

THE BLACK LENSTM

NEWS FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

1967 DETROIT UPRISING

Fifty Years Later. Looking Back. Looking Forward.



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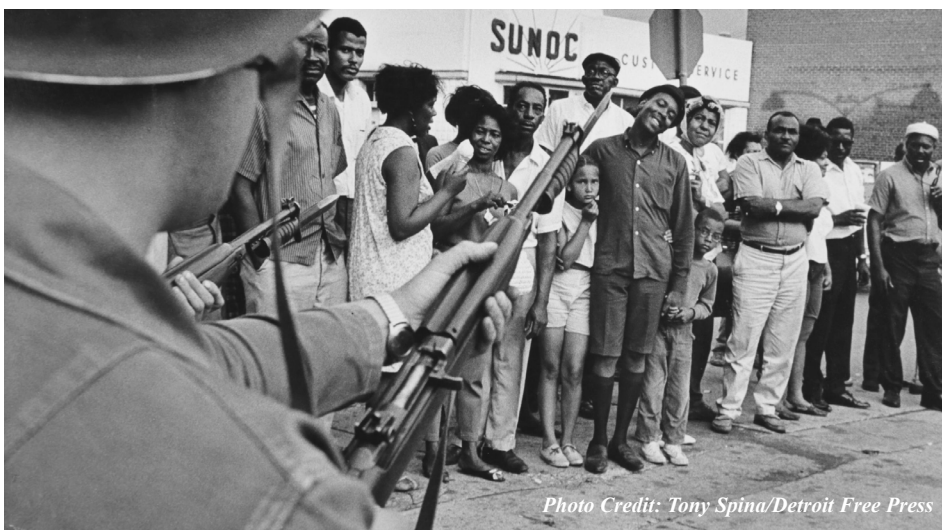


Photo Credit: Tony Spina/Detroit Free Press



Photo Credit: Associated Press

Reprinted from Blackpast.org

The uprising in Detroit, Michigan during the summer of 1967 was one of the most violent urban revolts in the 20th century. It came as an immediate response to police brutality, but underlying conditions including segregated housing and schools and rising Black unemployment helped drive the anger of the rioters.

On Sunday evening, July 23, Detroit Police Vice Squad officers raided an after hours, unlicensed bar known as a "blind pig." The bar was on the corner of 12th Street and Clairmount Avenue in the center of Detroit's oldest and poorest Black neighborhood.

A party at the bar was in progress to celebrate the return of two Black servicemen

from Vietnam. Officers had expected a few patrons would be inside, but they found more than they expected and they arrested all 82 people attending the party.

As the party goers were being transported from the scene by police, a crowd of about 200 people gathered outside agitated by rumors that police had used excessive force during the 12th Street bar raid.

Shortly after 5:00 a.m., an empty bottle was thrown into the rear window of a police car, and then a waste basket was thrown through a storefront window.

At 5:20 a.m. additional police officers were sent to 12th Street to stop the growing violence, but by mid-morning looting and window-smashing had spread out along 12th Street.

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ON MY MIND

THOUGHTS FROM THE EDITOR

by Sandra Williams

Disparities, Disparities and Even More--- Disparities

One of the things that is the most challenging about publishing the Black Lens every month is that I devote a good deal of my time researching, tracking down and identifying the issues that are impacting Black people.

Month after month, I read reports and articles and papers. I attend meetings. I participate on advisory committees and task forces and commissions. You name it and I've probably been there. All in an effort to get as much information as I can, so that I can pass it on to our community.

Over the past few months, though, that task has become increasingly difficult. There's a saying that I heard a long time ago when I was growing up. It says, "Once you know a thing, you can't un-know it."

The words have become a sort of mantra for me, and they echo in my ears at times like these, when my brain is sending signals to my heart, telling it--enough. You know too much now.

I've been calling this August issue the "Disparity Issue" since I started working on it a few weeks ago. It was birthed out of my recognition that I have been bombarded lately with report after report after report about the disparities that are impacting Black people.

It seems, every where you look, on every indicator that exists, Black folks are impacted negatively, and I just feel that now is the time to take a stand.

As I was putting this paper together, a couple of things came to mind. First of all, none of this is a surprise for me and I suspect that it isn't much of a surprise for anyone reading this paper either. In this issue I talked about disproportionality in education, law and justice, housing, business, and health, and I wasn't surprised by any of it. I wish I was, but I wasn't. It's actually more of a validation, than a discovery. A testament to what we've known to be true for a long as we can remember.

The second thing that came to mind was a question. Now what?



My daughter wondered if all of the negative statistics would be depressing and if it would leave folks feeling defeated. I think that defeated feeling, or something like it, was the spark that lit the fires of the 1967 Detroit Uprising.

So, defeated is certainly not what I am hoping comes from this issue. Besides I think we, as a people, are much stronger than that. And I think the fact that we as a people are still standing after everything that has been thrown at us, says something.

So my hope is that this disparity issue will be a catalyst for African Americans to take the bull by the horns so to speak, and change things-- for ourselves.

On Saturday, August 12, the Washington State Commission on African American Affairs is partnering with the Spokane NAACP, the Spokane Minister's Fellowship, the Links and the Deltas to co-host a Spokane meeting for members of the African American community to come up with a Unified Black Agenda, to determine our priority issues and how we as a community can come together to address them.

The meeting is from 10am-Noon at the Emmanuel Family Life Center, 631 S. Richard Allen Court, Spokane, Wash. 99204.

My hope is that we will have so many people there that we will run out of chairs, so *please RSVP at 509-795-1964 or sw9876@aol.com.*

I believe, and I have for some time, that Spokane's African American community is at a crossroads. I hope that you will make time on the 12th to help us choose the best path.

QUESTION OF THE MONTH

CITY OF SPOKANE



How many people do you know personally who are in positions of power in Spokane?
And more importantly, how many of them know you?
Look on Page 14 to See.



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Let's Get it!!!

THE BLACK LENS NEWS

The Black Lens is a community newspaper based in Spokane, WA. The paper is published on the first of each month, and it is focused on the news, events, issues, people and information important to Spokane's African American Community and beyond.

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1967 Detroit Uprising

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As the violence escalated into the afternoon, Detroit Congressman John Conyers climbed atop a car in the middle of 12th Street to address the crowd. The police informed him that they could not guarantee his safety as he was pelted with bricks and bottles.

Around 1:00 p.m. police officers began to report injuries from stones, bottles, and other objects that were thrown at them. When firemen responded to fire alarms, they too were struck with thrown objects. Mayor Jerome Cavanaugh met with city and state leaders at police headquarters and agreed that additional force was needed in order to stop the violence.

By 3:00 p.m. 360 police officers began to assemble at the Detroit Armory as the uprising spread from 12th Street to other areas of the city. The fires that were started spread rapidly in the afternoon heat and as 25 mile per hour winds began to blow. Even as businesses and homes went up in flames, firemen were increasingly subject to attack.

At 5:30 p.m., twelve hours into the uprising, Mayor Cavanaugh requested that the National Guard be brought into Detroit to stop the violence. Meanwhile firefighters abandoned an area roughly 100 square blocks in size around 12th Street as the fires raged out of control.

The first troops arrived in the city at 7:00 p.m. and 45 minutes later the Mayor instituted a curfew between 9:00 p.m and 5:00 a.m. Seven minutes into the curfew a 16-year-old African American boy was the first gunshot victim.

At 11:00 p.m. a 45-year-old white man was seen looting a store and was shot by the store owner. Be-

fore dawn, four other store looters were shot, one while struggling with the police. As the night wore on, there were reports of deaths by snipers and complaints of sniper fire. Many of these reports were from policemen who were unable to determine the origins of the gunfire.

At 2:00 a.m. Monday morning, 800 State Police Officers and 8,000 National Guardsmen were ordered to the city by Michigan Governor George Romney. They were later augmented by 4,700 paratroopers from the 82nd Airborne Division who were ordered in by President Lyndon Johnson.

With their arrival of the additional troops, the looting and arson began to end but there were continuous reports of sniper fire. The sniper attacks stopped only with the end of the violence on Thursday, July 27th. The Mayor lifted the curfew on Tuesday, August 1 and the National Guardsmen left the city.

In the five days and nights of violence 43 people were killed, 33 Black and 10 white, 1,189 were injured and over 7,200 people were arrested. Approximately 2,500 stores were looted and the total property damage was estimated at about \$32 million.

Until the aftermath of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr's death in April 1968, the Detroit uprising stood as the largest urban uprising of the 1960s.

Contributor: Tabitha C. Wang, University of Washington, Seattle. Sources: Allen D. Grimshaw, ed., Racial Violence in the United States (Chicago: Aldine Publishing, 1969); Stephan Thernstrom and Abigail Thernstrom, America in Black and White (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1997). Photos Courtesy Detroit Free Press.

DETROIT 67: Looking Back To Move Forward

If we had had more fearless conversations in the past we would be further along.
~Lauren Hood , Detroit

DETROIT HISTORY SOCIETY

In the lead up to the fiftieth anniversary of the 1967 Detroit uprising, the Detroit Historical Society reflected on an important crossroad that existed for the city.

“With the 50 year commemoration of the tumultuous summer of 1967 coming in 2017, the community can either let this important moment in history pass – and just be an unpleasant and troubling reminder – or we can use it as a catalyst to engage, reflect and provide opportunities to take the collective action that can help move our community forward.” The Society chose the latter.

Detroit 67: Looking Back to MOVE FORWARD is a multi-year project bringing together diverse voices and communities. The project is comprised of four major components: a comprehensive online oral and written history archive, an interactive exhibition, community partnerships, educational and outreach activities, and community wide engagement and mobilization. The Detroit Historical Society’s goal is the creation of a model for bringing diverse voices and communities together around the effects of a historic crisis to find their roles in the present and inspire the future.

For more information visit: <http://www.detroit1967.org>.

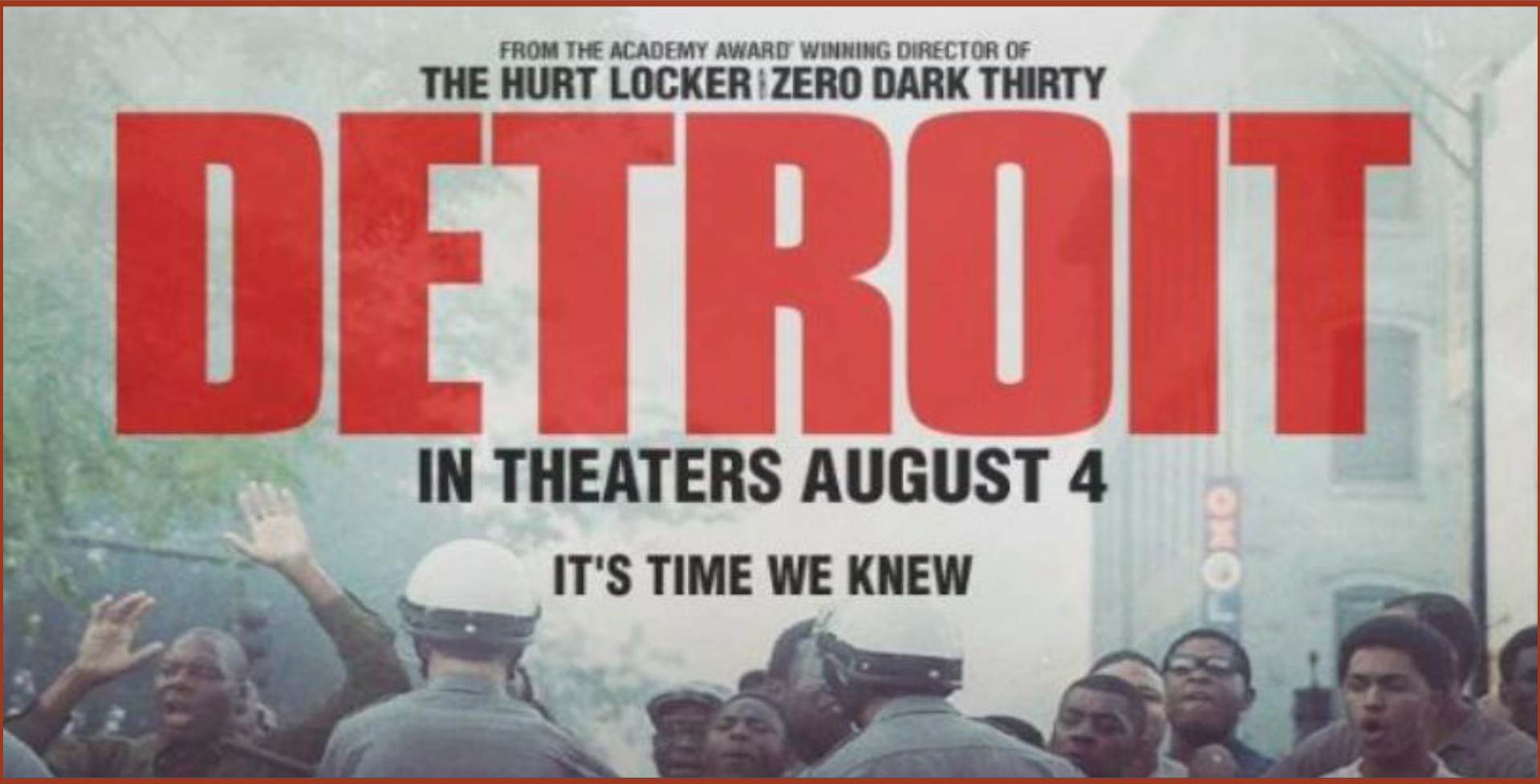
DETROIT FREE PRESS

The Detroit Free Press reflected on the coverage of the uprising and how that might be different today.

“50 years later, we can now recognize that Detroit in 1967 was a city of deep divisions that permeated every level of public life. The city’s segregation and prejudices led to omissions in coverage and perspectives. The city’s African American community was under-represented in news stories and often delegitimized. The absence of blogs and social media accounts meant many voices and frustrations, from the city and suburbs alike, went unheard.”

The Free Press collaborated with former Free Press journalist Bill McGraw, who wrote extensively on 1967, and with the Detroit Historical Society, to build a detailed timeline of the events of the unrest. They compiled oral histories and also launched social media accounts to “live-Tweet” and share the historic events of July 1967, 50 years later.

The Detroit Free Press Multimedia project: **Detroit 1967 Riot: Rebellion and Unrest** is available online at <http://on.freep.com/2gUGOpd>.



