Jermaine Leforge. “A show that shows a person who’s hopeful, a community that’s looking for unity and they have this figure, Courtney Rose, who comes in and says ‘OK, I don’t know what I’m doing, I don’t know what’s going on, but I have a heart for the people.’”

Although “The Mayor” is a political comedy, Jones hopes that audiences view the series with an open mind because of its nonpartisan take on the issues. The actor also wants viewers to take and make the best of opportunities that they might be given in their own lives.

“I hope that people in their own communities, whether you’re... going to be the treasurer of your school or you want to be head of the PTA, if you see a chance to make a change, go ahead and do it,” Jones said.

“The Mayor” airs Tuesdays on ABC at 9:30p.m.

<https://www.thewrap.com/the-mayor-star-bernard-david-jones-says-the-series-is-what-our-community-needs-right-now-video/>

###

# Los Angeles Times

## My Favorite Room: Bernard David Jones starts fresh with some secondhand finds



Bernard David Jones didn't need a lot of persuading to move from his home in Baldwin Hills to his new place in Koreatown — it reduced his commute by up to 45 minutes each way. (Photo: Jesse Goddard / Los Angeles Times)

**B**ernard David Jones didn't need a lot of persuading to move from his home in Baldwin Hills to his new place in Koreatown — it reduced his commute by up to 45 minutes each way.

“I sometimes have to be at work at 5 a.m.,” said the actor, who plays a political aide on the new ABC sitcom “The Mayor.” “Now I wake up, wash and can be on set in 15 minutes.”

Jones, 32, moved into the approximately 700-square-foot house in September and wasted no time furnishing it. The new construction had white walls and wood floors, which provided the canvas Jones needed to create an interior that would be “white, gold and crisp.”

## Los Angeles Times



The living room takes up most of the home and is where Jones focused the majority of his efforts, adding an L-shaped gray couch strewn with cushions; patterned rugs; and framed pictures taken by Jones, who is also a photographer. He shares the home with his 4-year-old Yorkie, Brodie.

### **Why is this your favorite room?**

It's where I spend a lot of my time, hanging out with Brodie. I like to just sit down and turn on CNN. Once my brain is fried from that, I watch Netflix, and then cartoons.



## Los Angeles Times

### How did you approach decorating it?

I left a lot of stuff behind. I wanted to start fresh. The first thing I got was the couch, because I knew it would take up the most space. I found it on Offer Up, but it was brand new. I sat on it, and it wasn't that comfortable, so I adorned it with pillows and it got comfortable.



### Did you work with a decorator?

It was me, and Pinterest. You can do anything with Pinterest.

### What were some of the ideas you had?

I knew I wanted gray and white, with gold accents. I didn't want a regular entertainment center, so I got these white cabinets and bookshelves from Ikea. I created a bar area using a bar cart from Target.

## Los Angeles Times



### **Where else did you pick things up from?**

I got a lot at Goodwill. I scoured a few of them to figure out what I wanted and to see what would work for the space. I found candles, vases, a heart statue, a floor lamp, things for \$2.99 or \$3.99.

### **Did your photography background help?**

Photography is about creating a mood in a snapshot, understanding composition, finding beauty in little things. I think because of it I have an eye for details.



## Los Angeles Times

### What of significance did you bring from your previous home?

I have a few plays on my bookshelf that were introduced to me in high school. I had an amazing drama teacher who introduced me to “Othello” and August Wilson. Those are the things that keep tagging along with me wherever I go.

<http://www.latimes.com/business/realestate/hot-property/la-fi-hp-my-favorite-room-bernard-david-jones-20171223-story.html>

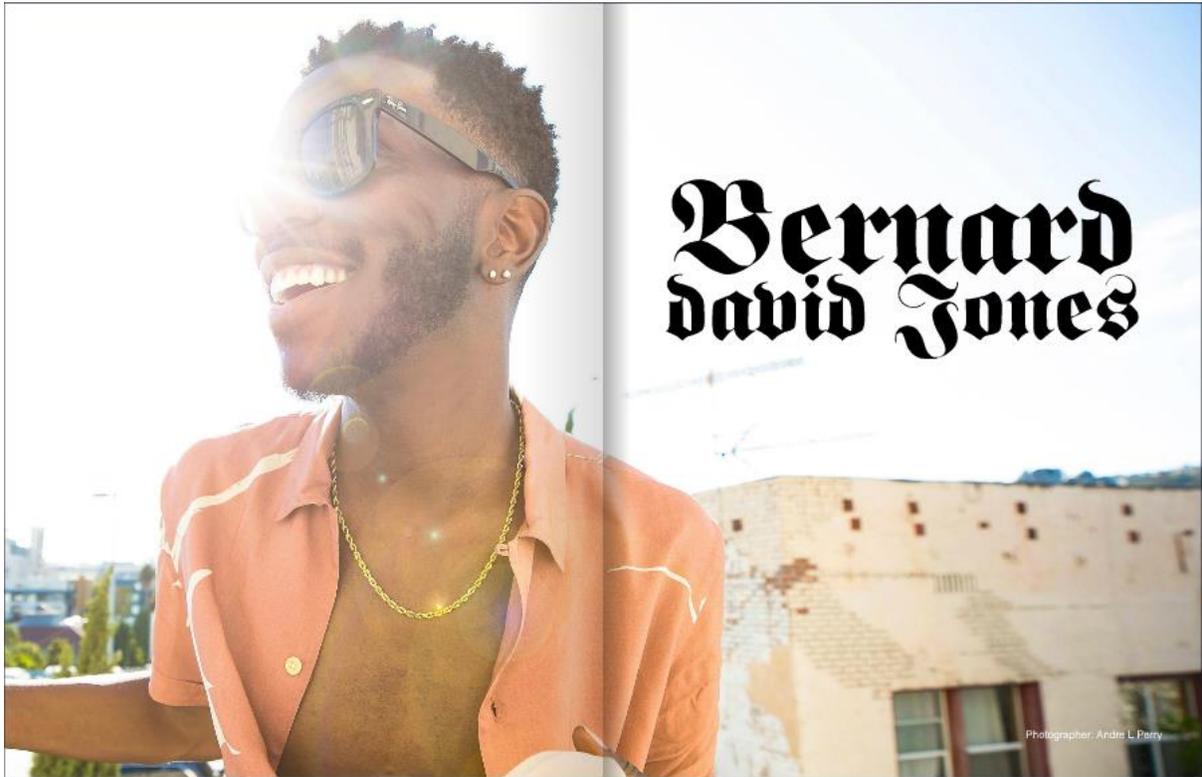
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# URBANI

WE DON'T JUST WEAR IT... WE LIVE IT

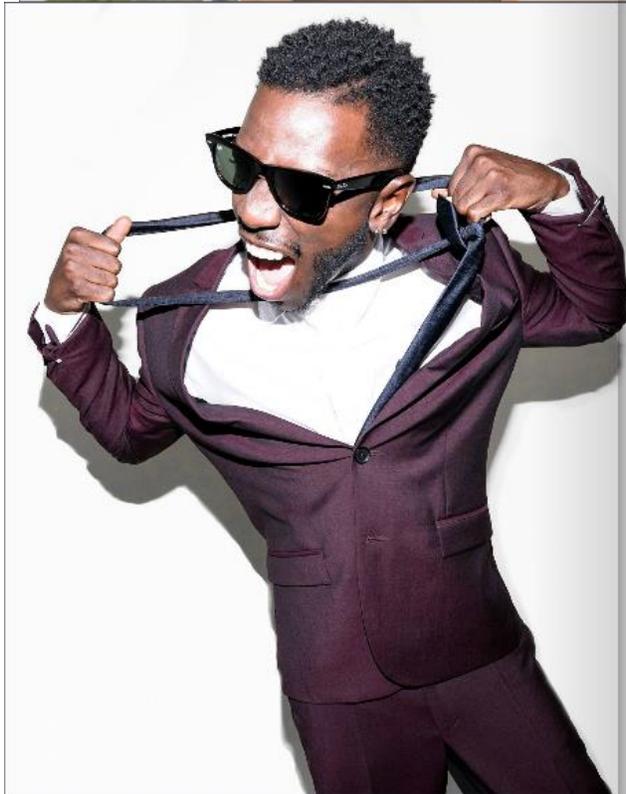
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THE MAYOR'S BERNARD DAVID JONES



# Bernard David Jones

Photographer: Andre L. Perry



## FUNNY AS F\*CK

Jersey-born Bernard David Jones brings his comedic wit to the small screen, playing the supportive role of Jermaine LaForge in the new ABC sitcom "The Mayor." Here, he speaks about his humble beginnings, "The Mayor", its inspiring undertones and his future endeavors, laying the groundwork for some humorous conversation.

**How would you describe Bernard? If you have to, look in the mirror.**  
Bernard...oh, wow yeah. First and foremost, I would describe him as loving. I describe him as a family person...a friend and family person. I describe him as tenacious, goal driven, I describe him as fun, sometimes funny, maybe only funny to himself, if that's okay. A workaholic, but still finds time for fun, yeah, loving. Definitely at the forefront, loving.

**In your humble beginnings, you started out as a singer and an actor in the church (What Black person has not started out in the church?) and you continued to pursue your dream until you got the opportunity to background sing for Lyle Jennings. How did that come about?**

What Black person did not start out in the church? (laughs) We all started there. Actually I was in college. I think I was in my Junior year in college and I heard an ad on the radio saying that Lyle Jennings was having auditions for background singers and I had no intention to go, but a friend of mine was going and I was like "Alright, I'll go with you and wait in line with you and see what happens." So I went and I sang for him, and round after round, he kept calling me back until it was the final 4 or 5 and I sang for him. He was like "Thank you," and I didn't hear back from him for a couple of months. I was like "Okay." That was it. It wasn't actually couple of months, it was a couple of weeks.

# URBAN

Then I received a call from his tour manager who said, "I need you on a plane tomorrow." I was like, "Wait, can I call you back? Can I think about it?" and he was like, "What is there to think about? Either you're getting on the plane or you're not." I said "Yes, I'll take it! I'll be there!" So I was able to tour around the U.S. We went to Bermuda, he took me all over the country. He took me to so many cities, thanks to him. It was an amazing experience. It was so hard to tell the man that I had to go back to school. I wanted to finish college, I wanted to have that degree. It was important to me, it was important to my family and it was one of the most hardest conversations I ever had to have with somebody, but he understood, it was a great growing experience. I learned so much literally on a tour bus.