BLACK NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Local, State, National and Around the World

OJ Simpson Gets Parole After Serving 9 Years

(Source: <http://www.aljazeera.com/news>)

OJ Simpson, the former American football star, who was acquitted of the murder of Nicole Brown Simpson and Ron Goldman on October 3, 1995 in what has been described as the “most publicized trial in American history”, has been granted parole after serving nearly nine years in prison for a Las Vegas hotel armed robbery.

Simpson, now age 70, made his plea for parole at Lovelock Correctional Center in rural Nevada, where he has been serving his time. The four parole commissioners questioned him via video from Carson City, NV, two-hours away.

During the hour-long hearing, that was streamed and televised around the world, Simpson insisted, as he has from the beginning, that he was only trying to retrieve items that belonged to him and never meant to hurt anyone.

The four commissioners unanimously agreed to release Simpson, citing his lack of a prior conviction, the low risk he might commit another crime, his community support and his release plans.

Simpson, who was moved into protective custody following the hearing, could be a free as early as October 1.



Jason Bean/Pool/Getty Images

NY Police Officer Ambushed

(Source: Tracie Strahan and Katherine Creag, <http://www.nbcnewyork.com/news>)

A police officer and mother of three was shot and killed while sitting in a marked NYPD command vehicle with her partner in the Bronx the morning of July 5, making her the first female New York Police officer killed in the line of duty since the 9/11 attacks, according to the NY Times.

NYPD Officer Miosotis Familia, 48, was stationed in a mobile command post -- a RV-sized truck used as a communications hub during major events like the Fourth of July. She was in the area of 183rd Street and Morris Avenue in Fordham, according to Police Commissioner James O’Neill, and was wrapping up her shift just after midnight.

Officer Familia, had been looking down, writing in her memo book, when a gunman walked up and fired through the passenger side window, in what officials called “an unprovoked attack.”

Familia, 48, was only working the mid-night shift that morning to free up more time with her family during the summer. In addition to raising her kids, Familia was also caring for her 86-year-old mother who was recovering from a recent surgery for oral cancer. Her devastated children are left wondering about their future and who will take care of them.



“Reading Rainbow” Host LeVar Burton Launches New Reading Podcast For Adults



(Source: Amy Ratcliffe, <http://nerdist.com>)

LeVar Burton has a new podcast for adults that is much like Reading Rainbow, the hit PBS children’s reading program that Burton hosted for over twenty years.

Burton is an Actor, Director, Educator & Co-founder of the award-winning Skybrary App, host and Executive Producer of PBS’s Reading Rainbow and a lifelong children’s literacy advocate.

The weekly podcast, titled “**LeVar Burton Reads**”, will feature LeVar Burton reading “handpicked pieces of short fiction” from a variety of genres. The first episode premiered on June 13 with Bruce McAllister’s science-fiction short story “Kin,” a Hugo-nominated story about a boy who hires an alien mercenary to save his sister’s life.

The second episode featured Daisy Johnson’s “The Light-house Keeper,” the story of a solitary life by the sea, and a woman’s courage.

Each episode of “LeVar Burton Reads”, which range in time from 30 - 50 minutes, concludes with the narrator’s final thoughts on the story. After reading “Kin,” Burton says that “it is incumbent upon us to grow up and decide, define, discover what it is that we are supposed to do, what gift we are supposed to give” to the world.

LeVar Burton Reads is available on Apple Podcasts or by visiting <http://www.levarburtonpodcast.com>.

Google Helps Urban League Provide College Experience To Seattle Youth



(Source: <http://seattlemedium.com>)

Over 90 under-represented Seattle High School students embarked upon the campus of Seattle Central College for their first-ever college experience when they attended the kick off to **Summer University**, a high school enrichment program led by the Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle (ULMS), on the campus of Seattle Central College.

In its second year, the program has more than doubled, from 37 students in 2016 to over 90 enrollees this year. Google helped fund last year’s pilot program, and is granting \$50,000 to the program this year.

Students in the six-week program will be immersed in various STEAM disciplines (science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics), with courses designed to stimulate curiosity and appreciation for the wide range of college degrees and career opportunities available to them. They will receive college credit and high school credit retrieval to support their high school graduation and increase the likelihood of attending college.

Outcome data from students who completed the course in 2016 showed that 74 percent of attendees were more likely to attend college, 87 percent were more interested in STEAM topics, 97 percent made new connections and 90 percent would participate in future Urban League activities.

Don Cheadle To Produce Film On America’s First Black Millionaire



(Source: Ryan Velez , <http://financialjunteenth.com>)

Newsone reports that Don Cheadle is planning to direct and star in a biography of **Jeremiah G. Hamilton** who is the first Black millionaire in the U.S.

Cheadle’s film will draw from the 2015 biography of Hamilton, *Prince of Darkness: The Untold Story of Jeremiah G. Hamilton, Wall Street’s First Black Millionaire*.

The book focuses on Hamilton being chased out of Haiti in 1828 before setting up business in New York, breaking many taboos such as marrying a white woman and owning stock in rail companies, despite not being legally allowed to ride the trains.

Hamilton made his fortune by becoming a broker and land agent in New York City. Unlike many Black businessmen of the day, who sold their wares generally to other Black people, Hamilton entered the white business world as well, which earned him both success and ire from the white and Black community alike.

At the time of his death in 1875, Hamilton’s worth was \$2 million, \$42 million today accounting for inflation. In his obituary, he was described as the richest Black man in America.

The film will be a familiar collaboration for Cheadle, who is bringing back writer Steven Baigelman. The two worked together on Cheadle’s biopic of Miles Davis.

BLACK NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Local, State, National and Around the World

James Troutt: Racquetball

Spokane Athlete Wins Two National Championships

In the span of two months local Spokane athlete James Troutt brought two national racquetball championships back home to Spokane.

The first was at the 2017 USA Racquetball National Singles Championships in Tempe, Arizona. The championships, which were celebrating their 50th Anniversary in 2017, were held from May 24-28. Troutt won the Gold Medal in Men’s Singles in the 75-80 Division.

“We had a heck of a match,” Troutt said of his victory in the finals. His opponent was Don Sperber, of Palm Beach, Florida, and although Troutt was having a fairly easy time defeating his previous opponents, Sperber was as well. They both won four straight games to get to the championships.

The match was best two out of three and Sperber took a 9-1 lead in the first game. Troutt had come close to defeat with an earlier opponent, but had overcome the deficit. This time was different. Troutt rallied and battled his way back, but he lost the first game 10-15, his first loss in the tournament. The next game was back and forth, and up and down, but Troutt eventually won 15-12.

Troutt knew the third game tie breaker was going to be tough for him, and he was going to have to summon strength from somewhere in order to win, but from where? There were a few minutes between games, so Troutt went off by himself. “I found a space where I could walk around the wall of Jericho,” he said, and he walked and he prayed and the wall came down. Troutt won the final game, 11-5.

The second national championship that Troutt won was at the National Senior Games, otherwise known as the Senior Olympics, which was held from June 6-12 in Birmingham, Alabama. This time his Gold Medal was for Men’s Doubles in the 75-79 Division. Ironically, Troutt’s doubles partner was the man he had defeated in the Single’s Championships a month earlier, Don Sperber.

Troutt and Sperber had met at other tournaments, but they had never played together. They talked in February at the U.S. Doubles National Championships and Sperber asked Troutt if he was going to participate in the Senior Olympics. There were qualifications that players had to meet in order to be eligible for play and Troutt wasn’t sure if he was eligible, but when he found out that he was qualified, the men decided to be partners. “We didn’t talk any more until we got there,” Troutt added.

The pair won both of the matches leading up to the finals fairly easily (11-7, 11-6 & 11-7, 11-7), but despite that, Troutt said he was “a little concerned about the finals” because one of the men on the opposing team had beaten Sperber in singles, which meant he was good.

“I went in there all fired up to make sure that I was ready,” Troutt shared. “I took the guy that had beaten my partner, and he took the other guy. We just did everything right. This guy was hitting his best shots and I was getting everything.” They won in straight games, 11-4, 11-4.

In reflecting on how it felt to win the national championships, Troutt said, “It was like heaven. I thought I had died and gone to heaven. I couldn’t have been more proud.” And he wants his family to feel the same pride that he has.

“I want my kids and grandkids to be able to look at the records and see that I was able to play and win gold medals at 75, and I hope that they will be able to see me winning at 80 too.”

Troutt says at age 75, his goal is just to keep playing racquetball as long as he can. His next stop: The World Senior Games on August 28 in Albuquerque NM, where he will play Men’s Doubles in the 70+ Division, and Men’s Singles in the 75+ Division.



Hip-Hop/R&B Surpasses Rock as Leading Music Genre in U.S.



(Source: Sheryl Estrada, <http://www.diversityinc.com/news>)

For the first time since Nielsen started measuring music consumption in the United States, rock is no longer the top genre. R&B and Hip-Hop have taken the throne.

Nielsen Music released its annual mid-year report this month, which provides the definitive figures and charts for the music industry from the first six months of 2017.

The R&B and Hip-Hop genre has become the largest share of overall volume (album sales, TEA and on-demand audio SEA) at 25.1 percent. Rock falls to second with 23 percent of the total volume.

While rock still dominates album sales at 40 percent, R&B and Hip-Hop has become the largest genre by dominating streaming consumption. More than 30 percent of audio on-demand streaming comes from R&B and Hip-Hop, nearly as much as the next two genres combined (rock at 18 percent and pop at 13 percent).

Hip-Hop, which originated in the streets of South Bronx in New York City in the 1970s, is currently at the forefront of the music industry.

“Hip-Hop is profitable for companies,” said Dr. Shango Blake, CEO of TRU SK Consultants, also known as ‘The Nation’s Hip-Hop Principal’. “If we say you are ‘hot’ or ‘poppin,’ you can take that to the bank!” Blake continued, “If they are wise, corporations will continue to pay attention to Black culture.”

NFL Players Invest In 12-Year-Old’s Lemonade Company



(Source: <https://blavity.com>)

A group of NFL players invested \$810,000 into Me & the Bees Lemonade, a beverage company run by 12-year-old Mikaila Ulmer.

The Houston Chronicle reported that retired running back Arian Foster announced the investment at the “Bee Brilliant Entrepreneur Day” event held at a local Boys & Girls Club. Foster was joined by other players such as Glover Quin, Duane Brown, Jonathan Grimes, Omar Bolden, Bobby Wagner, Darius Slay, Sherrick McManis, EJ Manuel, Malik Jackson, Nick Martin and Lameck Lukanga who put their money together to invest in the young company.

Mikaila Ulmer founded the brand when she was 4-years-old after she got stung twice by bees. The incident led her to become fascinated by bees’ impact on the ecosystem. This, in turn, led Ulmer to incorporate honey into her great grandmother’s flaxseed lemonade recipe.

After appearing on Shark Tank in March 2015 and taking home a \$60,000 investment from FUBU Founder Daymond John, Ulmer landed a 62-store Whole Foods deal, was named one of Movement50’s Top 10 Innovators of the Year at SXSW and even got to meet President Barack Obama.

“I’m very happy that I’m able to work with them and they invested in my company,” Ulmer told the Chronicle. “I think we have a better chance of achieving our goals. That keeps me pumped and excited every day.”

Mother and Daughters Own 13 McDonald’s Franchises



(Source: <http://blog.blackbusiness.org>)

Patricia Williams and her daughters, Nicole Enearu and Kerri Harper-Howie, have built an empire of McDonald’s franchises in the Los Angeles, California area. Combined, they employ more than 700 people in the community and generate annual revenues of almost \$50 million.

More than 30 years ago, Patricia, inspired by other family members who also owned McDonald’s franchises, took the leap herself. She was working at the time as a rehabilitation therapist, and her husband was a police officer for the LAPD. They decided to cash out their retirement plans, and take out a small business loan to enter the world of fast food. Their first McDonald’s location was in Compton, CA.

The first location became a quick success enabling Patricia and her husband to purchase a second store. Their marriage eventually fell apart and Patricia ended up buying out her husband’s share of the company. She continued working hard on customer service and marketing, which helped significantly to increase the revenue at both locations and in 1995 Patricia sold both of her stores and purchased five more.

In the early 2000’s, both of Patricia’s daughters ended up getting involved in the business as well. Today, the three of them are running a multi-million dollar company that provides hundreds of jobs to the local community. They also provide scholarships to local students, and the funds for various local and national charities.

YOU SHOULD KNOW

(Or Things You Probably Didn't Learn In School)

ART AND HISTORY by Bertoni Jones Bey

(jbaguart@yahoo.com)

Mary Elisabeth Bowser

The First Spy Named “Bond”

Mary Elisabeth Bowser was born in Richmond, Virginia on the John Van Lew Plantation in 1839. Upon Mr. Van Lew’s death in 1851 all of his slaves were given their freedom papers with the help of the master’s daughter Elizabeth, a fiercely committed and publicly outspoken critic against chattel slavery, known to locals as “Crazy Bett”.

Noticing her intelligence, Elizabeth invested in Mary’s education and sent her to the Quaker School for Negroes in Philadelphia. Upon her return from school, Mary was employed back on the Van Lew plantation as a servant making wages. Days before the Civil War, Mary married a free man named Wilson Bowser in a church ceremony that was filled unusually by a Caucasian congregation. There is no record of children from the union.

As the Civil War was taking shape, the Van Lew Plantation, under Elizabeth, took a critical stand. It was very rare for southern plantations to side against the Confederate cause and stand with the Union, especially in the Confederate capitol of Richmond. But this was exactly what Elizabeth did by establishing the plantation as a stop in the Underground Railroad and hiding Union soldier-prisoners and fugitive slaves alike, eventually creating a sophisticated and highly coordinated in-house spy center that would soon infiltrate the very highest levels of Confederate society.

This is where Mary came into play. With her high IQ, photographic memory, and acting skills, Mary was hired as “Ellen Bond” a useful but illiterate and dim-witted servant to

Varina Davis, the wife of Confederate President Jefferson Davis. This made Mary historically the first spy named “Bond”!

Mary worked for Varina Davis until the end of the Civil War. Her daily routine was to clean and serve meals at the Davis Mansion. In the course of her daily chores she acquired vital knowledge by listening in on conversations. While “cleaning” Jefferson Davis’ office, Mary uncovered highly secretive documents that she could recite back from memory, word for word, all without anyone’s knowledge that she was in fact a Union spy.

Towards the war’s end The Davises realized that there was a breach coming from within, but they couldn’t quite point to a source. By January of 1865 their suspicions fell upon Mary or “Ellen,” but with the end of the war on the way and her usefulness to the Union cause diminishing, Mary retreated from the Davis Mansion. Not before her last heroic and patriotic act, however. She attempted to burn the Davis’s Confederate Mansion to the ground, but the flames did not take hold.

There are no clear records of Mary’s life after the Civil War or her date and place of death. In 1995, at Fort Huachuca in Arizona, the United States Government gave public honor and recognition to Mary Elisabeth Bowser for her dedicated efforts towards the Union cause and inducted her into the Military Intelligence Corps’ Hall of Fame.

Sources:
Black Heritage Day III (Mary Elisabeth Bowser) – Jamiyo Mack; Hutchinscenter.fas.harvard.edu/bowser-mary-elizabeth-1839-union-spy-during-civil-war



Shariah Harris: Polo Player

Teen Becomes First Black Woman to Play On Top Tier U.S. Polo Team

Source: D.L. Chandler, Little Known History Fact, <https://black-america-web.com>; Associated Press; Mary Kekatos, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news>

Polo has long had an image of being a sport for the rich, white elite, and not something inner-city kids participated in. Things are changing, however, as **Shariah Harris** made history in June by becoming the first Black player to reach the highest level of the sport.

Harris, 19, is currently a student at Cornell University and a star on its Polo team. She led the school to the national finals and was named the U.S. Polo Association’s Player of the Year in 2016.

Harris shared in an interview with CBS News that she discovered the sport of polo by accident twelve years ago when her mother took a wrong turn while driving one day. They ended up on a dead-end road at a barn where other minority children were riding on horses.

What they had stumbled on to was the home of “Work to Ride”, a nonprofit organization that teaches urban kids from low-income homes how to ride horses and gets them involved in equestrian events. From there, Harris became enamored by the sport and over the years, she’s honed her skills as a polo player under the guidance of Work To Ride’s Lezlie Hiner.

In late June, Harris joined the Postage Farm Polo Team,

making her public debut with the team in the Silver Cup tournament at the Greenwich Polo Club in Connecticut.

While humbly accepting all the accolades but thinking of herself as just another player, Harris does hope that her presence on the Polo field will inspire boys and girls who look like her to embrace the sport.

Harris said the stares, the inappropriate comments and the whispering that comes with being a Black woman playing polo can be discouraging at times,” according to the Daily Mail, but she adds, it won’t stop her from riding.

“If me playing will mean opportunities to play for other kids like me, then I’m perfectly happy to be breaking down doors,” Shariah said. “I just keep quiet, put on my boots and go out and play.”

(c) Associated Press Photo



‘Corrected’ School Map Gives New Look for Africa

(TriceEdneyWire.com/GIN) - In an age of “fake news” and “alternative facts”, authorities in the city of Boston believe their new school map offers something closer to the geographical truth than that of traditional maps, and hope it can serve an example to schools across the nation and even the world.

The school district will drop the Mercator projection, which physically diminished Africa and South America, for the Peters, which cuts the developed world down to size.

The Gall-Peters projection shows land masses in their correct proportions by area, putting the relative sizes of Africa and North America in perspective.

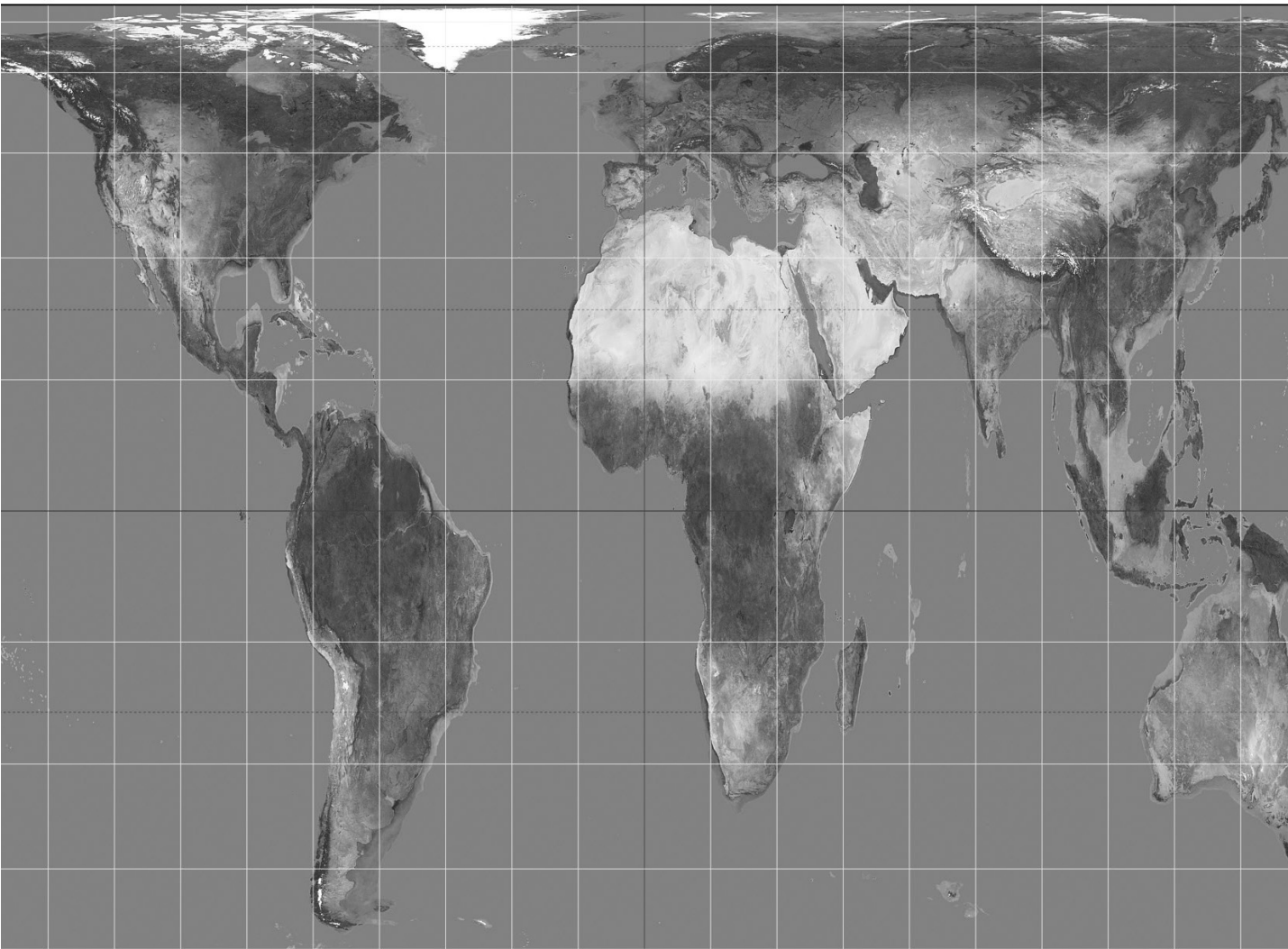
When Boston public schools introduced a new standard map of the world this week, some young students felt their world had changed.

The USA was small. Europe too had suddenly shrunk. Africa and South America appeared narrower but also much larger than usual. And what had happened to Alaska?

For almost 500 years, the Mercator projection – designed to aid navigation along colonial trade routes - has been the norm for maps of the world.

In the Mercator system, North America and Europe appear bigger than South America and Africa. Western Europe is in the middle of his map.

South America is made to look about the same size as Europe, when in fact it is almost twice as large, and Greenland looks roughly the size of Africa when it is actually about 14 times smaller. Alaska looks bigger than Mexico and Germany is in the middle of the picture, not to the north.



The switch to the Gall-Peters Projection sees Boston’s public schools follow the lead of the United Nations, which has advocated the map as a more ‘fair’, less Euro-centric representation of the world, as have several aid agencies.

Teachers in the 2nd, 7th and 11th grades have already received their new maps, and say the reaction from their students has

been fascinating. “It’s “interesting to watch the students saying ‘Wow’ and ‘No, really? Look at Africa, it’s bigger’”, Natacha Scott, director of history and social studies at Boston public schools, told The Guardian.

“Some of their reactions were quite funny,” she added, “but it was also amazingly interesting to see them questioning what they thought they knew.”

GLOBAL INFORMATION NETWORK creates and distributes news and feature articles on current affairs in Africa to media outlets, scholars, students and activists in the U.S. and Canada. Our goal is to introduce important new voices on topics relevant to Americans, to increase the perspectives available to readers in North America and to bring into their view information about global issues that are overlooked or under-reported by mainstream media.

THOUGHTS FROM A GRANDMOTHER



Parenting Classes?

By Evelyn Anderton

In the early 1990’s I was asked to attend a parenting class workshop in Seattle Washington. I really had no interest in going to a parenting classes workshop, but I didn’t want to miss out on a week in Seattle.

The workshop first got my attention because of the title, “Effective Black Parenting”. My first thought was why effective Black parenting and what difference does it makes if I’m Black, white or red? However, after completing the class and receiving my certificate, I realized how important it was to introduce parenting classes to our Black community.

I didn’t know personally any Black parents who had ever taken parenting classes, and although I was a parent of 3 children, I had never considered parenting classes myself. I always felt we were wonderful parents, and parenting was easy for me and my husband. If someone would have asked me to grade our parenting skills, we most definitely would have received a B+.

One of the most interesting parts of the workshop was chapter 3; Proud of being Black. That lesson was very

interesting and very useful to me as a Black parent, and especially useful for parents with multi-racial children.

Three thoughts came to my mind when we discuss the topic of pride of your ethnicities (1) James Brown singing in the late 60’s “Say It Loud I’m Black and Proud”, (2) Marin Luther King Jr’s., verse in his, ‘I Have a Dream Speech’, “that one day his four children will live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character”, and (3) Mona Lake Jones in her poem Being the Mother of a Black Child, saying “what counts is not the outside wrapping but the character within. It is our responsibility as Black parents to teach our children to be proud of their heritage.

On many occasions parenting classes are misunderstood. Too often parents feel parenting classes imply that they are doing something wrong. However, these classes are designed to equip parents with fresh ideas and methods to handle future problematic situations.

There is an old saying, terrible two’s make terrible teens. Therefore, it is very important to start early. If you are wondering if you could use parenting classes, ask yourself these questions below. If you answer yes to any of these questions you may need

to consider taking parenting classes.

- 1) Do you find yourself avoiding shopping or eating out, because your 2 – 4-year-old is more likely to have a temper tantrum? **You could use a parenting class.**
- 2) Has your 5 - 9-year-old developed a disrespectful behavior at home, school, and with friends? **You could use a parenting class.**
- 3) Is your 10 – 13-year-old totally out of control and you feel like giving up? **You could use a parenting class.**
- 4) Is your 14 – 17-year-old telling you where they are going, instead of asking you can they go? **You could use a parenting class.**
- 5) Is your 18 – 21-year-old still living at home and having temper tantrums, or acting disrespectful and out of control, with a sassy mouth? **You don’t need parenting classes. Your child needs a new address!**

Finally, are you one of those parents who thinks you will never go to a parenting classes? If your answer is yes, the next time you buy a new appliance, car, or toys for your children; just throw the manual or instruction in the trash.

Parenting classes are your manuals or instruction booklet, follow the direction and they will help you be the most effective parent you can be.

DISPARITIES IN BUSINESS

IF PEOPLE OF COLOR WERE **PROPORTIONALLY REPRESENTED** AMONG BUSINESS OWNERS, THERE WOULD BE



1.1 million

More businesses owned
by people of color



9 million

More jobs



\$300 billion

More in workers' income

Based on “**The Color of Entrepreneurship: Why the Racial Gap among Firms Costs the U.S. Billions**”, available at globalpolicysolutions.org.



EXCEPT FOR ASIAN AMERICANS, **PEOPLE OF COLOR ARE UNDERREPRESENTED** AMONG 5.1 MILLION OWNERS OF PRIVATELY HELD BUSINESSES WITH EMPLOYEES



White men

Make up
41%
of the labor force



Own
57%
of businesses



White women

Make up
35%
of the labor force



Own
17%
of businesses



Black men and women

Make up
12%
of the labor force



Own
2%
of businesses



Hispanic men and women

Make up
16%
of the labor force



Own
5%
of businesses



Asian American men and women

Make up
6%
of the labor force



Own
8%
of businesses

Based on “**The Color of Entrepreneurship: Why the Racial Gap among Firms Costs the U.S. Billions**”, available at globalpolicysolutions.org.



DISPARITIES IN ECONOMICS

The Asset Value of Whiteness

Understanding the Racial Wealth Gap

By Amy Traub, Laura Sullivan, Tatjana Meschede, & Tom Shapiro

Reprinted from the publication ‘The Asset Value of Whiteness: Understanding the Racial Wealth Gap’

Issues of racial inequity are increasingly at the forefront of America’s public debate. In addition to urgent concerns about racial bias in law enforcement and the criminal justice system, activists highlight deeply connected issues of economic exclusion and inequality. No metric more powerfully captures the persistence and growth of economic inequality along racial and ethnic lines than the racial wealth gap.

According to data from the Survey of Consumer Finances, the median white household possessed \$13 in net wealth for every dollar held by the median black household in 2013. That same year, median white households possessed \$10 for each dollar held by the median Latino/a household. Research probing the causes of the racial wealth gap has traced its origins to historic injustices, from slavery to segregation to redlining.

The median white single parent has 2.2 times more wealth than the median black two-parent household and 1.9 times more wealth than the median Latino two-parent household.

The great expansion of wealth in the years after World War II was fueled by public policies such as the GI Bill, which mostly helped white veterans attend college and purchase homes with guaranteed mortgages, building the foundations of an American middle class that largely excluded people of color. The outcomes of past injustice are carried forward as wealth is handed down across generations and are reinforced by ostensibly “color-blind” practices and policies in effect today.

Yet many popular explanations for racial economic inequality overlook these deep roots, asserting that wealth disparities must be solely the result of individual life choices and personal achievements. The misconception that personal responsibility accounts for the racial wealth gap is an obstacle to the policies that could effectively address racial disparities.

This paper explores a number of these popular explanations for the racial wealth gap, looking at individual differences in education, family structure, full- or part-time employment, and consumption habits. In each case, we find that individual choices are not sufficient to erase a century of accumulated wealth: structural racism trumps personal responsibility.

Drawing on data from the 2013 Survey of Consumer Finances, we find that white adults who don’t graduate high school, don’t get married before having children, and don’t work full time still have much greater wealth at the median than comparable Black and Latino

The median white adult who attended college has 7.2 times more wealth than the median black adult who attended college and 3.9 times more wealth than the median Latino adult who attended college.

no adults—and often have more wealth than Black and Latino households that have married, completed more education, or work longer hours.

Differences in consumption habits also cannot explain the wealth gap; we look at academic research finding that white households spend more than black households of comparable incomes, yet still have more wealth.