**What was the best city you performed at?**

I really enjoyed New York. I'm from New Jersey, so it was kinda like going back home. My vocal teacher from high school got to come see the show, my dad, my uncle got to come see the show, but Bermuda was pretty cool, too.

**I wanted to talk about the web series "Shitty Boyfriends" for a minute. I was watching the "Friends First" episode and I really wanted to say that I was on your side. I never saw your character (Braden) give any advances of hooking up with the main character (Alison). You were just being friendly, just being yourself. What was her deal?**

Oh my god, thank you! I think that character is a loveable jerk, anyways, but I think it was just him trying to be a nice guy, for once, and I think she just read it the wrong way. I mean, it happens, right? You get drunk, you behave in a certain way that some people read wrong and it took him back a little bit, he had to go back to his jerky ways. He didn't want to hurt the girl, but he does wind up hurting the girl, because he's a little bit of a douche.

**Not really. That was her fault. She took it the wrong way.**

Exactly and her best friend on the show told her "Don't think of him that way" and she still did it. She wound up catching feelings.

**They (Refinery 29) needs to come out with a sequel called "Shitty Girlfriends" with you as the star.**

Wouldn't that be good? You know what, let's call up Lisa Kudrow and Dan Bucatinsky and pitch that! That's a good idea!

**Yeah, I want 5%, too.**

Yeah and you got it, too! (laughs)

**I say a sequel because as women, we can be complex and we can be crazy, at times. That would be interesting to do.**

It would be interesting because I think first, women are beautiful and amazing. I think that women comes in all types of variations. It would be interesting to see what type of girls that Braden would actually date and how they would react to his type of personality, that would be interesting to see if a woman can get his mind right.

**Let's get into your upcoming show, "The Mayor," where you play the main character, Courtney Rose's best friend, Jermaine LeForge. Describe Jermaine and what attracted you to the role.**

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Jermaine is one of his best friends. They grew up together in the town of Fort Grey, they were doing music together, you know, just best pals. Courtney's mom is sort of like Jermaine's mom. Jermaine is really supportive of his friends. The thing that I like most about Jermaine is that he leads with love, which is something that I do, and he loves his friends, he loves his family, in which his family is his friends. I think that it's so important for that to be on television, Black men uplifting each other due to the climate that we're in right now, and I think that's what attracted me to the role. One black man uplifting another Black man, to be his biggest support system without any type of jealousy, malice or ill intent. He is wanting to be there for his best friend and I really love that about him.

**In my opinion, "The Mayor" is sort of a "take-it-hill-you-make-it" story because Courtney actually does make it, but not in the way that he intended. It relates to some of the industry, where some people pose until they finally come up, intentional or not, so I would love to hear your opinion on this.**

Well, you never really know what people are going through, that's why it's so hard to look at Instagram and judge based on what you see other people do. I call it "the highlight reel." You're looking at people's highlight reel and don't know what's actually going on with their life. We need to be careful on how we compare ourselves to through what we see in the media, Instagram or social media. The things that I love about Courtney is that, yeah, he fakes it until he makes it, but what he does with his platform, the decision that he makes to change the community that he loves, and now he has the opportunity to do so instead of running away or giving up. He decides to take the responsibility and take it seriously. It's one of the most admirable qualities of Courtney Rose.

**You say that people are going through so much and you don't know what they are going through. You look at Instagram and see a lot of people taking pics with these celebs, hashtagging #weworkin and it confuses you.**

Right! You see them and you kinda say to yourself, "Man, I wish I can do that," and you know, they may be an extra, which is nothing wrong with that, but you should just focus on your journey and that's what I had to learn what I'm doing and the path that I'm setting for myself to walk on and not worry about what other people are doing because when you start doing that, you start saying to yourself, "Am I not doing enough? Am I doing it wrong?" If they just focus on their own journey, they will get to the end goal."

**"The Mayor" tackles a lot of social and political issues that are consistently talked upon, some critics call it the "political sitcom for millennials." What do you want the viewer, including myself, to learn from this show?**

I think the biggest thing that millennials can learn from this is that you have a voice. You have the ability to make change and to change the community that you live in. All you have to do is make the decision to do so. Part of it is to have the tenacity that is required of you to make change. I think by watching this, you may see, "Okay, this mayor doesn't know what he's doing. I don't know what I'm doing, but I know I have a heart for the people, heart for my community. I'll figure it out. I'm gonna run for office, or school treasurer" or "I'm gonna run for Councilman." Whatever it is, take the steps that you need in order to make the change that you want.

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**Word on the street is that you have a penchant for fashion. What designers are you feeling at the moment and what has got to be the craziest fashion trend of this generation?**

Currently, I'm into Rick Owens, Balenciaga...I'm into some boutique African fashions here in Los Angeles. I wear a lot of Topman and Zara. DSquared is dope. I like Giuseppe. Oh, Now I'm talking shoes. I like the Gucci shoes with the graphics on it. yeah, I'm into that, but I go right back to Zara and Topman. I'm looking for them to just give me a campaign already because I wear a lot of it. Forever 21, they have good stuff too. The craziest fashion trend right now is tattooed faces, but I don't think that is a fashion trend, but people are doing it.

**Some people can get away with it.**

Yeah, but when you got people tattooing your face or eyebrows...I don't know, but hey, if you like it, I love it, but yeah, I'm into everybody's fashions. If you're walking around with big ol' huge pants and platform shoes, I'm kinda into that, depending on who you are. Sequins, I'm into that as well.

**Sequins is kind of a hit or miss depending what you are wearing.**

Right, if you got a whole suit of sequins, no. Blazer only, yes.

**You are also the shutterbug, as well. You like photography. Do you like being in front of the camera more or behind it?**

I love being behind the camera. I love fashion and I knew that I wanted to do something in fashion at some point in my life, but I know I can't sew. I'm not even trying to learn. I knew that I wasn't tall enough to model. I knew that I liked people and maybe I should just pick up a camera and just try, so I did one day and I just kept shooting until I got good.

**In my opinion, I feel that when you're in front of the camera you portraying someone else, but when you're behind the camera, we get to see the world and people from your view.**

And that is the most exciting part. You get to see what I think is beautiful or what I think is interesting or compelling. That's a good point.

**Last but not least...**

Oh, no! This is fun! (laughs)

**Yeah, this is fun! If you wanna continue this conversation, we can! We can talk about anything! We can talk about Jersey or Brooklyn, the Barclays Center, we can talk about anything, but what is in store for Bernard?**

I'm just doing "The Mayor" right now, but I'm also working on some music. Hopefully, I'll be in some movies coming up, but I'm really focused on "The Mayor", making sure I bring my A-game to that each and every day. So yeah, "Mayor", music and movies in 2018.

- SHAMIKA SANDERS-SYKES

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###

# VIBE

## Bernard David Jones Explains How 'The Mayor' Inspires Young Minorities To Get Involved In Politics



CREDIT: Andre L Perry

For actor/singer/songwriter Bernard David Jones, his plate of talents isn't sectioned off so that they don't touch. Jones' creative expressions blend together to present a resume that looks pleasing to the eye.

A Paterson, New Jersey native, Jones described his environment as one that treasured the importance of family which fostered his pursuit of an acting career. Through performance art troupes as a middle

# VIBE

schooler to getting his degree in theater from Morehouse College, Jones was primed for the spotlight, which ultimately landed him on the recurring cast of ABC's new comedy, *The Mayor*.

Created by Jeremy Bronson (*The Mindy Project*) and executive produced by *Hamilton*'s Daveed Diggs among others, the lens follows an aspiring rapper-turned-politician named Courtney Rose (Brandon Michael Hall). The young man originally had his eyes set on popularizing his rap career and decided to run for mayor of his Fort Gray hometown in order to fulfill that desire. Unbeknownst to him, his two best friends, (Jermaine Leforge, played by Jones, and T.K. Clinton played by Marcel Spears), and his mother Dina Rose (played by Yvette Nicole Brown), Rose wins office and has to find a way to make his community better while keeping up with his original dream.

For Jones, he sees some of the main character's traits within himself, especially the art of focus. Not only does Jones act, but the Kappa Alpha Psi fraternity member is also a shutterbug and applies the quality of focus from behind the camera lens onto the silver screen.



“Whatever that emotion is that you try to capture in one picture, you have to focus to get that,” he says. “I think that has translated to my acting as well, being able to focus and be in the moment of whatever the situation that my character is in. Being honest and truthful in those moments.” Below, Jones shares how *The Mayor* can plant a political bug within young people of color and how he gets over the fear of creating and sharing content with the masses.

## **VIBE: When did you realize that you wanted to pursue a career in acting?**

**Bernard D. Jones:** For most young black children, you start performing in front of your family. You sing a little song or you do a little dance or you recite your Easter monologue for them, so it started, for me, with family. Then, of course, the church. For a lot of us young black performers, they start in the church and that's when I realized I loved performing for people. That was my first major audience. Just going from there I joined a performance art troupe when I was in middle school, junior

# VIBE



high. Then I went to a performing arts high school in New Jersey. I was able to hone the craft and learn the skill there. I received my acting degree from Morehouse College in Atlanta.

## How'd you come on board to join the cast of *The Mayor*?

During pilot season, actors normally get a bunch of scripts to audition for all the shows. Once this script ran across my desk, I said, 'Wow, this is amazing! This story is so important, it needs to be told.' Most importantly we see these three young black guys who are uplifting each other, who're relentless in their friendship for each other, and protecting each other and making sure that their best friend is set up for success. I love that about this show and how they depict the black family. For us, we see families where there's a single mom and a son and then the friends

are also like brothers, but for America to see it in such a positive light has been great.

## That was one of my questions: how do the characters make this show feel relatable or realistic?

One, it's the actors. Brandon Michael Hall is an amazing actor. Marcel [Spears] is phenomenal and Yvette [Nicole Brown] and Lea [Michele], but the thing that makes it so relatable is because it's something that we all have experienced. We've been in communities where things aren't the best and we've been in situations where politicians don't necessarily look out for your best interest. To be able to show what it would look like for a young black guy to say, 'Even though I didn't come here with the best intentions, I wanted to get some hits on my rap album,' but that character took on the responsibility and went for it, and wants to make his community and the constituents of that community better. I think that's such an important thing for people to see, especially to see young black men doing that, and then to see a strong black family on television. It's great.



**Bernard David Jones** 

@BernardDJones



Black people can headline a show! It's been done...it's been done WELL!