The racial wealth gap matters because of the central role wealth plays in enabling families to both handle current financial challenges and make investments in their future. Families that have accumulated some wealth are better equipped to manage unanticipated expenses like an emergency medical bill, or disruptions in household income such as a layoff, without falling into debt or poverty.

Over the longer term, wealth can expand the prospects of the next generation, helping to pay for college, provide a down payment for a first home, or capitalize a new business. As long as a substantial racial wealth gap persists, white households will continue to enjoy greater advantages than their Black and Latino neighbors in meeting the financial challenges of everyday life and will be able to make greater investments in their children, passing economic advantages on.

We can only create a more equitable future by confronting the racial wealth gap and the public policies that continue to fuel and exacerbate it. In order for our nation to begin addressing disparities in wealth and opportunity, we must recognize that the racial wealth gap exists and clearly understand its causes.

Building a more equitable society will require a shift in focus away from individual behavior towards addressing structural and institutional racism. To aid in that effort, the Institute on Assets and Social Policy developed the Racial Wealth Audit™ as a framework to evaluate public policy proposals for their potential to reduce the racial wealth gap.

To download and read the complete publication, visit: <http://www.demos.org/publication/asset-value-whiteness-understanding-racial-wealth-gap>. For more information about the Racial Wealth Audit, visit <http://racialwealthaudit.org>.

The median white household that includes a full-time worker has 7.6 times more wealth than the median black household with a full-time worker. The median white household that includes a full-time worker also has 5.4 times more wealth than the median Latino household with a full-time worker.

Attending college does not close the racial wealth gap.

Raising children in a two-parent household doesn’t close the racial wealth gap.

Working full time does not close the racial wealth gap.


Spending less does not close the racial wealth gap.

The Asset Value of Whiteness (2017)

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Theresa Fisher
Stylist



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Spokane, WA 99212
509-534-2470 fisherta@gmail.com

THE STATUS OF BLACK WOMEN

A recently released report, **The Status of Black Women in the United States**, authored by Asha DuMonthier, Chandra Childers, Ph.D., and Jessica Milli, Ph.D., analyzes data for all 50 states and the District of Columbia across six topical areas that affect women’s lives: political participation, employment and earnings, work and family, poverty and opportunity, health and well-being, and violence and safety. Within each of these areas, various indicators of well-being are explored.

While the focus of the report is on the status of Black women, comparisons between Black women and other racial and ethnic groups of women (and men) are presented to contextualize the data. Basic demographic data for each state are also provided and the report concludes with recommendations to improve the status of Black women in the United States.

The Status of Black Women identifies a number of key finding:

- Despite the fact that Black women vote at comparatively high rates and had a higher voting rate than all other groups of men and women during the last two presidential elections, Black women remain underrepresented at every level of federal and state political office in the United States.
- Despite the fact that more than six in ten (62.2 percent) Black women are in the workforce, making them one of the two racial/ethnic groups of women with the highest labor force participation rate among women, Black women’s median annual earnings (\$34,000 for those who work full-time, year-round) lag behind most women’s and men’s earnings in the United States.
- Despite the fact that between 2004 and 2014, the share of Black women with a bachelor’s degree or higher increased by 23.9 percent and the number of businesses owned by Black women increased by 178 percent between 2002 and 2012, which is the largest increase among all racial and ethnic groups of women and men, a quarter of Black women in the United States live in poverty (24.6 percent), compared with 18.9 percent of Black men and 10.8 percent of White women and Black women experience poverty at higher rates than Black men and women from all other racial/ethnic groups except Native American women.

To download a complete copy of *The Status of Black Women in the United States* visit: <https://www.domesticworkers.org/status-black-women-united-states>.



The Status of Black Women in the United States



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DISPARITIES IN LAW & JUSTICE

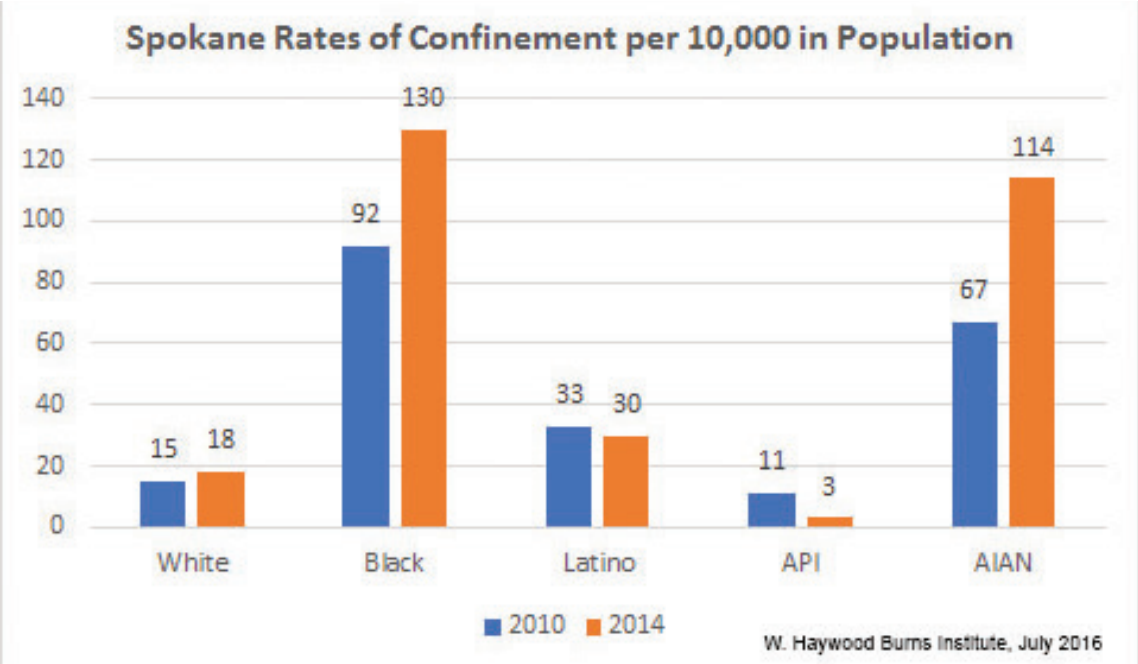
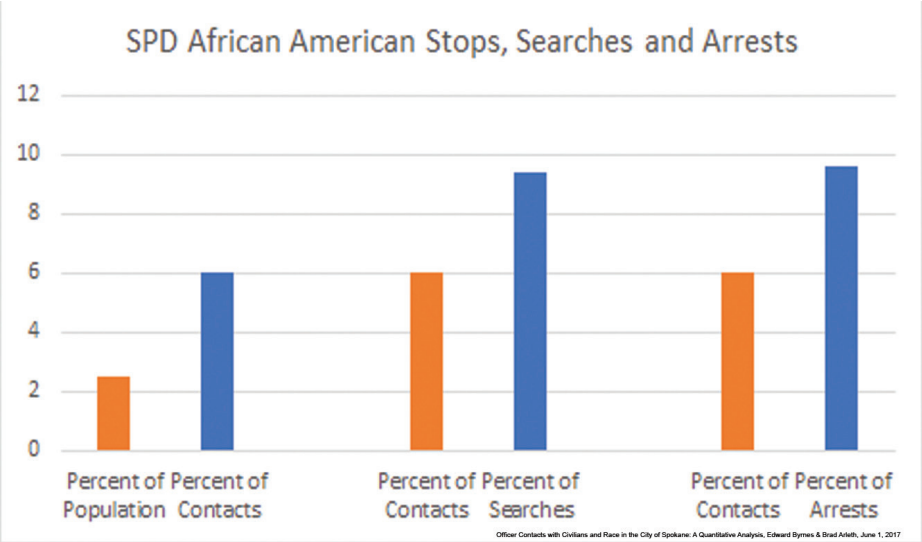
In Spokane African Americans are stopped, searched, arrested, locked up and have force used on them at disproportionately higher rates.

Blacks make up **2.5%** of the population in Spokane but are

6% of the stops

9.4% of the searches

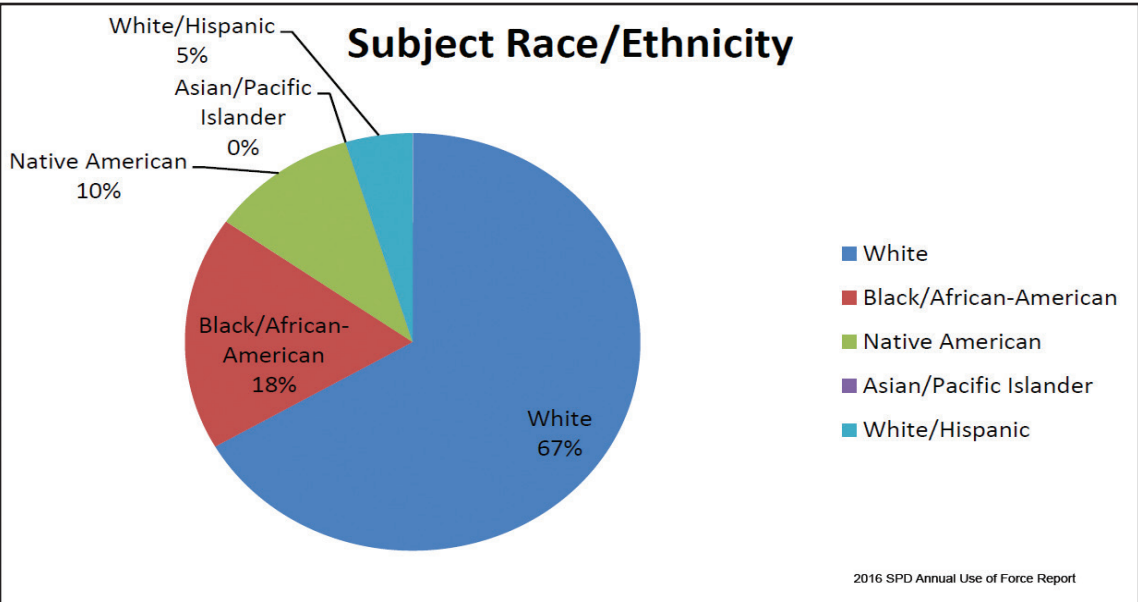
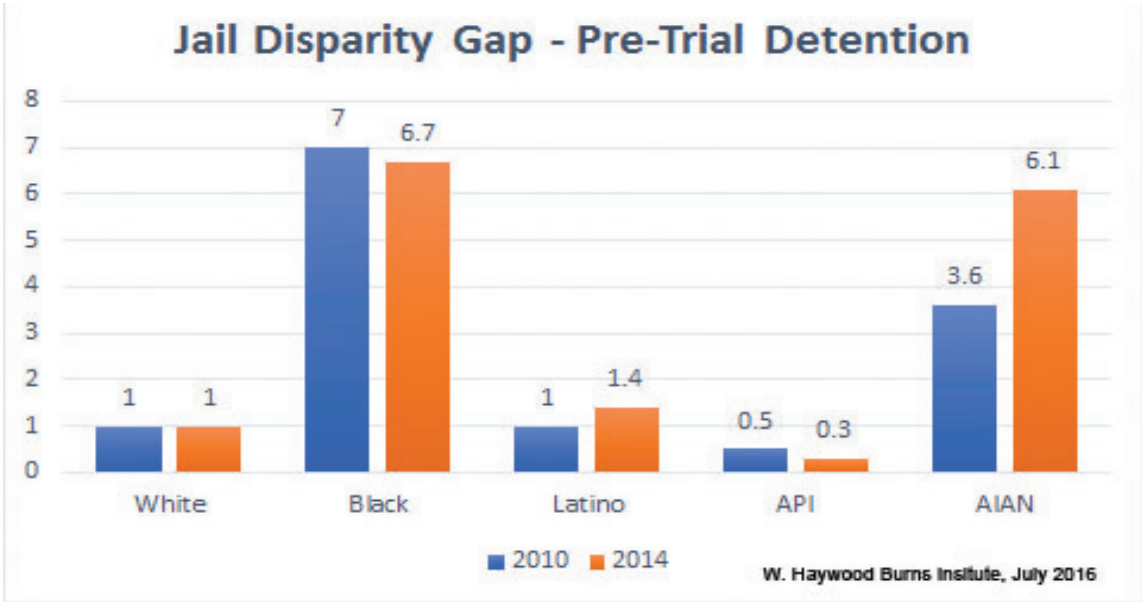
9.6% of the arrests



For every **1000** White adults in the population in 2014 **18** were detained.

For every **1000** Black adults in the population in 2014 **130** were detained.

For every **1** White adult that was detained pre-trial in 2014, **7** Black adults were detained.



18% of the subjects involved in Use of Force incidents with the Spokane Police Department in 2016 were African American

YOUTH & YOUNG ADULTS

Ashane Davis: Miss Cheney USA 2018



In April of this year, Ashane Davis became the very first **Miss Cheney USA**, and she plans to proudly wear her sash, representing Cheney in the 2018 Miss Washington USA Pageant which will be held November 4-5, 2017 in Redmond, Washington.

Ashane, who recently turned 21, was born and raised in Seattle with a big, loving, extended family for support. She graduated from Garfield HS and attended college for a couple of years at Langston University, a small Historically Black College (HBCU) located in Oklahoma. Then last fall she transferred to Eastern Washington University (EWU), where she is studying Psychology, with minors in Criminal Justice and Africana Studies.

But in addition to her focus on academics, Ashane has always wanted to do modeling. She thought doing a pageant “might be fun” and applied on a whim.

But she says, “the more I started to get into it, I realized it’s a lot less about the modeling factor and more about the voice that you get when you earn the title.” With that voice, Ashane says, you are able to do a lot more in your community. “With whatever platform you choose, having a title makes it that much easier to implement.”

Miss Washington USA, which is a part of the Miss Universe Organization, encourages the 10,000 or so women who participate each year to challenge themselves to find their unique voice, and to pursue their personal and professional goals while making an impact in their communities.

Ashane is focusing her attention on two areas where she would like to make a positive impact. The first is called *Girl Trek*, (<http://www.girltrek.org>), a non-profit organization that promotes the physical health of Black Women in the country. “The rate of overweight Black women is alarming,” Ashane says. “So what Girl Trek does is try to get Black women active and eating better, because there are 137 Black women that die every single day from preventable diseases like heart diseases and diabetes and things like that, and it can all be changed by walking and eating better. So that’s the mission of Girl Trek.”

Ashane’s second focus area is promoting self-love, because she feels “self esteem and loving yourself are both really important,” and she says, “studies have shown that when you have a higher self esteem, the more successful you are, not just career-wise, but life in general, in maintaining relationships, and in friendships.”