6:33 PM - Nov 20, 2017 - Los Angeles, CA

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# VIBE

**What gems have you picked up by working with major figures like Daveed Diggs from *black-ish* and previously *Hamilton*, or executive producer Jeremy Bronson from *The Mindy Project*?**

I've learned that it's okay to grow during a process. You may not come in knowing all of the answers, you may not be delivering this joke the best way every single time, but the growth, being able to grow into the character, making that character full-figured has been one of the things that I've learned because they've been so supportive. Jeremy has been so amazingly supportive and Daveed with music, he's doing such an amazing job with the music. We do all of our own music. Brandon is in the studio every Saturday. I'm singing the hooks on the songs, and Marcel is doing verses. We're very much involved with the music as well. Just getting back into the studio and being able to do that and work with Daveed has been so valuable.



**I think that's what makes the show have an upbeat aura to it. They're using the cast's talents outside of the lights, camera, action. Like how you mentioned that you sing a few songs within the show, you guys are really hands-on with pretty much every aspect that goes into making *The Mayor*.**

It's been such a collaborative effort because our show is so ensemble-based and that's what makes the show special, is that somebody can come to the show and see a character that they relate to and you get to see that character every episode.

**The main character in *The Mayor* ran for public office but ultimately to fulfill his dreams of beginning his rap career. Have you done anything out-the-box to propel your own career?**

# VIBE

I wouldn't necessarily say out-the-box, but one of the most challenging things I've done is try to create my own content. Being a creator or creative, being vulnerable and putting the message that you want the world to see out there and hoping that people like it is not crazy, but it's definitely scary. It's probably the scariest thing I've done, producing my own work.



**How do you get over that fear? What mindset do you have to get in to unleash your talents?**

My thing is, 'Hey, we only have one life to live, just do it.' And if your reason for doing it is to fulfill whatever it is that you have inside of you, you're not going to worry about whether people will like it or not because you're doing it for yourself and you're doing it for those people who need it. I just say do it, we only got one life. Just go for it. You'll succeed, you'll fail, but that's just life; ups and downs.

**Speak on how *The Mayor* blends political and social issues while still being a lighthearted comedy.**

What Jeremy has done which has been so brilliant is we address these issues through a non-partisan lens so we don't have a responsibility to a Democrat or to a

Republican. We just tell stories that are affecting the community, that is affecting my community, that is probably affecting people's communities nationally. We're able to touch on issues like that, and the writing is so good that you'll laugh at a joke, but then maybe 10 minutes later, you'll think, 'Was that about gun violence?' It makes you laugh, but if you're really paying attention it'll also make you think, and I think that's how people can come and sit down and watch it and receive it a little better. Plus there's amazing music on the show, the actors are great, so I think people are able to come and watch this lighthearted comedy that'll make you think a little bit.

**That's interesting you said a lot of the issues that are depicted in the show affect everyday people. There's one episode, I think it's Episode Two ["The Filibuster"], where you guys talk about the creative arts and how it plays a major role in young kids' creative development. I've read [articles](#), not only this year but throughout the years, where the government has threatened**

# VIBE

**to cut funding to schools' arts programs. How important are these creative outlets in today's society?**

It's extremely important because that little weird kid that's doing the dancing and the singing and running around the house like I was, if it weren't for an arts program, I wouldn't have anywhere to focus that energy or focus that ability into building a sustainable career. Kids should be able to have the option to do whatever is in their heart. My family let me do tons of things until I decided to stay on this and it's so important in schools because it gives kids something to do. Sometimes they don't know that that particular outlet is what they need, but once they see it and they're around it, they feel it, it could create the next Hollywood star, director, actor, singer, you never know. It bothers me so much that they try to fight to cut the arts out. I joined this new coalition here in L.A. that protects and advocates for arts education, it's so important. It changed my life. If I didn't have it, I would be lost in the world because I wouldn't be able to do anything else or want to do anything else. I'm passionate about it.



**With the rave reviews that *The Mayor* has gotten from different media outlets—[JET Magazine](#) called it a “political sitcom for millennials”—do you think it has yet to get the shine it deserves, especially with talks of cancellation? Do you think the show has a lane to succeed in today's society or is it ahead of its time?**

I think the show definitely has a place for now. It's been amazing having articles say how great the show is and how the politics are needed right now. It could succeed, we're up against *This Is Us* [Laughs] so it's kind of hard for a freshman comedy to come in and pull numbers from the number one show on television. That's a little unfortunate. I wish that more people would be able to see the show, but that's why it's good to have things like Hulu and DVR and you can go and watch it, and people can binge to see what's going on. I think it definitely has a place. If people gave it a chance they would really enjoy it.

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I saw that you re-tweeted a statement [Color of Change](#) made that said hopefully the show inspires more young people of color to get involved with politics. Have you noticed that in any of the conversations you've had?

Absolutely, there was a hashtag, I think it was #IfIWereMayor, and there was this one young black girl who said the show inspired her to go into her school and try to run for SGA. She saw there was an issue in her school that she wanted to be a part of the change. I think it will inspire, to see this young black guy—a rapper—who's being respected as the mayor, making a change and being loved by his constituents. It will really motivate some people, put a spark somewhere, especially people of color because if we're not there trying to make a difference for the marginalized people, who's going to do it? We have to be at the table to eat.

**Have you been inspired to make a change on a local level since you've been working on this show?**

Yes, for sure, that's why I joined the arts advocacy group. That's something that I'm passionate about and being a part of a fraternity, we have a little brother program where we go in and teach these young men how to tie a tie, how to balance a budget. I've definitely been doing my part as much as I can to affect some type of change.



*The Mayor airs Tuesdays at 9:30 p.m. EST on ABC.*

<https://www.vibe.com/2017/11/bernard-d-jones-the-mayor-abc-interview/>

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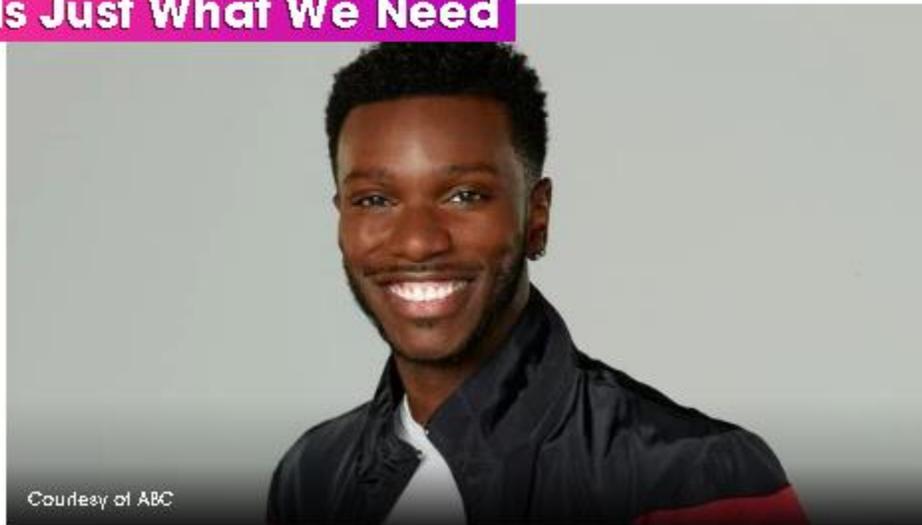
# Hollywood Life

by Bonnie Fuller

**'The Mayor's Bernard David Jones**

**Promises Political Comedy With 'Heart'**

**Is Just What We Need**



Courtesy of ABC

**Bernard David Jones stars in 'The Mayor,' a new show about a rapper who runs for office for free promotion and gets elected. We get the joke here, but Bernard told HollywoodLife.com EXCLUSIVELY the comedy is nothing like our reality.**

The hype surrounding ABC's *The Mayor* is real and for good reason. The show — a new sitcom starring **Brandon Micheal Hall** as Courtney Rose, a young rapper who decides to put his name on the mayoral ballot to get himself some free publicity and ends up winning — already dropped its pilot for free a few weeks ago, and fans and critics alike love it. Though the reaction is definitely appreciated, **Bernard David Jones**, who plays Jermaine Leforge, one of Courtney's best friends and his enthusiastic communications director, couldn't have anticipated it would have resonated with people this much. However, given [the country's current political climate](#), it makes sense that a story about someone who probably shouldn't have been elected (but is actually trying *really* hard to do a good job) would hit close to home — in a good way. [Click here](#) to see pics from the show.



“I was not prepared,” Bernard told **HollywoodLife.com EXCLUSIVELY** of seeing viewers’ reactions to the pilot. “People are like, ‘This is good. Wow!’ People are connecting to this piece of art that we all connect to. We believe that it’s important right now. People need to see this type of show that has hope and love and unity and they are responding to it.” Oh they definitely are, as Twitter is already abuzz about tonight’s official premiere. Of course there are many reasons for that, like the fact new Brandon, Bernard and **Marcel Spears**‘ (who plays Courtney’s other BFF, T.K. Clifton) new faces will be mixed in with some comedic heavyweights, like **Lea Michele** (who plays Valentina, Courtney’s reluctant chief of staff) and **Yvette Nicole Brown** (who plays Dina, Courtney’s mother). Jermaine says that even though the cast is lead by Brandon, a Julliard trained newcomer who is totally killing it, these ladies act as “strong women, who are strong in different ways,” behind this man.

“We have Yvette Nicole Brown [who plays] a young mom who had Courtney when she was 16,” Bernard said. “And she not only raised him, but had such a big part of raising T.K. and Jermaine as well. A single mom who raised not just one son, basically raised two others, and gave them the best experience they could have. Sometimes we’re just like, ‘We don’t know how you did it.’ And to have that character on screen is awesome and she’s such a strong woman.” Bernard said **Lea is just as powerful a force**, playing a young woman who takes politics seriously. “Lea Michele makes the decision to say, ‘I know that I was on the opposing team, but I still want to make this community better and show other women you can come in, you can go into these offices and make a difference,’” he said. “Her role as a strong woman in the mayor’s office should inspire women everywhere.”



<http://hollywoodlife.com/2017/10/03/the-mayor-bernard-david-jones-abc-political-comedy/>

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Actor Bernard David Jones visits Home & Family to talk about his new ABC sitcom, “The Mayor,” which airs Tuesdays at 9:30/8:30c. The actor also shares stories from the set and photos.

<http://www.hallmarkchannel.com/home-and-family/friday-december-29th-2017>

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## Bernard David Jones Interview | AfterBuzz TV's Spotlight On



AFTERBUZZ TV – AfterBuzz TV's Spotlight On edition, is a long form interview series featuring actors discussing their roles and shows as well as their thoughts, passions and journeys. In this episode host Raquel Harris interviews Bernard David Jones.