Even though the pageant is months away, Ashane has already started implementing her platform. “What I’m trying to do is talk with the youth here in town about self-love and I’ve also started the paperwork to get the Girl Trek organization brought to the EWU campus. She hopes Girl Trek will also unify the Black women. “Since there aren’t too many Black women here in Cheney, I think Girl Trek will be important to have on campus.”

The Miss Washington USA Pageant, which is for women ages 18-27, consists of three rounds of competition, including interview, evening gown and swimwear. There are cash, prizes, awards and scholarships for the titleholders and the top finalists, as well as for some of the competing contestants. The contestant that wins the Miss Washington USA pageant will go on to compete in the prestigious Miss USA pageant, and the winner there will represent the United States at the Miss Universe Pageant that is seen on FOX TV.

It’s a challenging competition. But, Ashane says, the competition actually begins long before the pageant starts. “The competition really began when I got my title. They look at everything leading up to the pageant and not just the pageant itself. They give you the title to see what you will do while you have your local title. To see what kind of impact you will make with the state title.”

Ashane is confident of the impact that she will make through her focus areas and knows that she will represent Cheney and the African American community well in November. She has already raised the \$1,000 that she needed to enter the competition and is now hoping to raise an additional \$1,500 to cover the cost of an evening gown, swimsuit, makeup and hair for the pageant.

To make a donation visit Ashane’s GoFundMe Page at <https://www.gofundme.com/ashane>.

Neighborhood Network Teen Summer Program

Giving Spokane Teens Experiences They Might Not Otherwise Have

By Students from the Neighborhood Network Teen Summer Program
(with a little help from Sandy Williams)

Spokane’s Emmanuel Family Life Center is hosting teenagers this summer from across Spokane as a part of the Neighborhood Network Teen Summer Program.

The Program, which started on June 26 and lasts until August 1, is designed to be a fun and educational, career development experience for teens ranging in age from 12-18.

The teens meet daily, Monday through Friday from 9am - 4pm, and participate in team

development, college tours, recreational activities, and community service. The goal of the program is for the teens to have fun, but they are also exposed to experiences that they might not otherwise have.

“We get to learn about how our future will be,” shared Chanelle, and the teens say, the camp also helps them to “be educated and develop into great adults.”

The summer program is made possible by the hard work of Charles Williams, who runs the program, as well as with help from Betsy Williams and “Mr. Norm”.



Grants that support the program come from the Chase Youth Award, Smith-Barbieri Progressive Fund, Avista, BNSF Railway Foundation and Empire Health.

The program also receives support throughout the summer from Whitworth University, Spokane Falls Community College, Eastern Washington University, Spokane Community College, Gonzaga University, Washington State University of Spokane, United Way, YMCA of the Inland Northwest, Dennis Mitchell, Stacy Benoscek– Mrs. U.S. World, New Bryant Arms South dba

Richard Allen Apartments, Bethel A.M.E. Church, Teen Challenge, Union Gospel Mission, Tim Foster Consulting, Pastor Happy Watkins, and The Black Lens.

The summer program is not just important to the teens for the activities that they get to participate in, but for other reasons as well. Jacquil shared, “the camp lets you forget about all of the stuff that is going on at home and lets you be yourself.” And, the group added, the teen summer program is here “because Charles loves us all and wants the best for us.”



YOUTH & YOUNG ADULTS

#GETCIVIC: Students Take Civic Engagement Pilgrimage



By Sandra Williams

If you thought you felt a powerful surge of energy roll through Spokane on July 11-12, you weren't mistaken. The energy came from an enthusiastic and passionate delegation of students and staff that are part of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Freedom Center in Oakland, CA and the Institute for Community Leadership in Tacoma, WA, who stopped by Community Minded Television Studios last month on their way to Seattle.

The Freedom Center, which is associated with California Congresswoman Barbara Lee, and the Institute for Community Leadership have partnered to carry out a project called #GETCIVIC, which is a civic engagement collaboration between the two organizations. The goal of the project is to strengthen school and community efforts at increasing civic learning and civic engagement in schools and in community life.

As a part of the project, the students have embarked on what they are calling a "Civic Engagement Pilgrimage", a journey of education and discovery that is taking them across the country's western states. The delegation, which was invited to Spokane by State Senator Andy Bilig, traveled from Oakland to Fresno, through Oregon to Eugene and Portland, and they will visit 14 cities and towns in the State of Washington before returning to CA.

At each of their stops along the way, the delegation is exploring what civic engagement means to the people that they encounter and how best to get more people involved in the various expressions of civic engagement that exist, from the more traditional activities like voting, running for public office and volunteering for community events, to the less familiar actions like communicating with elected officials and understanding how government works.

The stop at Community Minded TV included a lively and engaging exchange between the students, Ben Cabildo

(CMTV14's Program Developer & Marketing Director) and Sandy Williams (Publisher and Editor of The Black Lens). The dialogue, which will air on Community Minded TV at a later date, included questions and discussion about everything from racism and ageism and balancing the demands of activism with family and personal needs, to identifying the barriers that keep people of color from participating in the political process,

After about ninety-minutes the students were off to their next stop, leaving as quickly as they had arrived. What they left in their wake though was optimism and hopefulness that young people, armed with knowledge and the tools of democracy, have the ability to actually change this country for the better.

The Martin Luther King Jr. Freedom Center and The Institute for Community Leadership are working together to support the establishment of more thorough and significant civics classes in public schools. For more information visit: <http://www.mlkfreedomcenter.org> or <http://icleadership.org>.

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Spokane County Commissioners



Spokane City Council



Spokane Regional Law and Justice Council Admin Committee



Police Chief

A portrait of the Police Chief, a man with short blonde hair, wearing a dark blue police uniform with a badge.

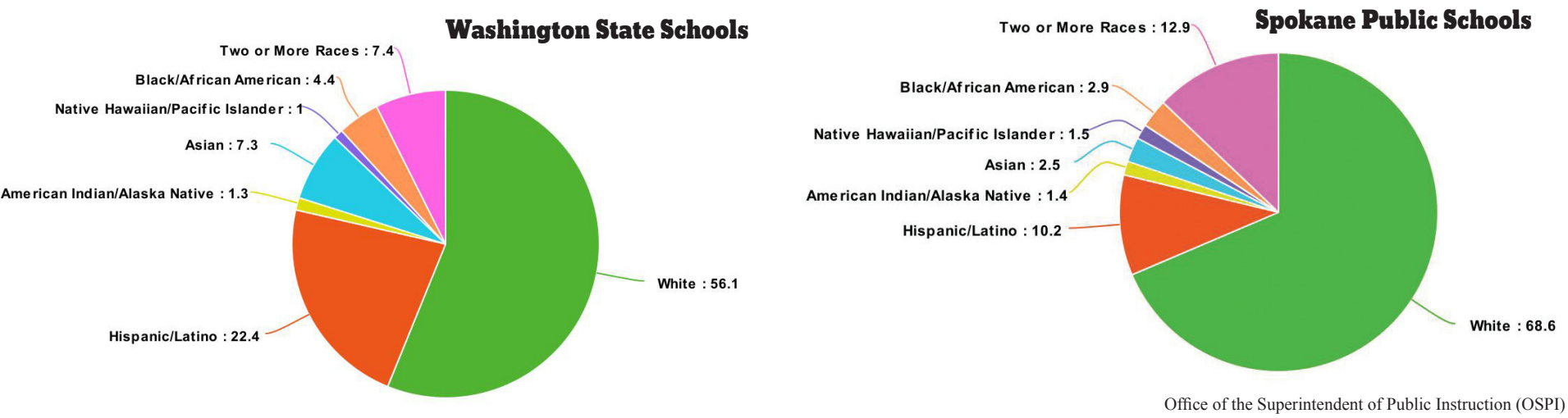
Spokane County Sheriff

A portrait of the Sheriff, a man with short blonde hair, wearing a tan sheriff's uniform with a star badge and an American flag in the background.

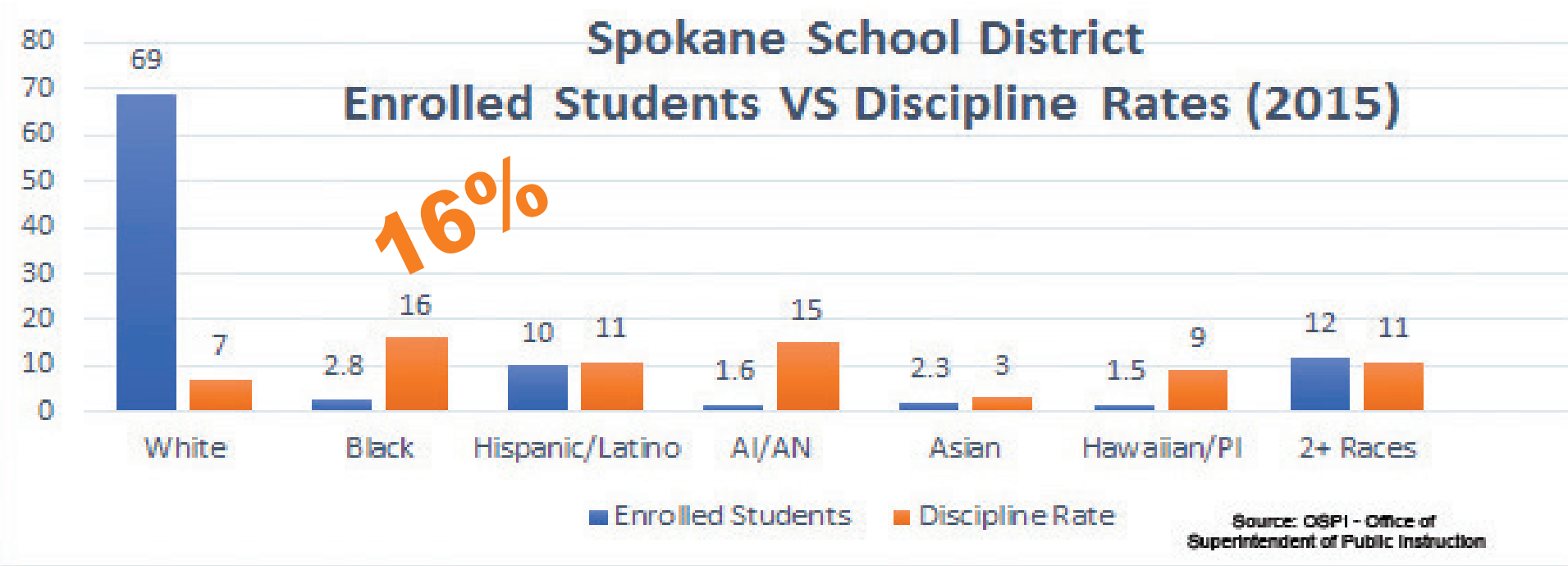


DISPARITIES IN EDUCATION

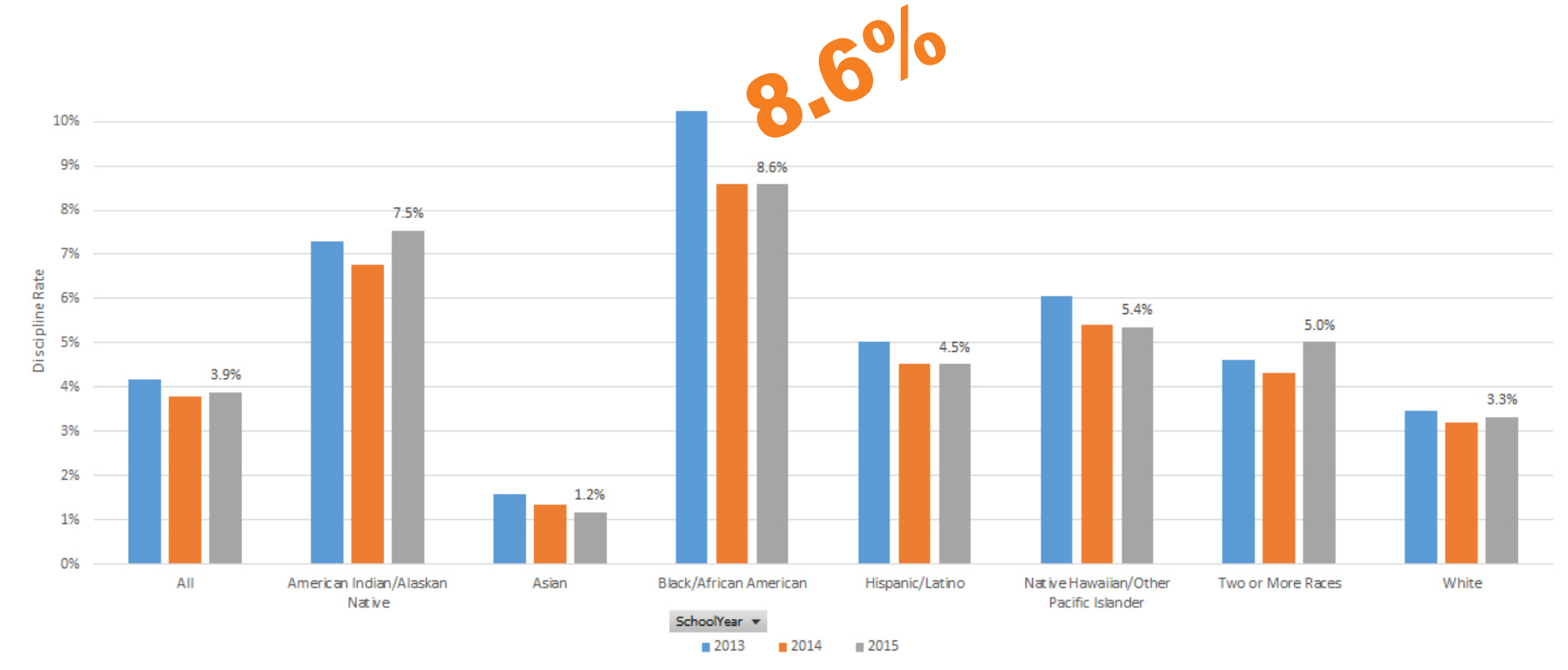
African American students make up **4.4%** of the school population across the state and **2.9%** in the Spokane School District.



Compared to the rate of enrollment in 2015, the discipline rate for African American students is disproportionately high.



The discipline rate for the state is high too, but not as high as Spokane Schools.



DISPARITIES IN HEALTH

Medicaid Coverage Reduces Health Disparities

Special to the Trice Edney News Wire from NorthStarNewsToday.com

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - Medicaid plays a significant role in providing health care to communities of color and reducing health disparities. People of color tend to be covered by Medicaid at a higher rate than Whites, often because they face structural disadvantages, which result in less access to private health insurance. Examples of these barriers include lower levels of education and higher unemployment rates. Given the fact that minorities also tend to fare worse on health measures than Whites, Medicaid’s role in furnishing healthcare to minorities is invaluable.