RSS Feed: <http://afterbuzztv.com/aftershows/afterbuzz-tvs-spotlight-on/feed/>

<http://www.afterbuzztv.com/2017/10/24/bernard-david-jones-interview-afterbuzz-tvs-spotlight-on/>

###

# HOUSTON CHRONICLE



‘The Mayor’ Star Bernard David Jones Says the Series Is ‘What Our Community Needs Right Now’



# HOUSTON CHRONICLE

Although ABC's new series "The Mayor" has some parallels with the 2016 election, star Bernard David Jones says that the outcomes couldn't be any more different.

"They're completely different in the sense that as a result of the election, the people are coming together on our show," Jones told TheWrap. "The people are saying, 'Hey, you're different, we need you,' and that leader is saying, 'OK, I got you, so let's figure out how we can make all of your situations better.' And that's a person that has a heart for the people."

"The Mayor" starts off with aspiring rapper Courtney Rose (Brandon Micheal Hall) running for mayor of fictional Fort Grey, California. No one really thinks he's serious about it — mostly because he isn't. Rose doesn't really want to be a political leader, but he's putting himself in the spotlight to promote his musical career. In a twist, Rose actually ends up winning.

"I think it's an intentional response to what our community needs right now," said Jones, who plays one of Rose's friends and cabinet members, Jermaine Leforge. "A show that shows a person who's hopeful, a community that's looking for unity and they have this figure, Courtney Rose, who comes in and says 'OK, I don't know what I'm doing, I don't know what's going on, but I have a heart for the people.'"

Although "The Mayor" is a political comedy, Jones hopes that audiences view the series with an open mind because of its nonpartisan take on the issues. The actor also wants viewers to take and make the best of opportunities that they might be given in their own lives.

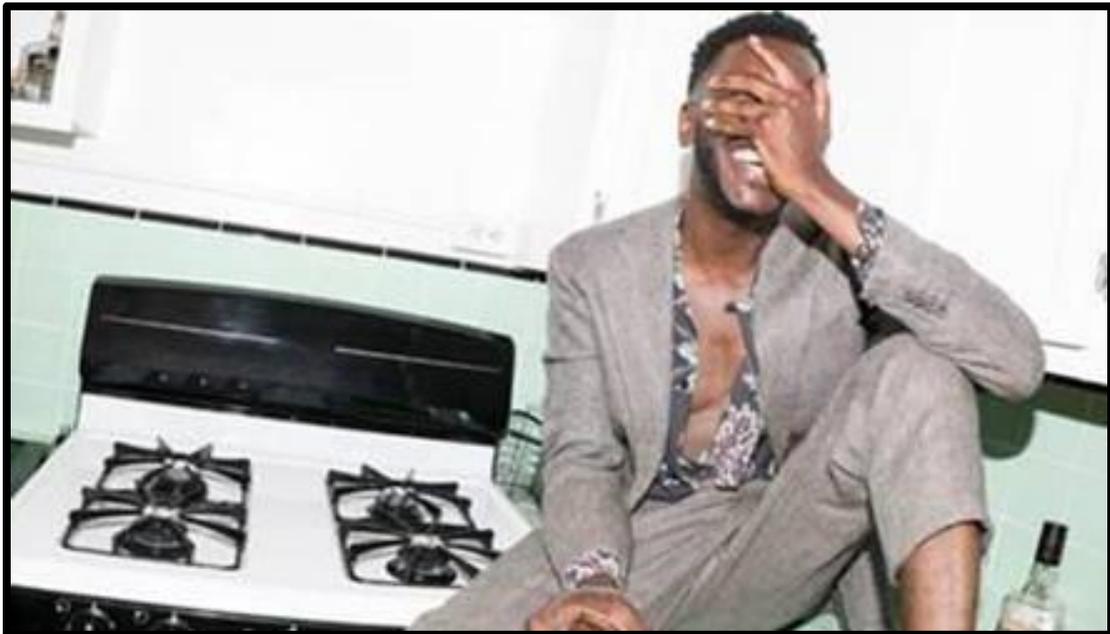
"I hope that people in their own communities, whether you're... going to be the treasurer of your school or you want to be head of the PTA, if you see a chance to make a change, go ahead and do it," Jones said.

"The Mayor" airs Tuesdays on ABC at 9:30p.m.

<http://www.chron.com/entertainment/the-wrap/article/The-Mayor-Star-Bernard-David-Jones-Says-the-12270638.php>



# DEMUR



## Bernard David Jones Is Best Friend's With The Mayor Of Fort Grey

The Mayor hit American tv screens just last month and it seems to be the show that is on everyone's lips, even over here in the UK. One of the characters who has stood out for us is, Bernard David Jones who brings refined humour to the ABC series. Bernard David Jones has been up and down all over the US states ever since he realised from a young age his dream of performing for a living.

The new ABC comedy revolves around young rapper 'Courtney Rose' (Brandon Michael Hall), who has toiled for years in a small inner-city apartment making his music while looking for his big break. Tired of waiting for the opportunity, Courtney cooks up the publicity stunt of the century: Running for mayor of his hometown in California to generate buzz for his music career. Unfortunately for Courtney, his master plan goes wildly awry, ending in the most terrifying of

# DEMUR

outcomes: an election victory. With the help of his mother (Community's Yvette Nicole Brown) and best friends 'Jermaine Leforge' (Bernard David Jones) and 'T.K. Carter' (Marcel Spears), as well as rival foe turned allied partner 'Valentina' (Glee's Lea Michele), Courtney will have to overcome his hubris if he wants to transform the struggling city he loves.

## **You got your first major break singing backup for Lyfe Jennings. Why did you make the transition from music to acting?**

I loved being on tour with Lyfe Jennings, and being able to perform in front of so many people that loved him and his music. Growing up, we trained in everything, so the transition felt more like exercising a different muscle group. I come from theatre/musical theatre world, so I was excited to switch over to acting.



Images by Andre L Perry

**What was it about your character in 'The Mayor' that appealed to you and made you take it on?**

# DEMUR

I play Jermaine Leforge. He's fun, energetic, but above all, he loves his friends and family. That was what I gravitated towards. Our show, in general, is full of hope and love. It's special because you get to see three young black men lifting each other up and taking on the responsibility of public service. I love that these guys are exploring what it looks like for leaders, who have a heart for people, to govern. It's very exciting.

## **What role in any movie or TV show do you wish you could have played and why?**

I see so many movies and TV shows that have characters that I wish I could've played. I wish I could've played MARTIN in MARTIN, or WILL in FRESH PRINCE OF BEL AIR. Those were the two comedic roles that showed me that I could be on TV one day. Plus, they were both comedic geniuses. Those two characters will live on forever.

## **You are also an accomplished Photographer. How many selfies do you have on your phone?**

1, 2 ,3 ,4...Yea its crazy. I'm just gonna stop counting. At least 1000.



## **If you could be any fashion item, what item would you be and why?**

I would be a very comfortable high-end bath robe. I get to hug people all day. lol Or, a nice piece of jewellery. I'd like to compliment every outfit.

## **What can we expect from 'The Mayor' as the show progresses?**

# DEMUR

You may or may not see more of our characters flexing their musical abilities. We have some amazing guest stars coming up. We're going to continue to talk about issues that affect our communities, and we're going to continue to bring the funny!



The Mayor is executive produced by Tony winner Daveed Diggs (Broadway's "Hamilton"), Jamie Tarses (Happy Endings), written and executive produced by Jeremy Bronson (The Mindy Project, Late Night with Jimmy Fallon), with the pilot directed by Executive Producer James Griffiths (black-ish).

<http://demur.co/bernard-david-jones-is-best-friends-with-the-mayor/>

###

# JET

## ‘THE MAYOR’ IS THE POLITICAL SITCOM FOR MILLENNIALS



*Hamilton's Daveed Diggs is bringing millennial politics to ABC!*

In our tumultuous political climate, millennials are the ones on the front lines resisting and pushing for major changes to make the world around us a better place. Sometimes, the best way to be an activist is through art and humor. In the forthcoming sitcom, *The Mayor* slated for the 2017-2018 line-up on ABC, Daveed Diggs is showing us a new type of politics.

In *The Mayor*, an outspoken, idealistic rapper Courtney Rose (Brandon Micheal Hall) runs for office as a publicity stunt. Everything is gucci until Courtney actually wins the election. As a surprise to everyone (including himself), Courtney discovers that he actually has a



knack for the job and he slowly begins to transform City Hall into a place where 21st-century citizens can thrive.

Joining Brandon Micheal Hall in *The Mayor* will be Yvette Nicole Brown, Bernard David Jones, Marcel Spears, Lea Michele, and David Spade.

If you haven't seen *Hamilton* on Broadway yet, you'll probably recognize Daveed Diggs as Adult Books from Netflix's *The Get Down* or from *Black-ish* as Bow's hippie brother, Johan. Diggs will be writing and executive producing the series along with Jeremy Bronson, Jamie Tarses, and James Griffiths.

Hopefully, Chance the Rapper will be watching so he can take notes and run for Mayor of Chicago. Seriously, we need to revise things in this country across the board.

Will you be watching *The Mayor*?

<https://www.jetmag.com/entertainment/mayor-political-sitcom-millennials/>

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## Bernard David Jones Hangin' With the Mayor

How is this for a TV series concept? An entertainer, who has no government experience or knowledge of the job, gets elected into an important political office, just on the strength of his personality.

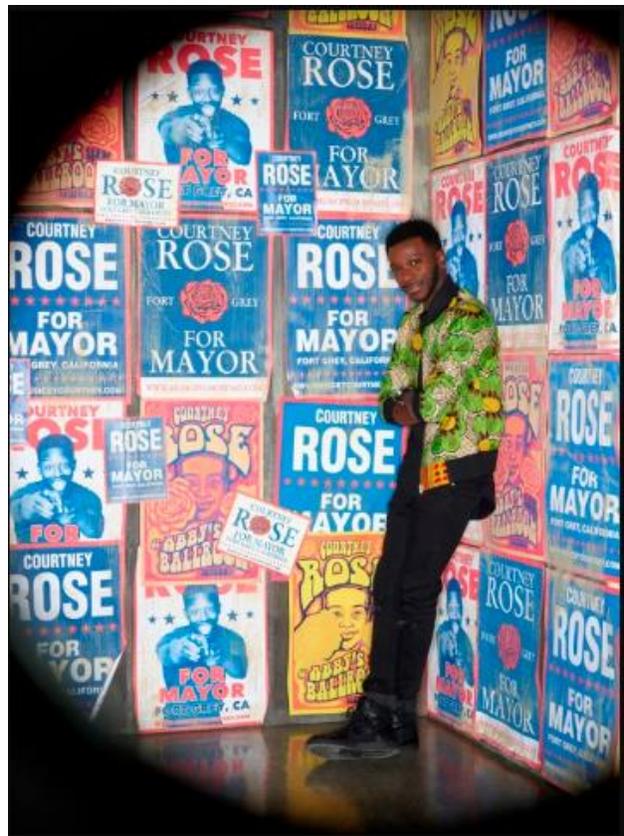
Come on, are people really going to buy into that? Really?

"I think we can imagine that actually happening," Bernard David Jones said, laughing hard. "I think we can put that out there and see it actually happening."

Jones is one of the stars of the buzzworthy new ABC sitcom *The Mayor*, so perhaps he knows of what he speaks. On this good-spirited and shockingly uncynical comic look at politics, a small-time rapper named Courtney Rose (Brandon Michael Hall) decides to run for Mayor, in order to boost his name recognition and download sales. While he knows little or nothing about politics, he knows about his community and his street-smart common sense help him win the election.

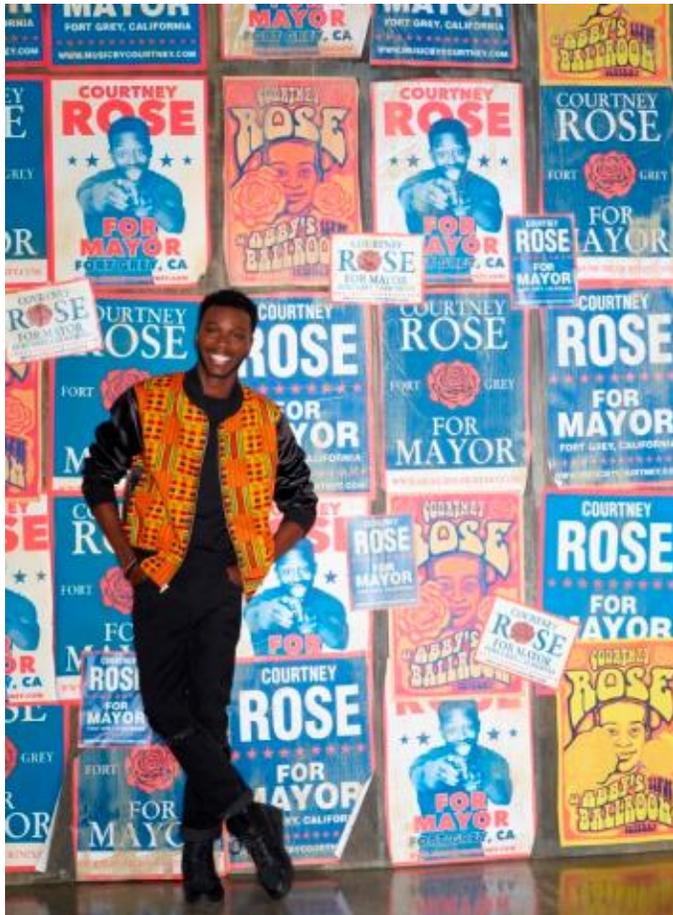
Therefore, Courtney throws himself into his new job, with the help of his mother (Yvette Nicole Brown of *Community*), his savvy political advisor (Lea Michele of *Glee*) and his two long-time best friends (Jones and Marcel Spears).

Jones, who has juggled careers as an actor and a singer, knew he was from the jump that he was looking at a very special project when he received the script. "Jeremy Bronson, who is our show





runner and our creator, wrote a really funny script,” Jones explained to me about a week before the series’ premiere. “At the heart of the script is this idea of love, unity, community, and family. I was just like: ‘Man, this thing is not only funny, but it’s well-written, it’s topical, it’s current, but it has heart. It has love at the core of it.’ I was like: ‘I have to be a part of this.’”



Luckily for Jones, the feeling was mutual, and he was penned in for the role of Jermaine, one of the new mayor’s best buddies.

“The thing that I love about Jermaine, and the thing that drew me to him, was that he leads with love,” Jones explained. “I do the same thing. I love people. Jermaine loves people. He loves his family. He loves his community. I was like: Wow, what a great characteristic to have in a character. As an actor, to lead from a place of love... Yes!”

Jones loves the relationship between the three guys, longtime *compadres* who share a history and background.

“TK and Jermaine, what they serve is that they remind Courtney of where he comes from,” Jones said. “They’ve been consistent figures in his life. They’ve been his support system, with his mother, for most of his life. They are the familiar faces that he wants to see when he goes to work every day.”

But, wait a second, a politician wouldn’t hire people with no political background, would they?

“TK and Jermaine end up serving more formal roles in the mayor’s office,” Jones said. “It’s just something about having your friends there that can help do the job, and that can support you. You can see those friendly faces when things start to go a little crazy. [Sometimes] TK and Jermaine are the cause of the craziness.”

Of course, Jermaine has some differences from Jones the man. However, those little variances just make the role even more interesting. “He takes his job very seriously,” Jones said. “A little anal about it. I’m a little more free spirited. He’s very much like: ‘I need to get this done. This is how it needs to happen. Courtney, you need to say this. Courtney, you need to do this.’ He’s very serious about his job in the mayor’s office.”



Actually, Jones' character of Jermaine and Spears' character of TK are sort of like Grizz and Dot Com on *30 Rock* – which is a huge compliment, by the way. They are guys who look like hangers on from the outside, but you learn they are surprisingly deep and are important in keeping Courtney grounded.

"They went to school together," Jones explains. "They all did music together. They've been collaborating for years."

It didn't take long for the three actors to bond to the point where they felt natural as childhood buddies. The first time they met, on the first table read for the show, the guys decided to hang out afterwards.

"We went to the movies," Jones laughed. "We put some food in a bookbag. We put soda in a bookbag. [We] snuck into a movie theater and watched *Get Out* together, while drinking sodas and eating food out of a bookbag. I said, 'This is home. This is what friends did.'"

He laughed again, reminiscing on it. "The chemistry was just there from the beginning. It's just a blessing. You pray for it, you hope for it, you hope that you really enjoy your castmates, and then when it happens it's just amazing. I'm very, very grateful. Very blessed."

Jones is continually impressed by his co-star Brandon Michael Hall, who has only been acting professionally for a couple of years, but has stepped up to the lead role in *The Mayor* with talent and confidence.

"Brandon is amazing," Jones said. "He's such a good leader for our show. When you just have that natural ability, and you add training to it, it's just unstoppable. That's what I believe that Brandon has. He just has this natural charisma about him that draws people to him, that makes people love him. And you throw Juilliard [training] on top of that... You have a phenomenal actor."

"Not only is he an actor, he's an artist. It doesn't just stop with learning lines and then regurgitating them. He's an artist, so he's also doing music, and he's writing in journals. He's just an artist. I really love that about him."

Hall is not the only actor that Jones is learning from working with. He's also thrilled to get the opportunity to work with sitcom staple Brown.





“Dina, played by the amazing Yvette Nicole Brown, serves as a mother figure in their lives as well,” Jones says.

Okay, she serves as a mother figure on the show, but how about on the set? After all, as the most veteran actor in the cast. She has a lot more TV experience than most of the cast members on the show.

“I wouldn’t say mother figure, because she’s too young for that!” Jones laughed. “Too beautiful for that. But she’s definitely taking on this mentorship role, which has been such a valuable asset to all of us.”



So how has Brown been helping her new colleagues?

“Whenever we have questions, we know that we can go to Yvette and she is going to give us the best advice that she can give us, based on her own experience,” Jones said. “She’s a well of information. And she’s willing to share. Some people have the information, but they are not willing to share. We’re her babies, she says. It’s been such a blessing just having her there, even just to teach us how to behave in this whole Hollywood world. It’s just great.”

Also familiar with playing the Hollywood game is actress and singer Lea Michele, who as the political director is playing a very different character than she did for six seasons in her breakout role as

Rachel on *Glee*. But, truthfully, in the middle of the day does Michele periodically break into show tunes?

“I’ll catch Lea humming a little bit between takes,” Jones laughed. “I’ll be like, I hear you, Lea.”



However, when the camera turns on, she puts on her game face.

“She’s great,” Jones said. “She’s a great professional. She knows her stuff. She’s great take after take. I’ve just been watching her, taking notes, because she is so good at what she does, it’s inspiring. It’s great to be in scenes with her. We try to crack her up. We did her a couple of times, we did her. But just the professionalism when she is on set. She does a great job.”

Beyond the funny parts of *The Mayor*, Jones is also excited about another side of the project.

“Amazing music, which is being done by Daveed Diggs,” Jones said. “Tony Award-winning Daveed Diggs. Grammy Award-winning Daveed Diggs, of *Hamilton*, and his group Clipping. They are doing all the music for the show, all the scoring for the show. It’s just Bay Area hip-hop, and it’s amazing.”

This is especially exciting to Jones, because like Michele, he got his start in music.

“When I first started, I started performing, so we had to do everything. We had to do singing, we had to do dancing, and we had to do acting. I just gravitated towards singing, because growing up I was singing in the church. It just came naturally to me. I went to a performing arts school, where I majored in vocal music. I started taking drama classes while I was there, too, because I wanted to be a well-rounded performer. I just fell in love with the craft. I went to college and got my degree in acting. I just kept going from there.”

Still, the music is still close to his heart.

“I’m still working on music. I do my own music. I was able to go on tour with Lyfe Jennings for a little while. That was fun. Music is still very much a part of my life. I’m still working on music. It’s just that I’m acting as well,” Jones laughed.

Music and acting is not the end of things for him, either. He is also an accomplished photographer. While he doesn’t have as much time to devote to it as he would like, he keeps working on his photos.

“Like Brandon, I consider myself an artist,” Jones explained. “I feel like I have to be able to do multiple things, to have my hand in multiple things to fulfill the artist in me. So, I find time to do the things that I love. Even if I have to shoot out of my apartment. Most of the time I just shoot out of my apartment, I say, hey, come on over. Let’s do some shots. Keeping art artistic.”





And what does he do around home when not taking pictures?