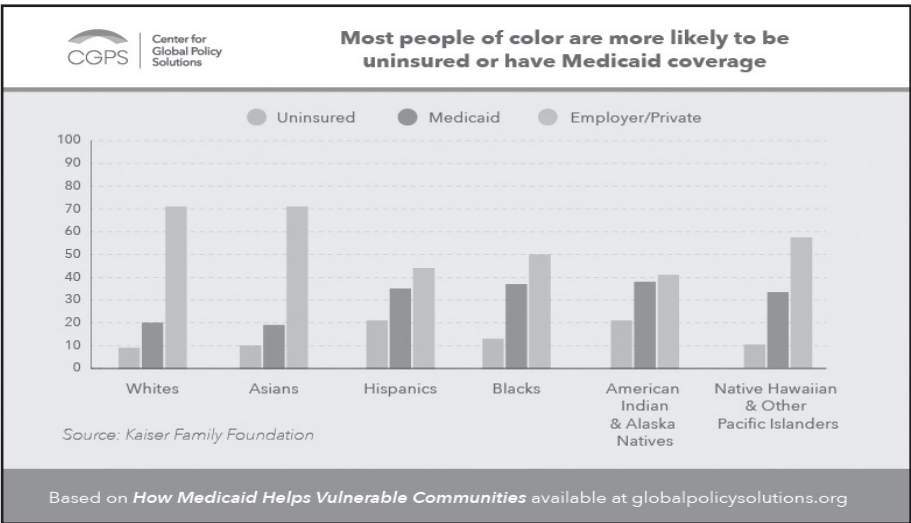
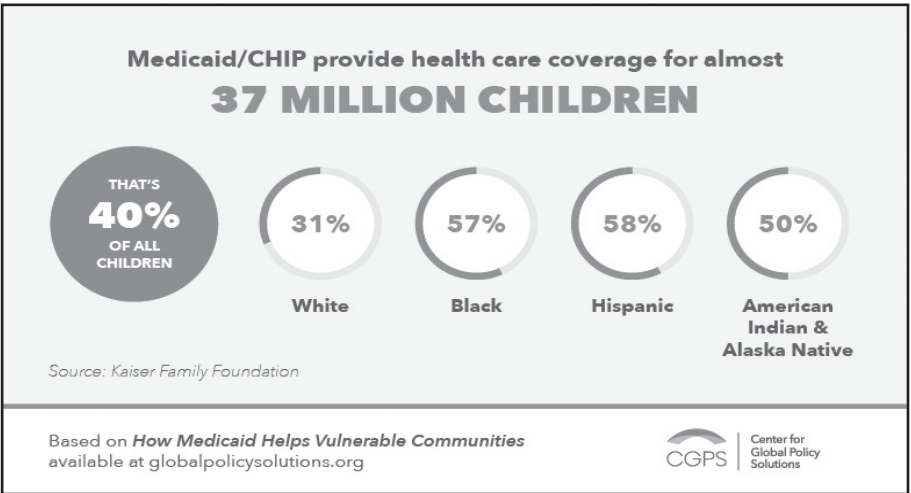
Medicaid and the Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) cover a large portion of minorities: roughly 28 percent of Black adults and 57 percent of Black children, 25 percent of Hispanic adults and 58 percent of Hispanic children, 33 percent of Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islanders, and 26 percent of American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) adults, and 50 percent of AIAN children.

Native Americans and Alaskan Natives receive healthcare through Indian Health Services (IHS), a federal program that has been grossly underfunded since its inception. Given the limitations of IHS, Medicaid is vital

to American Indians and Alaska Natives. In fact, one in three out of five million American Indian and Alaska Natives are covered by the program. In an effort to reduce health disparities, the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare Services expanded its coverage for AIANs to include 100 percent reimbursement to states for any Medicaid benefits received. People of color had the largest increases in coverage with the implementation of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), but even with the Medicaid expansion, people of color are more likely to lack coverage than Whites. Minorities make up 55 percent of the 33 million uninsured Americans, and American Indians and Alaskan Natives and Hispanics are most likely to be uninsured.

Despite the ACA and the expansion of Medicaid, there is still a coverage gap. In states that did not expand Medicaid, many people remain uncovered because they do not meet the eligibility requirements for the Health Insurance Marketplace tax credits. Many African Americans fall into the coverage gap because their population tends to be concentrated in the South, where most states chose not to expand Medicaid.

This excerpt was taken from the article: Medicaid: America’s Largest Health Insurer. Dawn Godbolt, Ph.D. is a health equity fellow with the Center for Global Policy Solutions.



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CHAS health

SPOKANE REGIONAL HEALTH DISTRICT

DISPARITIES IN HOUSING

No Cause Evictions Disproportionately Hurt Tenants of Color

By Terri Anderson
Tenants Union of Washington State

Tenants are facing challenges that accompany the severe rental housing market in Spokane that include rising rents, higher move in costs and no cause housing displacement.

The vacancy rate in rental housing is currently hovering around 1%. That means when tenants are forced to move, they have fewer choices of where to move. If they want to remain in their neighborhoods and/or close to family, schools or jobs the options may not be there.

A home provides the safety and security that often keeps people employed, keeps children in consistent neighborhood schools and helps maintain family connections. These are just some of the reasons that Spokane must protect housing security by ending 20 day no cause notices to vacate which too often result in no cause evictions.

Current state law allows landlords to end tenancy without cause by serving a 20 day notice to vacate on tenants who do not have a term lease. This notice does not require landlords to give any reason to the tenant why they are being forced to move. If the tenant is unable to move in those twenty days they will be evicted. Once an eviction has been initiated the tenant will have that legal action on their record regardless of the outcome of the action which makes it even more difficult and costly to obtain housing in the future.

This means that someone who pays rent on time every month and abides by their rental agreement can be evicted, become homeless and find themselves living substantially deeper in poverty for no reason whatsoever.

It is why tenants are more likely to move and deny their right to due process rather than fight the legal challenge of eviction, even if the consequence is homelessness. And it is why fair housing protections are difficult, if not impossible, to enforce and discrimination and systemic racism will continue to cause disparity and injustice in rental housing.

The Fair Housing Act of 1968 was enacted into federal law immediately following the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. It prohibits discrimination in housing based on race, religion and national origin. People with disabilities were added as a protected class with the passage of the Americans With Disabilities Act. The state of Washington added age, veteran status and sexual orientation, and the city of Spokane includes victims of domestic violence and recently added source of income, including housing vouchers, as protected classes against discrimination.

No cause terminations create a cover where discrimination can be hidden, making it very difficult for a targeted person to prove. It should be no surprise that the vast majority of substantiated housing discrimination claims are based on disability because they are easier to prove.

The result of systemic fear of eviction and homelessness provides no incentive for tenants to exercise their rights under the law to improve their housing conditions; in fact, it does the opposite. Tenants are less likely to report and request repairs once they have been ignored and the balance of power favors the landlord. Many tenants fear reporting fire hazards and substandard housing conditions to city fire and building departments because they fear being forced to move.

It eliminates the ability for tenants to form a union or tenant association to collectively address building issues because tenants are afraid of retaliation. Add this to an aging and deteriorating rental housing stock and it is not surprising that many neighbors complain about substandard rental houses and buildings in Spokane.

These are stories repeated by tenants who visit any of the three Spokane walk-in tenant counseling clinics and call the statewide tenants rights hotline provided by the Tenants Union of Washington State. The stress caused by a twenty day notice to move cannot be measured and because there are no government provided services to help tenants, there is no way of knowing how many families and individuals are being displaced and added to the homeless population in Spokane every day.

What can be done to stop this cycle of fear and eviction? The city of Spokane can join other cities and states around the nation who have adopted “just cause eviction” laws that require landlords give a reason to tenants before they can end the tenancy that will lead to eviction.

In the state of Washington, Seattle is the only city to enact this law, although Vancouver recently amended its no cause notice to give sixty rather than twenty days, and communities in Kent, Renton and Airway Heights are urging those cities to adopt just cause eviction laws. The state of Oregon and the city of Portland have both introduced measures that would end no cause rental terminations and no cause evictions.

Just cause eviction does not mean that landlords will lose their ability to evict or that they will not have authority over rental property and tenants. Current state law only provides two causes for landlords to end a tenancy, failure to pay rent and violation of the rental agreement. Just cause laws allow landlords to add causes beyond just those under state law such as repeated late fees issued to the tenant and home renovation.

The Seattle just cause eviction ordinance has sixteen causes that landlords can give to end the rental agreement. The importance is that tenants will know that if they abide by the rules and pay rent their housing is secure and the only way they can be forced to move is when there is a legitimate reason and just cause. It will take away the fear of the unknown that often prevents tenants from exercising their rights and their ability to speak up when they are violated.

Only the Spokane City Council can protect tenants and improve housing conditions by passing a local ordinance to end no cause rental terminations and evictions.

It is important for council members to know that injustice still exists in rental housing and that it places the most vulnerable residents in our city (children, the disabled, communities of color, refugees and immigrants, senior citizens, women, and families with a single head of household) at a higher risk of becoming homeless or living in substandard housing conditions.

Decent housing is a human right and policies must provide housing justice for all.

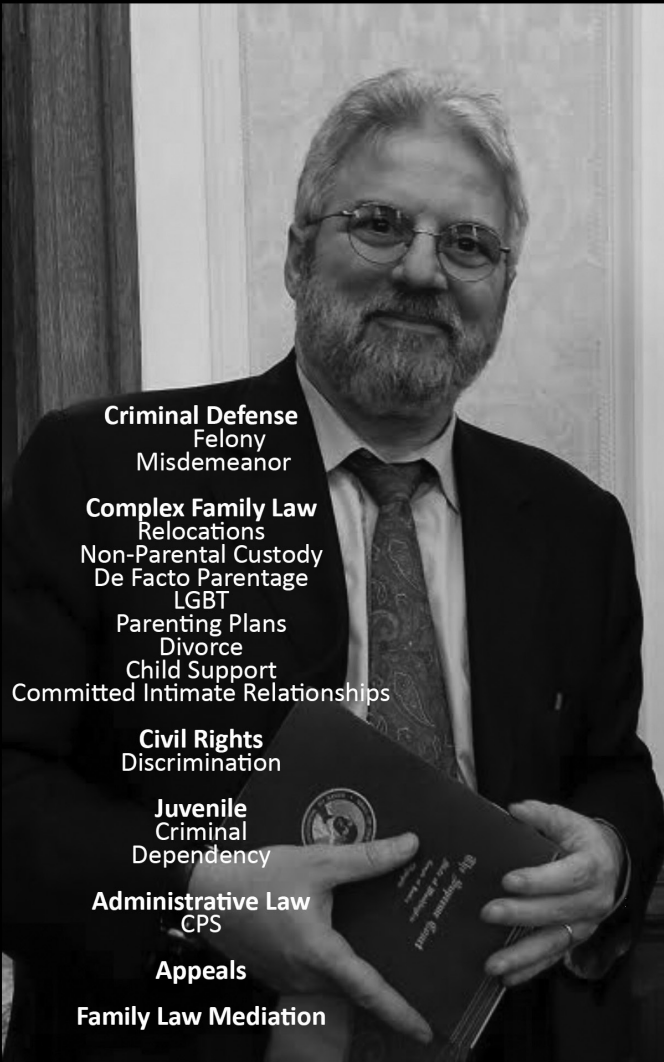
For more information contact Terri Anderson, Community Organizer, Tenants Union of Washington State, 509-464-7620 or 206-723-0500 (hotline), 35 W. Main Suite 310, Spokane, WA 99201. To learn more about your rights visit www.tenantsunion.org.

People of color are nearly twice as likely to experience homelessness in Spokane.

Black people are 3.3 times more likely to experience homelessness in Spokane as White, non-Hispanic people.

Source: Catholic Charities

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MONEY/FINANCE

Reciprocity in the Marketplace

By James Clingman

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - We hear a great deal of discussion about the percentage of money Blacks spend with Black businesses versus how much we spend with White businesses—and others as well. It has been said that 90 percent or more of Black dollars are spent at non-Black businesses. Obviously, that leaves about 10 percent for our businesses. What are we getting for that 90 percent? Blacks must drastically change our spending habits and/or leverage what we do spend.

The average annual revenue (sales) for Black owned businesses without employees is \$58,000 and for those with paid employees it is \$948,000, both of which are much lower than other so-called “Minority Groups.”

A report published by the U.S. Small Business Administration, titled, “Minority Business Ownership: Data from the 2012 Survey of Business Owners” by Michael McManus, Regulatory Economist, had this to say about Sales Disparities:

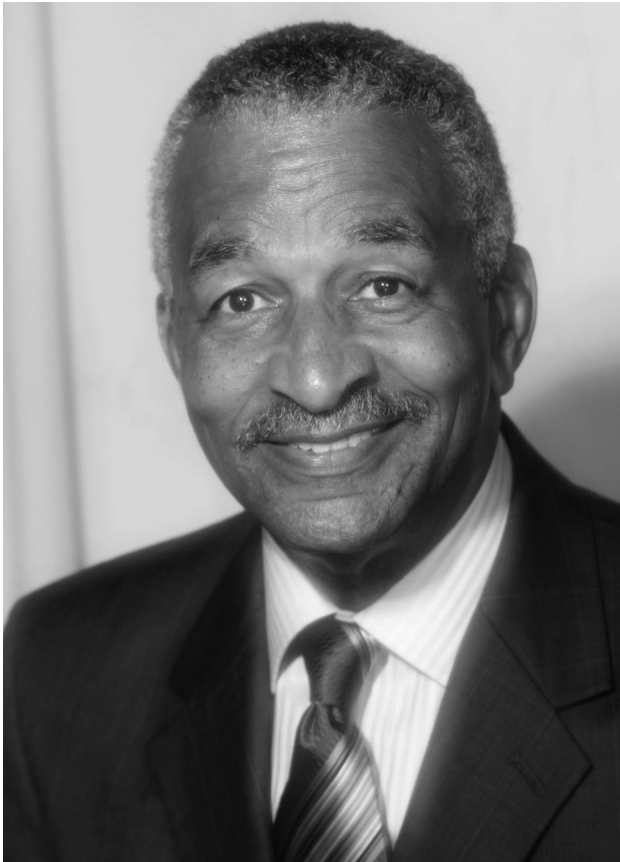
“Evaluating disparities using per-firm sales average shows the stark difference between minority and nonminority firms. It also highlights key variations between minority groups. For example, [Black]-owned firms average about \$58,000 in sales per firm, while Hispanic firms generate two and a half times this amount; Asian-owned firms, 6 times as much; and nonminority-owned firms over 9 times this amount.”