"I have an obsession with bad TV," Jones laughs. "I'm watching reality TV shows. I'm obsessed with shows like... not that these are bad, but... *Project: Runway*. I love *America's Next Top Model*. I'll be watching *So You Think You Can Dance*. I'm like all about those shows. People who know me are like, 'What?!'"

Of course, he likes good TV, too, as a fan and as a creator. In recent years he's worked on *Meet the Browns* and *House of Payne*. He also played a big role in Lisa Kudrow's acclaimed web series *Shitty Boyfriends*, which co-starred Melissa Hunter, Emily Arlook (who will be on the upcoming series *Grown-ish*) and Sandra Oh (of *Grey's Anatomy*). "*Shitty Boyfriends* is about a young lady, named Amanda, who is basically looking for love," he said. "She just keeps choosing shitty boyfriends."



Jones enjoyed the experience, because he got to play the type of character he rarely portrays.

"I play Braden, who was one of the guys in the office. There were the three of us in the office that they work in. I was kind of a... kind of a douche," Jones laughed. "Very different. I normally play the nice guy. I'm always nice guys, best friends, quirky friend. To be able to be the douche was so much fun." She also learned from his co-workers on this set.

"Sandra Oh is amazing. When I first met her I was just like, 'Oh, you're Sandra Oh!' And she's like, 'I'm so glad that you are here.' I could have broke down and cried right there. 'No, you're Sandra Oh, what do you mean?' She was like, 'No, I'm so happy that you're here.' I was just like, wow."

Being able to work with the show producers was also a treat.

"Lisa Kudrow and Dan Bucatinsky were just amazing to work with. They were super funny. They were very hands-on, which I wasn't expecting, but it was so good to have them on set every day, pitching jokes and making sure that we had the best show that we could. Refinery 29, they did it. It's online."



However, now he is focused on *The Mayor*. He recognizes that political humor is very timely, so that is a good thing for the show. (For the record, the show was already in the works before Donald Trump became President.) Still, it is important to Jones and the *Mayor* team to juggle the political humor with more character and story based humor.

“We’re just dealing with issues that people have been dealing with for years, and years, and years,” Jones said. “We’re talking infrastructure. We’re talking money for kids in school. We’re talking community centers being built so that people have somewhere to go. Jobs. These are things that are consistent through our history. I don’t think it will be dated. It’s just our way of talking about it.”



One nice thing about the political leanings of the show is that they are largely optimistic and positive. In the world of *The Mayor*, a government official can help to make others’ lives better. This idea seems to be rare in the current political climate.

“That’s the hope,” Jones said. “When you use your power to vote for someone to get into an office that is supposed to affect change in your community, or in your country, you hope that they would step up to the plate and do so. It can be done, when the leader truly has a heart for people. Has a heart for the issues. Has a heart to change, to make their community better. When you live in the community that you’re leading, you have a different sensitivity to the issues. It can be done. We just have to use our power as voters and constituents to elect the right people.”

This kind of rosy look at an often-dirty political world makes *The Mayor* necessary viewing. In a world where even political series – like *House of Cards*, or *Designated Survivor* – is full of Machiavellian intrigue, this show takes a blessedly non-jaded or cynical look at government.

“The best thing is that people will see issues that they are dealing with, at their local level or at their national level, and they’ll be able to see a person who has a heart for people,” Jones said. “A person that believes in the community, and wants to see change. They will see a person who tries their very best to make that happen. I think people will really enjoy that, especially with the temperature of

America right now being so hot. It’s escapism, a little bit. You can come and watch what America could be.”

<http://www.popentertainmentarchives.com/bernard-david-jones-top-story>

###

# SEAT 42F



INTERVIEWS

## EXCLUSIVE : THE MAYOR Scoop: Shining The Spotlight On Bernard David Jones

Photo Credit : Andre L. Perry

Co-starring in the new ABC comedy series *THE MAYOR*, Bernard David Jones is a bundle of enthusiasm. He deftly conveys the comedy amidst the show's political antics while still being earnest enough to keep the show grounded. The secret to *THE MAYOR* is that it offers a heartfelt message of community and friendship, and Bernard's portrayal fits into that seamlessly. In an exclusive interview, Bernard talks about his happiness working on *THE MAYOR* and the lessons he continues to learn as an actor.

**What initially appealed to you about the role of Jermaine Leforge and working on ABC's *THE MAYOR*?**

**BERNARD:** When I first received the script, during pilot season, I knew that it was special. I loved the content and the subject matter. I fell in love with the

# SEAT 42F

characters and I knew what it could do for our community, especially the African-American community.

**How would you describe who Jermaine is and his arc this season?**

**BERNARD:** Jermaine really loves his friends. His friends are his family. I really love that he supports Courtney and kind of acts as his voice of reasoning at times even though sometimes that voice of reasoning may not have the best advice. Jermaine really takes his job very seriously, and that's another thing that I love about him. Even though he has no political experience, he does his best to make sure that he serves the community that he loves so much.

**What is it like working alongside such a talented ensemble on THE MAYOR? Who do you get to work the most with?**

**BERNARD:** IT'S AMAZING! I work with really talented people both in front and behind the camera. We have the best cast, creatives, and crew in Hollywood. Everyone is just so good. I remember shooting the pilot, and we were all just getting to know each other, we would just stop and fan out over each other. That's special. To be a fan of your cast mates. We're actually friends. We hang out outside of work, and our group text is the best. We just enjoy each other!

Marcel [Spears] and I work together a lot, but our show is so ensemble heavy. We get to work with each other in some way. I think Lea [Michele] and I work the 2nd most together.

**Any favorite scenes that you got to work on so far?**

**BERNARD:** I really enjoyed doing the sauna scene. We had no idea that we'd be in nothing but a towel and compression shorts! It was one of those vulnerable moments that makes every actor wince just a little bit. I thought, "I'm about to be in a towel on national television."



# SEAT 42F

**What is your favorite part about working on the show?**

**BERNARD:** My favorite part is that I'm a part of a show that I really believe in. I believe our country needs this show. It shows what a leader, with no experience, can do when that leader REALLY cares about his/her constituents.

**What has been the one thing you as an actor have taken away from working on THE MAYOR?**

**BERNARD:** Take the time to be grateful. There are moments when I just stop, and think, "WOW this is what I've dreamed about for so long." As far as acting, I've learned how difficult it is to maintain a character week after week. This is my first series regular role, and I'm in every episode. I've guest starred before, but this is the first time that I've had to put the character I've created in multiple situations week after week.



**What do you hope viewers will take away from watching THE MAYOR?**

**BERNARD:** I really hope audiences first come to our show with an open mind. We are talking about issues that affect our community and we are coming at it with a non-partisan lens. It's not a democratic perspective, not a republican perspective, but a people perspective. I hope it activates some sort of mobility and civic responsibility in people. If you want to run for public office or be president of the student body, I hope it sparks that in you.

# SEAT 42F

**What is the biggest challenge working on THE MAYOR?**

**BERNARD:** Finding time to do regular stuff like laundry, give the dog a bath, watch my shows. I'm so behind on all of my shows!

**What is the biggest surprise working on THE MAYOR?**

**BERNARD:** The response from fans of the show. It has been amazing! They really support the show, and want the best for all of us.

**At this stage of your career, what do you think you have learned from the amazing variety of roles and projects you have worked on?**

**BERNARD:** I've learned not to judge people. We all have different life experiences. Creating characters forces you to dig deeper into people's humanity. We can get caught up looking at people's surfaces, and then judge them accordingly.

Then we use our judgements as an excuse not to love people. It's awful.

**What are the perks of where you are in your career right now?**

**BERNARD:** That I'm still new! I'm hungry for great work. I have that fire — that passion and tenacity needed to traverse this industry.



# SEAT42F

**If there were one role you would like to revisit, which would it be and why?**

**BERNARD:** I would like to revisit a role I played in a short film. I played a homeless young man. I would love to play that character in a full movie.

**Has there been any great advice you have gotten?**

**BERNARD:** Yvette Nicole Brown has been so helpful! She's like the big sister God knew that I needed. Whenever we go out, people flock to her, and smother her with LOVE. I told her that, "I hope that people love me like they love you." She told me they will. All I have to do is be myself and be kind and loving towards people. BEST ADVICE.

**What advice would you offer to other upcoming and aspiring actors?**

**BERNARD:** Keep GOING!!! I always say: stick to the original plan. If you came to L.A. to be an actor, or writer, or director, stick to that plan — but be open to the path that gets you there.

**Do you have any other upcoming projects that you can share that fans should keep an eye out for?**

**BERNARD:** I'm working on some music. I'm really excited to be back in the studio. I'm also a content creator. I'm producing and acting in a web series called, "Who Is Amanda James?" starring myself, Bianca Ashley and Catherine Mersereau.

To see more of Bernard's fun-loving performance as Jermaine, be sure to tune in for all new episodes of THE MAYOR on Tuesday nights at 9:30 p.m. on ABC. Then to find out more about Bernard's upcoming projects and what further adventures he has as his career grows, be sure to follow him on Twitter [@BernardDJones](https://twitter.com/BernardDJones)

<https://seat42f.com/the-mayor-scoop-shining-the-spotlight-on-bernard-david-jones.html>

###

# UPROXX

## The Cast Of 'The Mayor' Proves Their Rap Chops In The Show's 'Right Here (Remix)' Video



ABC's [hip-hop sitcom](#) *The Mayor* has released its first official music video for the remix of the titular character's song, "Right Here." The video features the cast having fun while recording the track intercut with footage from the show itself. The song is a heartfelt shout-out to the show's fictional setting of Fort Gray, California performed by the show's lead Brandon Micheal Hall in character as Courtney Rose, the town's newly-elected and bewildered young



mayor. Hall is joined by co-star Marcel Spears, who portrays Courtney's best friend TK Clifton, who provides a laid-back but energetic second verse, and Yvette Nicole Brown, who plays Courtney's supportive mother Dina Rose, and Bernard David Jones who plays Jermaine and is Courtney's other best friend in the show, on background vocals.

The song, like the entire soundtrack, is written and produced by rapper Daveed Diggs and producers William Hutson and Jonathan Snipes of hip-hop noise band clipping., who likewise make an appearance in the studio session footage in the video. The soundtrack is [being released week by week on clipping.'s label, Sub Pop Records](#). The show has also featured [Bay Area legend E-40](#) as a local Fort Gray legend and favorite of Courtney and crew, who headlines a festival thrown by the naive new mayor and his friends.

*The Mayor* airs Tuesdays at 9:30 PM EST on ABC.