One can reasonably extrapolate a couple of things from that point: Black businesses must grow to the point of being able to hire employees; and Black businesses need a great deal more support—from Black consumers as well as other consumers—to reach parity.

One other point of consideration is the industry in which we choose to start a business.

The report states, “While the number of minority-owned businesses is growing rapidly, disproportionate amounts are in the lowest 20 industries in terms of sales. In aggregate almost 58.9% of all African American-owned businesses are in the 20 lowest sales-generating industries...”

Finally, as I have cited many times, of the more than 2.6 million Black businesses only 111,000 have employees. Do the math and see why we must grow our businesses in order to make them more viable in the marketplace. In or-



der to have more of our \$1.2 trillion flowing through Black businesses we must have larger ones in more profitable industries. Make sense?

Now here’s the rub against us as consumers of Black products and services from Black entrepreneurs. Paradoxically, while we must have more sustained growth and we must venture into more scalable business ventures, many Black consumers are buying from other groups and some are even refusing to do business with Black firms, for one reason or another. Add that reality to the fact that other groups do not support our businesses to any great degree, which could be due in part to the industries we select, and Black business is stuck on a treadmill, expending a lot of energy without moving forward, multiplying but never growing.

Top all of this off with the fact that we hold our entrepreneurs to a higher standard than we hold others. We want reciprocity from them, and we want them to “give back,” which is quite reasonable and appropriate. However, we

do not demand the same level of reciprocity from the other businesses that we support virtually every day. Don’t agree? Then tell me, where is the balance of our \$1.2 “trillion” annual income when we deduct the \$188 “billion” in annual revenues earned by Black businesses, not all of which comes from Black consumers?

Let’s face it, Black consumers could never spend all of our \$1.2 trillion with Black owned businesses; we do not have enough businesses for that ideal to become a reality. We can certainly increase the amount we currently spend, but until we establish and grow more businesses, which will take at least a generation if we concentrate on it, we will continue to spend vast sums of money with businesses other than our own. So why are we not seeking reciprocity from them?

We must use collective leverage that can be given or withdrawn at a moment’s notice. Understanding that Black consumers cannot get around spending dollars with non-Black companies, the Collective Banking Group of Maryland, and its local chapters, work with White owned and other companies, in mutually beneficial strategic partnerships, to obtain reciprocity. Banks, furniture stores, carpet stores, automobile companies, restaurants, movie theaters, supermarkets, and many other companies that profit from the Black dollar should reciprocate to their Black customers beyond sponsoring a dinner or a youth baseball team.

If we are going to spend tremendous sums of money with White owned, Indian owned, Chinese owned, and Arabic owned businesses, then it’s up to us to initiate and negotiate reciprocal agreements that benefit both groups. One side of that equation is already complete: We benefit them. Since we inevitably will keep spending our money with them, don’t you think we should complete the equation by getting some benefit ourselves?

James E. Clingman is the nation’s most prolific writer on economic empowerment for Black people. His weekly syndicated newspaper column, Blackonomics, is featured in hundreds of newspapers, magazines, and newsletters. He has written seven books, five of which are on Economic Empowerment, and has been the featured speaker for numerous organizations, schools, churches, and events across the United States. Clingman is the former Editor of the Cincinnati Herald Newspaper, the founder of the Greater Cincinnati African American Chamber of Commerce, and he has been instrumental in establishing several other Chambers of Commerce around the country.



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The sounds of a man banging on the Congo



By Afaria McKinney

The beat is a melody that I am unable to describe, first it's up beat, then it has a slow smooth drive.

My ears perk as I listen to this white man play these bongos like they were his wife and, he made love to them all night

-he must know my strife and

I'm puzzled... in my belief I have become stunned ...

The realization of something I did not think of has snuck up on me like Donald trump's bid for presidency

When did rhythm and soul rely on pigments of the skin and shades of green and gold?

Why are we surprised by the acts of one white cop....like

COME ON PEOPLE racism is not paper thin. Stop acting surprised Racism has been around since BB king sung the blues,

before Martin had a dream, and after Barack became president. So now do I seem relevant.

As I listened to the man play his bongos from afar forgetting for a brief moment about this fucked up madness called reality.

A random thought came to me, that I wish to share with you.

Music is An art, and art is just like a fart

Since we're talking bout farts let's talk about racism ... Racism and taking a shit have so much in common,

Both require assistance before something can happen

Neither is fun to go through but helps pass so much time.

Everyone does it but no one wants to talk about it, or be seen doing it .

My conclusion, I guess that means racism is equal to shit, so wipe your ass America so you can be great again.

BLACK LENS In the Community

Coffee & Conversation



Tongues of Fire By Rev. Beverly Spears

Monday, August 7
6:30 - 8pm

Caffe Affogatto

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The Black Lens is excited to announce that our monthly spiritual columnist Rev. Beverly Spears will be in Spokane for one day and is joining Black Lens readers for coffee and conversation.

You are invited to come meet Rev Bev, learn about her spiritual journey and join us for what promised to be an interesting conversation on topics such as the intersection of spirituality and politics and the future of Christianity.

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OUR VOICES

On the Minnesota Shooting & the White Empathy Effect

By Hari Ziyad

(Reprinted from <https://cassiuslife.com>)

It's a story we have heard too many times. On Saturday, a Minnesota woman called police to report a crime near her home and was killed by responding officers. They conveniently had their body cameras turned off. It's the kind of tragedy the Movement for Black Lives erupted to illuminate and resist. If the police are supposed to protect us, they should not be killing us, and so often they do just that, generally without ever facing any consequences.

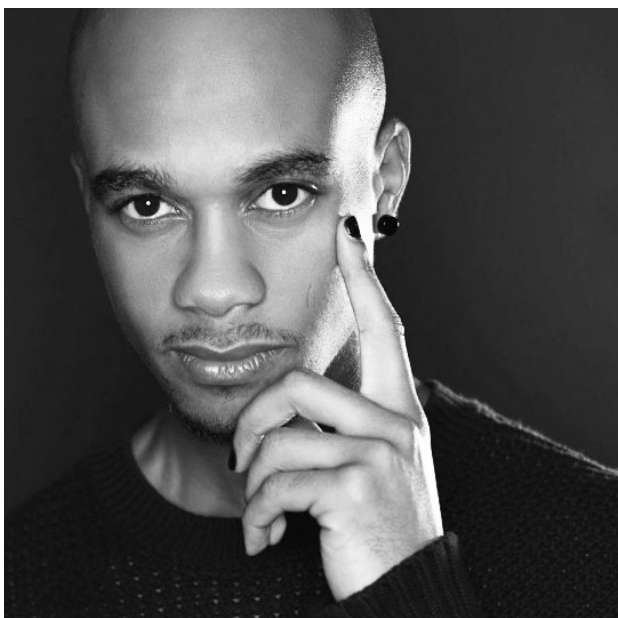
This time, however, there are two important distinctions: the woman killed was white, and her killer was Black. These realities provide critical insights for assessing how the state denies human treatment to Black people, even and especially when agents of the state are Black themselves, and even when white people are collateral.

According to Star Tribune, Justine Damond called 911 on Saturday night to report a possible assault in an alley behind her house in what the media is calling "one of the city's safest neighborhoods." She was unarmed when officer Mohamed Noor shot her in the abdomen through his car door.

If you listen closely to these accounts, you might hear the foreign sound of empathy rustling under the far more familiar descriptions of high-profile police shootings, like a snake beneath dead leaves. Safest neighborhood. Unarmed. Mother. Fiancé. The stories surrounding the shooting thus far have emphasized the impossibility of Damond deserving what happened to her, her white womanhood providing a cloak of humanity people like Philando Castile, who was also killed by Minnesota police and his murderer was acquitted last month, could not access.

Noting the different tone in the media coverage of this act of police brutality than those centering on the Black dead, some activists have hoped to use this newfound empathy for a victim to lead to real action against police violence. "Maybe, just maybe, with the shooting death of Justine Damond, millions of white people, for the very first time, will now see a victim of police brutality, and see themselves," New York Daily News reporter Shaun King wrote.

But King misses what many of Black people—who still have hope in reformative solutions to anti-Black state violence—continue to miss: Black people are not victims of "police brutality." Black people are not understood as "victims" of anything, and so when white people connect to the shared victimhood of other white people it is a connection that stops there. Empathy is not extended to Black people because we are cast as casualties even before we are killed.



Black people are not treated to a double standard that can be illuminated when a white person finds themselves in a similar situation to us. Anti-Blackness is the standard. As Timothy DuWhite opined at RaceBaitr, anti-Blackness is "not hypocritical, but rather it is history."

Police aren't supposed to protect Black people, they are supposed to protect Damond. Anti-Black violence meted out by police is the job of the police. Protecting white people from Black people, protecting white people's properties, as well as protecting white people's ability to exploit us has always been the job of modern police. And that police failed to do their job in this one instance is behind a vast majority of outrage and new energy being targeted at the Twin Cities police department now.

This does not mean the state is not implicated by this case, or that we should ignore this incident because the victim was white. No. Damond's death highlights a crucial distinction between killing portrayed as a mistake, and killing portrayed as justified, and how both rationalizations serve the purpose of protecting the killer. In the case of the state, the killers—the police—always need to be protected in order to continue their job of justifiably killing, enslaving and profiting from Black people. These killers—officers—will at times make mistakes that inadvertently harm those the state is designed to protect.

But with a mistake, the killer is still not wrong, just imprecise. And though we may be able to solve such imprecision with reform, what about when anti-Blackness is precise? Any white person just now "see(ing) a victim of police brutality, and see(ing) themselves" in the victim is only interested in a salve—a salve which is not a cure for all.

As opposed to mistakes, justifications—like those which were relied upon to turn Mike Brown into a "demon"-like "hulk" who runs through bullets after his death, or turn 12-year-old Tamir Rice into a grown man after his, or Korryn Gaines into a mentally-disturbed lead-poisoned person after hers—have no solution because they are always already right by definition. Justifications for anti-Black violence are always at hand, can always be pulled out of thin air, are always believable, and therefore cannot be reformed—and certainly not reformed when white people tap into the empathy they have for one another.

Reforms meant to ease the mistakes of the state—or the way the law inadvertently sometimes harms "innocent" "white" "non-violent" people like Damond—never reckon with how the state is anti-Black at its core. Black people are never innocent, never white, always violent. This is why Black liberation relies on entirely rethinking how we demonize criminality, not in emphasizing innocence. These reforms, including body cameras, more police trainings, and even the integration of police forces that allowed Mohamed Noor his badge, can do nothing for a Black person whose life doesn't matter in the first place.

In fact, Noor's own Blackness makes it easier for the police department and public to throw him under the bus as an anomaly to the largely white, and certainly white-protecting police force. The uniqueness of Noor's Blackness gives even more cover to the idea of this incident as a reformable "mistake," even while his identity can also be used to discredit against the idea that police brutality is uniquely anti-Black.

But Noor's Blackness is no less a scapegoat for the state's violence in his mistakes than it is when he and other Black officers do their jobs—protecting whiteness—properly. As James Baldwin famously recalled, "we feared black cops even more than white cops, because the black cop had to work so much harder—on your head—to prove to himself and his colleagues that he was not like all the other n*ggers."

The purpose of the state is to punish whomever is like all us other n*ggers, us regular n*ggers, us criminalized n*ggers, and that purpose will continue whether those who experience inadvertent violence gain distance from us or not. We cannot continue trying to use reform to clean up after the state's mistakes, or putting our hope in protecting its collateral as though its intended targets are any more disposable. At the same time, we have to recognize that whenever the state operates, even when its operation harms a white person, even when a Black person does the operating, even when the operation is reformed, it still operates to harm Black folks. And wherever it is operating we should be resisting.

Kaepernick's situation 'mirrors what I went through'



Before Colin Kaepernick, there was Denver Nuggets guard **Mahmoud Abdul-Rauf** who is pictured standing with his teammates and praying during the national anthem before a game with the Chicago Bulls on Friday night, March 15, 1996. Like Kaepernick, Abdul-Rauf felt the U.S. flag was a symbol of "oppression." He was suspended for sitting down during the national anthem. Photo Credit: Michael S. Green/AP.

From **Mahmoud Abdul-Rauf**

(Excerpt from interview with Marc J. Spears, theundefeated.com)

It's not surprising to me what he [Kaepernick] is going through. I said from the beginning that I wouldn't be surprised if he didn't get another job. With all the death threats and assassinations of his character, it mirrors what I went through. This is just the way things are. It's unfortunate when in particular Black athletes are in this position.

I remember the words of Noam Chomsky saying all these other things could easily be accepted and we can let them go. But to try to influence people to be socially, racially and politically conscious, opposite of what the mainstream wants us to think, is unacceptable. Athletes are looked at and viewed with much more importance than teachers and professors by far by the youth. There was a time years ago during Edgar Hoover where they wanted athletes basically brain-dead. Pushed away from the Muhammad Ali types. Those things are promoted day in and day out.

When a person like Kaepernick, or anybody, else comes and stands out against anything that is contrary to what image they want you to have as an athlete, then they will make an example of you because they want to discourage other athletes from doing the same thing. And that's just my take on it. And it doesn't surprise me. It's just sad.

You are hoping that it will galvanize us as people to say, look we are not going to tolerate this anymore, period. You ain't going to do this to this person, and then especially when you see blatant examples of when you're white or other people doing things that are even worse. I'm talking about assault, battery, rape, whatever and nothing happens. But he speaks out as an activist and you want to deny him access to a profession that he has been training most of his life for. It's not like he can just pick up right now and go and become an engineer and a doctor. And you are trying to take his livelihood away just because of that, when you see all of these other examples.

Unfortunately, we don't come together and fight and hit them where it hurts in the pocket. Hit them where it hurts. That's what the United States does, anytime they have a problem with a country we affect them financially at the negotiating table. And what happens? They bring their friends and say don't trade with them, buy from them, nothing, and eventually what happens is most of them come back to the negotiating table because their pocket has been hit.

But we are still going to support them, we're still going to pay for those tickets, still support them. It's just sad. My heart goes out to him, and I think about it constantly. [Kaepernick] seems to still be doing well and still giving and pursuing his passion, but it bothers me. It really does.

OUR VOICES

When Will We Learn?

By Dr. E. Faye Williams, Esq.

(TriceEdneyWire.com) — A recent study on wealth was conducted by Amy Traub, Laura Sullivan, Tatjana Meschede and Tom Shapiro. The study did a comparison of Black and white wealth and Latino and white wealth.

In our community, we have been consumed with racial inequities, voter suppression, health care, unjustified police shootings and racial bias in our criminal justice system. We've been concerned about shootings among our people within our community. Not often enough do we give serious attention to economic exclusion and inequity, and yet, poverty eats away at our communities every day.

Too often, we find ourselves contributing to our problem. We often choose to spend our money where we are not respected and on items we simply do not need. Not enough of us spend our dollars in our own community to help in building our community.

Building wealth in our community is as important as all of the other issues we face. As a matter of fact, with more attention to

the wealth gap our people face, some of the other challenges would at least lessen.

According to the study, "No metric more powerfully captures the persistence and growth of economic inequality along racial and ethnic lines than the racial wealth gap. According to data from the Survey of Consumer Finances, the median white household possessed \$13 in net wealth for every dollar held by the median Black household in 2013. That same year, median white households possessed \$10 for each dollar held by the median Latino/a household."

We have the ability to at least close that gap if we spend some of our money where we live. All of us know somebody who sews and charges far less than the commercial businesses where we currently take our clothing to be repaired. We know somebody who repairs cars, who cuts hair and someone who curls hair. We sure know somebody who can run circles around anyone who cooks in the average restaurant outside our community.

There was a time when we were limited to businesses in our community. We pa-

tronized our own, and built prosperous businesses that put money back into our community. We held our events at our own churches, schools and businesses. We banked with Black banks.

I'm not suggesting we can handle all of our business with Black companies/businesses. It sure would help Black wealth if we did as much business as possible where most of us live.

My organization National Congress of Black Women (NCBW) is 33 years old and for all of that time our banking has been with a Black bank where we know the people with whom we deal and they know us. I purchase my clothing from a Black woman, get my hair done by a Black woman, attend a church pastored by a Black woman, and get my clothing repaired by a Black woman. We have a Black male accountant, a Black woman services our computers and our webmaster is Black. Our interns and our staff members are Black. I write for a Black woman's wire service.

I don't mean to suggest that we'd never hire or do business with a non-Black per-



son, but I'm perfectly happy with doing the majority of my business in our community and circulating our dollars there so that we can at least put a dent in that wealth gap.

In every article I write, I try to have an "ask" of everyone or at least issue a challenge to think about how we improve our community. I'm asking that if you're not now doing business with at least one Black business, think about it, and try to find one Black person or company with which to do business *so long as they give back to our community*.

(Dr. E. Faye Williams is President and CEO of the National Congress of Black Women, Inc. www.nationalcongressbw.org. 202/678-6788)

Jay-Z: Prisons, Poverty and the Price of Freedom



By Marc H. Morial

(TriceEdneyWire.com)

Hip-hop legend Jay-Z celebrated Father's Day by allowing incarcerated fathers to spend the day with their families.

Pick any day of the week in America and an estimated 700,000 people are populating our nation's local city and county jails. Of those behind bars, 60 percent, nearly half a million people—many of them Black and Hispanic—will remain in jail, not because they have been convicted of any crime, but because they are guilty of the unpardonable crime of poverty and cannot afford the court-stipulated price tag placed on their freedom.

Pretrial incarceration can look very different based on race and socio-economic status. A Bureau of Justice study found that African Americans are 66 percent more likely to remain incarcerated before

trial and Hispanic defendants were 91 percent more likely to remain trapped behind bars, in comparison to white defendants. If a defendant cannot afford bail (nationally, 61 percent of defendants are required to post bail for pretrial release), he or she will stay behind bars until trial. It is in that purgatory of being presumed legally innocent, but locked away from your family, your job and support networks that Black and Hispanic communities are further traumatized and shattered.

For decades, activists and social justice groups have fought against this destructive facet of mass criminalization and incarceration. This year, the movement to reform our criminal justice system's current application of pretrial incarceration added the platform, power and philanthropy of a high-profile ally to its unceasing work: JAY-Z. The rapper, entrepreneur—not a businessman, but a business, man—and now proud father of three, donated to Southerners on New Ground and Color of Change to free and reunite incarcerated fathers with their families on Father's Day—the continuation of an earlier campaign to bail out mothers of color for Mother's Day.

To put the impact of incarceration on communities of color in context, it is important to note that today one in nine Black children living in America has an incarcerated parent in jail.

In a Father's Day essay for Time magazine explaining why he was taking on the "exploitative" bail industry, JAY-Z was personal and poignant:

"If you're from neighborhoods like the Brooklyn one I grew up in, if you're

unable to afford a private attorney, then you can be disappeared into our jail system simply because you can't afford bail. Millions of people are separated from their families for months at a time — not because they are convicted of committing a crime, but because they are accused of committing a crime. [...] When black and brown people are over-policed and arrested and accused of crimes at higher rates than others, and then forced to pay for their freedom before they ever see trial, big bail companies prosper. This pre-incarceration conundrum is devastating to families."

The cost of being imprisoned as if you are guilty while you are legally innocent is high and the damage extends well beyond jailhouse bars. From the separation of family members to jeopardizing current—and future—housing, benefits and work, studies have also consistently found that in comparison to defendants who were released before trial, defendants who remained incarcerated were three times more likely to be sentenced to prison, tended to receive longer sentences, and are more likely to reoffend the longer they are incarcerated.

Because the inability to pay bail is both an impediment to freedom and a major cause of pretrial incarceration, people are essentially being punished for being poor. Like so many other misguided criminal justice actions, pretrial incarceration makes us less safe and poorer. As a nation, we are collectively footing a monstrous \$9 billion dollar annual bill to incarcerate people who have not been convicted of a crime, while the ballooning bail bond industry continues to profit off the poverty and

desperation of vulnerable communities.

Many solutions to the problem of pretrial incarceration have been proposed, from limiting the use of pretrial incarceration to individuals who pose a threat to society to implementing alternative forms of bail besides cash bail and forcing defendants to use bail bond companies that put profits before people and engage in predatory lending practices.

We must reform this two-tiered system of injustice urgently—to save lives, families, communities, and restore our faith in our badly damaged criminal justice system.



Kenneth Applewhaite

“I Feel Like I’m Making A Difference With What I’m Doing”

By Sandra Williams

Why would an African American man want to be a police officer in 2017?

That was the question that was on my mind when I sat down to talk with Officer Kenneth Applewhaite, a Senior Patrol Officer and 23 year veteran of the Spokane Police Department. Given everything that has happened around the country in recent years and what could best be described as an adversarial relationship between some police departments and the Black community that they are charged with serving, I have to say, I was very curious.

Officer Applewhaite’s response was simple and clear, “this job fulfills me. Period,” he shared. “It’s a job that I can come to and I feel like I’m making a difference with what I’m doing during the day.”

Like many in Spokane’s African American community, Kenny, as he likes to be called, first came to Spokane because of the military. He was born and raised in the U.S. Virgin Islands, and served in the Air Force for four years, stationed at Fairchild Air Force Base, where he worked as a Boom Operator, refueling airplanes in the air.

When Applewhaite left the service in 1992, a couple of friends that he played basketball with helped him get a job at Riverfront Park as a security guard where they were working. That job would eventually lead him to the Spokane Police Department.

“I worked there for one whole summer and at the end of the summer both of those guys ended up leaving Riverfront Park and joining the Police department.”

Applewhaite’s friends encouraged him to consider becoming a police officer as well, and he credits their encouragement with his decision to take the exam. He passed the exam and joined the force in 1994, twenty-three years ago. Both of his friends are also still police officers.

One of the things that Applewhaite says he has enjoyed about his career with the SPD is the variety. He started as a basic patrol officer, which he says, everyone does. He has also worked undercover, as a school resource officer, as a motorcycle instructor, doing collision reconstruction, and is currently a traffic officer.

The undercover work, he says, was “interesting,” but the work that he has enjoyed the most so far was being a School Resource

Officer. “I was at Sacajawea Middle School and all of the schools that fed into Sac, like Grant and Lewis and Clark High School. It was a perfect set up for me. I loved that job. I did it from the start of the program until the program ended two years later.”

When asked what can be done to heal the divide that currently exists between the police department and some members of the public, Applewhaite reflected on his time as a Resource Officer and the relationships that he was able to develop with the students that he worked with and their families.

“Those kids that I met when they were kids are now parents, and they come up to me now, still, and say to their children, ‘hey, I don’t care what you see on tv, I don’t care about that stuff, this guy here, this policeman here, you will call him Officer Applewhaite.’ That’s why I took this job and it’s why I still want this job.”

It’s those relationships, Applewhaite feels, that have the power to change things between the community and the police. “If I can give you an example,” he offered. “My brother has had some issues with police officers in the past, and depending on what my brother tells his kids about the police, that’s the story those kids will know. You take that and move a generation back from there and now everybody knows that story. And that story could be the same story for all of them. Or they could have that one contact with a police officer and that’s the new story that everybody gets.”

For Applewhaite, his one contact with a police officer was Mr. Drake. “There was a police officer in my life when I was a young kid and he was my hero. He was a policeman and he was also the ice cream man, and as a fat kid, I loved that guy. But I got to see how he operated. He did not treat you different than he treated me. White. Black. Everybody got the same tone. So, when I talk to people, I do exactly the same, because I try to model what I learned from him.”



Applewhaite wants the community to see in his behavior the way he learned to treat people from Officer Drake, but he says, one thing that is frustrating about the job is that when people see a police officer, “they put us in a box-- fear on fear is what it is.”

What he would like for people to see instead, is that “like every other occupation, that guy is wearing a uniform and he’s doing a job. We have people doing jobs throughout the world, they do many different jobs, and there are good people and bad people in all walks of life. So, it is with this job.”

Applewhaite admits that over the years there have been people that have taken issue with him working for the police. He has been called an Uncle Tom, and worse, and some have questioned his commitment to his own community. But, he says, he is proud of the work that he has done and is currently doing and would encourage others to consider doing it as well.

“I think the best part of this job is helping people and being out there in the public. There are so many misconceptions about police work and about being a Black man, or being a Black officer. I get to hopefully fix that, maybe not with everybody, but I get to touch those people you can touch, and as a Black officer, I would say, here in Spokane, anything you want to do, you can do, as long as it’s legal, and as long as you put the hard work in to get to it. That’s what I like about my job.”



Spokane Police Department

Hiring Workshops



The Spokane Police Department is hiring. We are looking for qualified professionals that want to serve their community.

Upcoming Tests: Aug. 26 & Oct. 14

Local workshops have been designed to give you a head start at joining the Spokane Police Department. Officers will be there to answer questions, explain the process and sign you up for a ride-a-long.

Community Workshops
West Central Community Center, Aug. 3, 5:30-7pm
East Central Community Center, Aug. 7, 5:30-7pm
Spokane Valley Library, Aug. 10, 5:30-7pm
Hillyard Library, Aug. 15, 5:30-7pm

The Spokane Police Department offers the region’s best pay and benefits. Start your career today!

For more info, call the SPD Academy: (509) 742-8100
<https://my.spokanecity.org/police/officer/jobs/>

AUGUST EVENTS

AUGUST 1

NIGHT OUT AGAINST CRIME

A national Crime Prevention event designed to heighten crime prevention awareness, increase neighborhood support in anti-crime efforts, and unite our communities.

4pm - 7pm

Emmanuel Family Life Center
631 S. Richard Allen Court
Spokane, Wash. 99204

AUGUST 4

BAN THE BOX BBQ & COMMUNITY MEETING

Learn about Ban the Boax and join a community coalition that is working to get a Ban the Box ordinance passed in Spokane.

5:30pm - 8pm

Morning Star Baptist Church
3909 W Rowan Ave, Spokane

AUGUST 4

GRAND OPENING: WORLD FINANCIAL GROUP

Join us to find out how we are helping families and businesses in the community.

6pm

1212 N. Washington St, #306
Spokane, WA

Special Guest Speaker: Edward Burns Jr., Senior Mkt Director
For information contact Dycelia Weiss at 509-327-0165 or dyceliaweiss@gmail.com.

AUGUST 7

BLACK LENS IN THE COMMUNITY - COFFEE AND CONVERSATION

Join Black Lens "Tongues of Fire" Columnist Beverly Spears for coffee and conversation. Learn about her personal spiritual journey discuss other topics.

6:30-8:00pm

Caffe Affogatto

19 W Main Ave, Spokane

Please send information about upcoming community events to sandy@blacklensnews.com or call 509-795-1964.

AUGUST 10

JUSTICE NIGHT

Justice Night is a walk-in legal clinic, no appointment necessary. Free legal information in the following areas: Family law, Consumer Protection, Housing, LFO/expungement, Police and Government Accountability.

(*rescheduled from last month)

5:30-7:00pm

Morning Star Baptist Church
3909 W Rowan Ave, Spokane
Questions? Call the Center for Justice at 509-835-5211

AUGUST 12

UNIFIED BLACK AGENDA

The Washington State Commission on African American Affairs is co-hosting a Spokane meeting for members of the African American community to determine our priority issues and how to address them.

10am-Noon

Emmanuel Family Life Center
631 S. Richard Allen Court
Spokane, Wash. 99204

Please RSVP to Sandy at by 509-795-1964 or sw9876@aol.com

AUGUST 21

NAACP MONTHLY MEETING

Join the NAACP for our monthly general membership meeting

7:00pm

Community Building - Lobby
35 W. Main Street, Spokane

For more information contact the NAACP at 509-209-2425 (ext 1141) or <http://spokaneNAACP.com>

AUGUST 24-27

THE WALL THAT HEALS

The Wall That Heals is a 250-foot replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

Mirabeau Meadows, Mirabeau Point Park, Spokane Valley

Open 24 hours. Free admission.



THE WALL THAT HEALS

Coming to Spokane August 24-27

THE WALL THAT HEALS
VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL REPLICA & MOBILE EDUCATION CENTER

ksps.org/twth

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MACKAY MANUFACTURING **EASTERN** WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY **Spokane Valley** **IRS** ENVIRONMENTAL **Global**

Unity Parade
9am

Career, Education and
Health Fair

Cultural Village

Activities for All Ages

Join us for the 23rd Annual

UNITY
in the
COMMUNITY

Our Diversity is Our Strength!

Region's Largest
Multi-Cultural Celebration

Live Entertainment

Free K-8
School Supplies

Free Kids Helmets
(while supplies last)

Senior Resource Area

Saturday, August 19th · 10am to 4pm · Riverfront Park, Downtown Spokane

nwunity.org

Family friendly and free to all ages.

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AUGUST
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
Judkins Park, Rainier Valley, Seattle, WA



CHILDREN'S DAY | AFRICATOWN HERITAGE PARADE
FAMILY FUN VILLAGE | SOUL N THE PARK
AFROBEAT & ROOTS STAGE
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