<http://uproxx.com/realtalk/the-mayor-right-here-remix-video/>

###

# LONG ISLAND *PULSE*

## ‘The Mayor’ Star Dishes on New ABC Show



With the title *The Mayor*, it's obvious politics are involved. But the new show set to air on ABC in October puts a different spin on the government. It centers around Courtney Rose (Brandon Micheal Hall), a young aspiring rapper who decides to run for mayor of the fictional California city Fort Grey. No, he's never dreamed of leading the people; Courtney simply wants to garner attention for his next album. The plan goes awry when he actually wins.

“He may not have had the best intentions going into it, but when he was presented with the opportunity to show responsibility, he took on that task,” said [Bernard David Jones](#) starring as Jermaine LeForge.

Jones, a New Jersey native who landed his first role in Tyler Perry's TV series *Meet The Browns* in 2009, said he was immediately drawn to the

LONG ISLAND  
*PULSE*

project. “My agent sent over the script and I was like, ‘I need to be a part of this.’”

The humor is on point if the pilot (available on ABC’s [website](#)) is an indication. The cast likable. And the topic timely. As [political tension continues to rise](#), *The Mayor* sends a hopeful message.

“I would love for people to come in open-minded. Our show is nonpartisan,” said Jones. “We just present what our world is. I hope that people will relate to that, gravitate to that and will love it.”

The insightful comedy, created by Jeremy Bronson, also stars Yvette Nicole Brown as Dina Rose, Lea Michele as Valentina Barella and Marcel Spears as T.K. Clifton.



Eager for the Oct. 3 premiere, Jones said he plans to watch with co-star Spears (Hall will be out of town), friends and good food. The actor also spoke more about the show, the rapper he thinks actually has a shot at politics and his unexpected dream role.

***The Mayor* is premiering very soon. Why should we tune in?**

Our show has a new fresh perspective on politics. I think that people are really going to enjoy the characters. Jeremy Bronson, our writer, has written some amazing characters. The cast is great...We are bringing the funny every

LONG ISLAND  
*PULSE*

Tuesday night. And I think people will really just connect with this kind of fish out of water story.

**You mentioned politics and this show is definitely coming at a time when there's a lot of tension. Is there a message that viewers can take away?**

Yes, definitely. Our show is so rooted in the theme of love and community and unity. I think that people will really take away from this story the fact that if they make a choice to do something, they can actually make a difference.

**And what about your character?**

I play Jermaine LeForge, who is one of Courtney's best friends that he grew up with. And I have a job in the mayor's office; I play his director of communications. The thing that I love about Jermaine is that he really loves his family and his friends. It's not your typical family, it's a little bit different (his family is his two best friends T.K. and Courtney and Dina who plays a mom figure in all of our lives). But he loves them and I think that's what's really important.



**Did you learn anything from working with the seasoned actors attached to this project like Lea Michele and Yvette Nicole Brown?**

Lea Michele is a professional. She comes in and she does her job and she does it so brilliantly. And I've been able to just take notes, watch her and just learn so much from her in that aspect. And Yvette who is also a professional hands down, comes in, she does her job and she's amazing. But she's also like the big sister of the set. She makes sure that everybody is good, that everybody is taken care of. She gives great advice.

**What kind of advice?**

When we go out with Yvette, everyone loves her so much. I was like, "Yvette, I hope that one day people will love me like they love you." And she said, "They will. Lead with your heart and be yourself."

**Now, if this show was real life, which rappers do you think could actually have a career in politics?**

I think Chance the Rapper would be an amazing mayor of Chicago...I would love to see Chance take that city and revitalize it. I think it would be great. He is the best!

And I mean Kanye [West] could be president. [He's running!](#) [Laughs]

**Sounds like you're a big Chance the Rapper fan?**

Oh, I love Chance. I love not only his music, but I just love what he stands for. I love how he uses his platform because I think that's super important. When



people get a platform I really respect when they use it to make change and to promote positivity.

**What's your dream role?**

This is going to sound really weird but I'm going to say it anyway. I would love to play the oldest living vampire in any movie or TV show, but look younger than everybody. [Laughs] I could have so much power. I just raise my hand and everybody dies.

**It's possible since the vampire theme is huge nowadays.**

Right? I'm like Ryan Murphy, what's up? [Laughs]

<http://lipulse.com/2017/09/25/the-mayor-abc-cast-member-interview/>

###

# BLEEP™

## Talking with The Mayor's Bernard David Jones



**Born and raised in Paterson, NJ, Bernard David Jones started acting and singing in church. Today he can be seen every week on ABC's *The Mayor*. I caught up with the talented rising star to talk about how he fell in love with acting, the hit show and why it's so important to today's audiences.**

### **When were you first bit by the acting bug?**

It came pretty early for me when I was probably 7 or 8 years old. I started out in the church and I remember singing my first solo in front of the church and feeling like 'This is it!' I went from singing in the choir to being in the Christmas and Easter productions to a performing arts high school and eventually on to Morehouse in Atlanta.

# BLEEP™

**When did you decide acting was going to be more than a hobby—that it was something you wanted to pursue vocationally?**

Growing up, my parents allowed us to explore many things. I did gymnastics, I wanted to be a veterinarian at one point, I played sports too, but when I stepped on stage and felt that overwhelming satisfaction of being up there, I knew that was what my life would be. While I was at my performing arts high school, I realized I could actually make a living doing what I love to do. So I got my degree and I made the commitment early on that I would work at this and even if it meant I had to get my break at 40 like Morgan Freeman, then that's what I would do.

**How has *The Mayor* challenged you as an actor?**

This is my first series regular role. I've been on TV before but this is the first time I've had the opportunity to create a character and sustain that character—to maintain who that person is. The challenge has been making sure each week that I'm bringing the same guy but adding levels to him. I'm figuring out what this guy is like in all situations as opposed to only being on one episode, doing one thing as a character and then moving on.



# BLEEP™

## **What's the process of bringing a new show to life?**

It's been extremely rewarding. It's a brand new show and the concept is amazing. When I first read the script, I realized this was something great and something important. It's important for the African-American community that a story like this is being told.

## **Well along that line, what do you hope audiences take away from the show?**

I hope audiences first come to our show with an open mind. We are talking about issues that affect our community and we are coming at it with a non-partisan lens. It's not a democratic perspective, not a republican perspective, but a people perspective. I hope it activates some sort of mobility and civic responsibility in people. If you want to run for public office or be president of the student body, I hope it sparks that in you.



## **So far, what has been the most surprising thing about doing this show?**

I spend more time at work than I do at my own home. I'm learning new things about myself. I'm learning I need to take time to sleep and make sure I'm eating. Being on the show as a regular, there's more responsibility to promote the show and promote yourself—those are the other things that are outside of the art that you don't learn in acting school.

## **Outside the show, what other projects do you have currently in the mix?**



I'm also a content creator. I'm producing and acting in a web series called, *Who Is Amanda James?* starring myself, Bianca Ashley and Catherine Mersereau. I'm also working on some music which has been a blessing in that our show is very musical. So it's been cool to get to work on all of that too.

Interview by [Ryan Brinson](#)

<https://bleepmag.com/2017/11/16/talking-with-the-mayors-bernard-david-jones/>

###





<http://www.justjared.com/tags/bernard-david-jones/>

###



## **Exclusive Interview with The Mayor's Bernard David Jones**



Bernard David Jones might not be a name you recognize, but chances are that you have seen his face before. Jones has a career that has already spanned a lot of different roles on a wide



variety of mediums. He got his first big break in television appearing as ‘Milo’ on Tyler Perry’s *Meet The Browns* and *House of Payne*. He’s also done a little bit of film work, starring in *The Lookalike* opposite Justin Long, Jerry O’Connell and Gillian Jacobs. He’s even starred in Refinery29’s YouTube series *Shitty Boyfriends* opposite Sandra Oh. Now, Jones has gotten his first ever regular role on a television show, starring in ABC’s new fall comedy *The Mayor*. Jones talked with me about how he got his start in acting, how he would describe his new character, Jermaine, which real life rapper would make the best politician and so much more. Keep reading to see his answers.

**How did you get involved in acting? Was there any specific experience you would credit as the moment when you knew acting was what you wanted to do for a profession?**

For sure. I think it all started, like for a lot of black artists, in the church. That was my first audience, so to speak. [I was] singing in the choir and transitioned into the Easter plays and the Christmas plays. That led me to where I am today, thinking, “Hey, I actually love doing this. This is a lot of fun. And I can get paid doing it? Absolutely.”



**Did you have any formal training? Did you study it in college or did you start your acting career right out of high school?**

When I was younger, I was a part of a performing arts troupe and that led to me going to a performing arts high school in Patterson, New Jersey and from there I went to Morehouse College in Atlanta and got my degree in acting.

**You've had a lot of different types of roles on a lot of different mediums, from television to film to stage to YouTube. Do you have a personal acting "bucket list" of things you still want to accomplish in your career? If so, what are some of the things on it?**

[laughs] This is going to sound weird, but I'm going to say it anyway: I want to be a vampire. But like the oldest living vampire known to man that just looks young. Like that is a dream role for me. So whoever can write that, think about me when you do.

**[laughs] What is it about vampires?**

I don't know! It's just like they're mysterious, they're sexy, they're strong. They dress well for the most part. They're dark and edgy. I play nice guys, for the most part, so it would be fun to play something dark.

**Which role that you've played do you think has had the biggest impact on your life and has maybe changed you as a person and why?**

I think for me it was my first professional gig. I did a show at the Alliance Theatre which was called *Class of 3000: Live with Andre 3000*. That was the moment when I realized I'm a professional, like this is my job. Having that company, the Alliance Theatre, give me this role, I was like, "You know what? This is what I'm going to do for the rest of my life." And I've been pursuing it ever since.



**Moving on to talk about *The Mayor*, how would you describe it for people who aren't familiar with it?**



I would describe it as fun, family comedy that addresses political issues from a non-partisan lens. So it's fun, but it's for the people who enjoy politics, the people who enjoy the underdog/fish-out-of-water story. I think people will love the fact that this guy actually cares about his community and cares about the constituents there and I think that's something that our country needs.

**How did you get involved in the show? What was the audition process like?**

It was during pilot season. For actors, during pilot season, you're getting a lot of stuff in, just auditioning and auditioning and auditioning. I remember getting the script and reading it and immediately knowing that it was important, that the story was important and that I wanted to be a part of it. I told my agent, "please get me



in for this. I would love to do this." And they got me in for an audition for Jermaine and then I remember, during my audition process, I did my audition and the casting director was like, "Well, I don't know about Jermaine for you. But let's try the other character." And I was like, "Okay!" So I ended up auditioning for TK as well. But my manager and my agents were like, "Let's get you back in there to audition for the role that you originally auditioned for and let the producers see it and see where it goes from there." So I was able to get back in and audition and show them Jermaine again and they liked it and, now, here we are!

**You kind of touched on it a little bit earlier, but how do you feel about taking on a politically flavored show at this time in our country's climate?**

It's truly been an amazing experience so far. It's been a joy to talk about issues that I care about because even before the show, I've been very in-tune to our political atmosphere; I'm listening, I'm reading articles, I'm watching the news. But I think because of the way our country is right now, a lot of people are more aware of what's going on and are more interested in government and trying to figure out what they can do to make their communities better. I think that's kind

of how I came at it. I've always been politically aware, but this show has definitely sparked it into a new interest and the fact that we can show these characters that love each other, first and foremost, but also love their community and the constituents that are a part of that community and to show America Tuesday night after Tuesday night what it looks like for a leader to actually care about the community is priceless. This leader doesn't know what he's doing, he's not a politician. But at the forefront of all his endeavors is to make the community better and I love that.



**How would you describe your character, Jermaine?**

Jermaine is very interesting; I love Jermaine. At the core, he's all about love. He loves his friends and his family, his friends are his family and he loves them so much. That was one of the things that drew me to the character in the first place. He's kind of like Courtney's voice of reason even though sometimes his advice can lead to bad decisions [laughs]. But it's always well-intentioned. He's a snazzy little dresser; he takes his fashion pretty serious.



I think what also makes our show pretty special is that these characters want to work and they are serious about their jobs. It's not these guys get into the office and just goof around. They really take their job seriously and I love that about Jermaine; he takes his job seriously.

**Would you say that Jermaine is more similar or different to the person that Bernard is and why?**

We're different in ways and we're alike in ways. The things that I mentioned was leading with love and that's what I try to do in my own life is lead with love and to love on people and to recognize people's humanity and I think Jermaine does that as well.

How we differ [laughs], Jermaine is a little shadier than I am. He doesn't like old people, he doesn't like children. He's a little shadier than I am for sure.

**I love this cast a lot because there is newer faces like you and Brandon [Michael Hall] and Marcel [Spears] but then there is also some Hollywood vets like Lea [Michele] and Yvette [Nicole Brown]. What is it like working with everyone, because you all come from such diverse backgrounds, but you all seem to get along so well?**

Yeah, I think that the fact that Marcel Spears and Brandon Michael Hall, we're all experiencing this first together and that has made the journey even better. I mean, it's a first for all of us in a way. For Marcel, it's his first show ever, this is Brandon's first leading role, my first regular series role, first time Yvette has had such a leading role on a show, this is the first role that Lea has had away from





the *Glee* franchise, or should I say away from Ryan Murphy. So we're all experiencing a first. I think that's what has drawn us together and has made our chemistry so good because we genuinely enjoy each other. We have fun. Our set, Yvette, she made it very clear that our set was going to be a set of love and that we're going to love on people when they come and visit us and we're going to make sure that when people leave *The Mayor* that they know that they were appreciated and that their talent and gift was loved and needed and appreciated. We did that early on and that's the kind of atmosphere we set and have tried to maintain all season.



**I figured I would wrap up our time with some more fun questions. Your character Jermaine is Courtney's communications director and he is always posting stuff on social media. What's your favorite social media platform and why?**

I really love Instagram. I love being able to see how people, even though Instagram is sometimes your highlight reel and you only show the good things that are happening, I love to see how people express themselves and see when people take pictures of the environment that they are in and how they view life from their perspective. I think it gives everyone an opportunity to be artistic, even if you don't think you are, you can be artistic and I love that. And also being able to connect with people, having hashtags that you can click on and see the people that are participating in that particular

hashtag, I really love Instagram for that.

**What real-life rapper do you think could have the best career in politics and why?**

Oh come on, you know Chance the Rapper would be an amazing mayor.

**Yeah. He'd be my number one choice.**

He would be so good for Chicago, the commitment to the city and the people and using his platform. That's what is so important, when you get a platform, and that is why the show is so important to me because it gives you a platform, but it gives you a platform to do some good in the world and I think Chance has done that with his platform, speaking out against things that need to be spoken out against. I think he would be a great mayor.

**Since music plays such a big part of this show, who are some of your favorite musical artists and bands?**

I'm all about R&B/soul. Jazmyn Sullivan is one of my favorites, P!nk is one of my favorites, John Legend, I love Adele, Sam Smith. There is so many; I love music so much. But then sometimes, I like to turn up a little bit. I'll listen to Migos [laughs] and I will listen to hip-hop. I'm pretty eclectic. I'll listen to Alabama Shakes.

**We're called Talk Nerdy With Us so what is something that you nerd out about?**

I nerd out about gadgets. So like getting the iPhone 10 and I have this EchoDot so I have to get all the accessories for the EchoDot so that I can try to figure out how to get Alexa to order me a pizza [laughs]. I'm into gadgets. I love it.

*The Mayor* airs **Tuesdays at 9:30pm on ABC. You can keep up with Bernard by following him on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).**

<http://talknerdywithus.com/2017/11/30/exclusive-interview-with-the-mayors-bernard-david-jones/>

###



## 'The Mayor' Star Bernard David Jones on Playing Titular City Leader's Right-Hand Man



Tuesday nights on ABC just got funnier. All of your favorite comedies finally return, which include *Fresh Off The Boat*, Emmy nominated *black-ish*, and *The Middle*, on its final season run. This time they will be joined by the new kid on the block, and we mean that literally. *The Mayor* tells the story of Courtney Rose, a struggling rapper who comes up with the idea to run for mayor in his local race as a way to generate publicity for his album. He's as surprised as anyone when he actually wins the election, and must switch gears in order to help his community. He is encouraged in his new role by his family and friends, which include



best friend Jermaine Leforge, played with ardent hilarity by series star Bernard David Jones. TVOvermind had the chance to talk with Jones about his role, why millennials should be inspired by the show's message, and to tease music fans about what they can look forward to this season.

**Who is your character, Jermaine Leforge?**

He's Courtney Rose's best friend. They grew up together and are more like brothers. He's also close to T.K. and Courtney's mom Dina, since she kind of raised them all together. Once his best friend is in the mayor's office? He makes sure that his image is right. He's like a Scaramucci type-but better!

**What is Jermaine's reaction to this election and his arc for the season?**

Jermaine's reaction is like 'Yes, absolutely yes!'. Because one of the things about Jermaine is that he loves his family, which is Dina, Courtney and T.K. He loves his family, but he also loves his community as well. And he believes so much in Courtney. He is Courtney's number one fan and biggest cheerleader. He believes that this man can change the city, that they all will. So he's very excited about Courtney becoming mayor. As far as his arc, you find out that Jermaine takes his job very seriously, because he really wants Courtney to win."



**JET Magazine described this show as the "political sitcom for millennials." Do you agree with that statement?**

Absolutely, because I feel like at this point when it comes to millennials, we watch a lot of television. We're very into the internet, on social media, and this mayor, he puts out a rap CD and he tries to get likes for his rap CD and he becomes mayor! But what he does is he accepts the responsibility, he gets up and he does something. I think that's the biggest goal for millennials today is that you have a voice, you can do something. You just have to step up and that's what Courtney does. I hope that's what millennials relate to.

**It's also great that you're going to be right behind *black-ish*, that it leads you into the ABC Comedy line-up.**

[Laughs] When they told us that, Wow! We said what a perfect lead-in it is for us!



**What is something you feel you have in common with your character, and something that is wildly different between the two of you?**

I think that we both love our friends. My friends are like my family, and Jermaine's friends are like his family. Jermaine loves hard, and that's something that I admire about him, and something that I bring from my own personal experiences to the character. Wildly different? Well, the thing about Jermaine is that he can be over-the-top, take his job maybe a little too seriously. He's a little more type-A than I am. That's also something that I admire about him.

**This is your first time being a series regular on a network series. What's something that you've learned through this process?**

Eat and get sleep! Make sure you do those things. It's a challenge, because you're creating a fully realized human person that people get to see every week, and you need to be consistent. That's where theater comes in. I've learned that when you make choices, big choices, make good choices that are right for your character. And eat and sleep!

**Why do you, personally, think that people should watch this show?**

I think that people should watch the show because currently, the temperature of America is so hot right now. I think that we need an escape. I think that this show provides people the opportunity to watch what happens when someone in leadership has a heart for people. He's not a politician, he's a rapper. But what he does have is a love for his community, for the people of this community. He wants to see them be better. I think this is a great example for people to tune in and say 'hey, I can do that. I feel like I want to change my community. This guy's not a politician, I'm not a politician, but I can get in here and I can do something. All I need to do is step up and make the decision.'



**Is there something that most people don't know about you that might surprise them?**

I'm probably going to get in trouble for this. I have little bit of a guilty pleasure. I love to watch different types of Reality TV. I like *Project Runway*, *So You Think You Can Dance*, and *Dance Moms*. Probably not the typical 'guy Reality TV'.



**What is the best advice you can give to someone who wants to go into the entertainment industry?**

The thing that I think is super important as an artist is to stick to the original plan. You moved somewhere to become an actor, stick to that plan. Now how you get to the goal may be different than you originally planned, but stick to the original plan.

**Finally, what can you tease about what is coming up on *The Mayor*?**

You may or may not hear some music [performances] from some other cast members. Just throwing it out there!

*The Mayor* airs Tuesdays on ABC.

<http://www.tvovermind.com/tv-news/the-mayor-star-bernard-david-jones-on-playing-titular-city-leaders-right-hand-man>

###

**"THE CHI" Premiere**  
January 3rd



**Eva Longoria Foundation Gala**  
October 12th



## Disney/Pixar COCO Premiere

November 8<sup>th</sup>



## 8<sup>th</sup> Annual "Movies By Kids" Screening and Awards Show

November 4<sup>th</sup>



## People's "Ones to Watch"

October 4<sup>th</sup>



## Men's Fitness Game Changers Event

September 29<sup>th</sup>



**LA Mission Thanksgiving Meal for Homeless**

November 22<sup>nd</sup>



**Television Industry "Advocacy Awards"**

September 16<sup>th</sup>



**SAG-AFTRA 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Dynamic & Diverse Celebration**  
September 12<sup>th</sup>



**Def Comedy Jam 25**  
September 10<sup>th</sup>

