

THE **BLACK LENS** SPOKANE™
NEWS FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

RIP Archbishop Desmond Tutu

Anti-Apartheid and humanitarian Icon Dies of Cancer at Age 90

(Reprinted from Black Information Network | Atlanta Daily World; Andrew Meldrum, apnews.com; and Keith Reed, theroot.com)

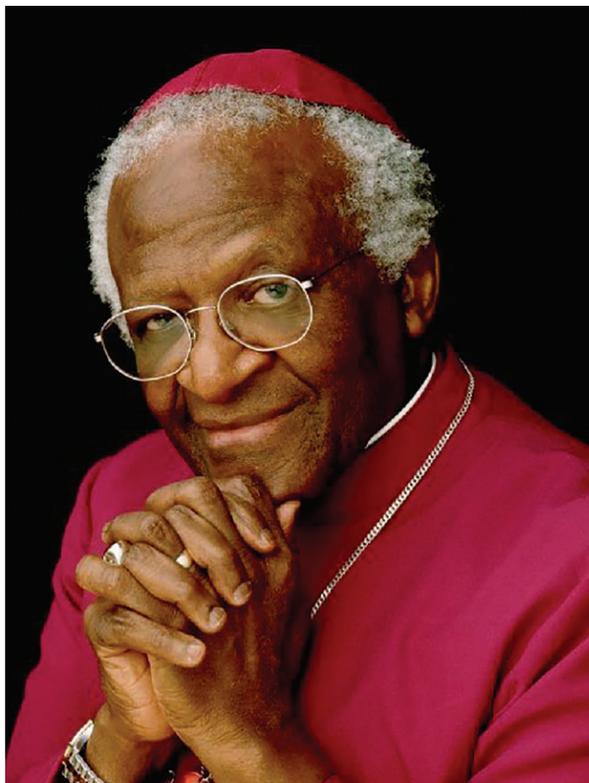
South African Archbishop Desmond Tutu, the Nobel Peace Prize-winning symbol for racial justice and human rights, died at the age of 90.

On Sunday (December 26), South African President Cyril Ramaphosa announced Tutu's death in a statement, saying, "The passing of Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu is another chapter of bereavement in our nation's farewell to a generation of outstanding South Africans who have bequeathed us a liberated South Africa."

Ramaphosa added, "A man of extraordinary intellect, integrity and invincibility against the forces of apartheid, [Tutu] was also tender and vulnerable in his compassion for those who had suffered oppression, injustice and violence under apartheid, and oppressed and downtrodden people around the world."

Desmond Mpilo Tutu was born Oct. 7, 1931, in Klerksdorp, west of Johannesburg, and became a teacher before entering St. Peter's Theological College in Rosetenville in 1958. He was ordained in 1961 and six years later became chaplain at the University of Fort Hare.

He then moved to the tiny southern African kingdom of Lesotho and to Britain, returning home in 1975. He became bishop of Lesotho, chairman of the South African Council of Churches and, in 1985, the first Black Anglican bishop of Johannesburg. In 1986, Tutu, who was



a primary voice in urging the South African government to end apartheid, was named the first Black archbishop of Cape Town. Archbishop of Cape Town. In 1984, Tutu was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his non-violent opposition to apartheid.

In 1990, after 27 years in prison, Mandela spent his first night of freedom at Tutu's residence in Cape Town. Later, Mandela called Tutu "the people's archbishop." Upon becoming president in 1994, Mandela appointed Tutu to be chairman of the country's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which uncovered the abuses of apartheid. President Barack Obama gave Archbishop Tutu the Presidential Medal of Freedom for his global humanitarian work in 2009.

President Obama tweeted: "Archbishop Desmond Tutu was a mentor, a friend, and a moral compass for me and so many others. A universal spirit, Archbishop Tutu was grounded in the struggle for liberation and justice in his own country, but also concerned with injustice everywhere."

Tutu campaigned internationally for human rights, especially LGBTQ rights and same-sex marriage. "I would not worship a God who is homophobic," he said in 2013, launching a campaign for LGBTQ rights in Cape Town. "I would refuse to go to a homophobic heaven. No, I would say, 'Sorry, I would much rather go to the other place.'"

Tutu was diagnosed with prostate cancer in the late 1990s. He had been hospitalized several times since 2015. In recent years he and his wife, Leah, lived in a retirement community outside Cape Town.

Tutu died peacefully at the Oasis Frail Care Center in Cape Town, the Archbishop Desmond Tutu Trust said.

Ain't I A Woman Author bell hooks Dead at 69

By Maiysha Kai
(Source theroot.com)

Acclaimed author, activist, educator and intellectual bell hooks, who was also a deeply influential figure in intersectional feminism, has died. According to a press release issued by her niece, Ebony Motley, printed in the Lexington Herald Leader, hooks died December 15 at her home in Berea, Ky. She had been ill and was surrounded by friends and family when she passed, according to the press release. She was 69.

Born Gloria Jean Watkins on September 25, 1952 in Hopkinsville, Ky., hooks was the fourth of Veodis and Rosa Bell Watkins' seven children. After a childhood educated in predominantly segregated schools, she would ultimately attend California's Stanford University, later earning her master's in English from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1976.

hooks began her first book, *Ain't I a Woman: Black Women and Feminism*, at only 19, reported the Herald Leader. It was during this time she began using a pen name, borrowing from her great-grandmother's name, Bell Blair Hooks,



NEW YORK - DECEMBER 16: Author and cultural critic bell hooks poses for a portrait on December 16, 1996 in New York City, New York. (Photo by Karjean Levine/Getty Images)

and using lowercase letters to emphasize the "substance of books, not who I am," according to the Lexington Herald Ledger.

Ain't I a Woman was published in 1981 and hooks would earn a doctorate in literature from the University of California at Santa Cruz in 1983, giving a dissertation on Toni Morrison. Dozens more books would follow, ranging from manifestos on gender, race and feminism, to meditations

on love, sexuality and spirituality, to children's books. hooks would also become a renowned educator, holding positions as Professor of African-American Studies and English at Yale University, Associate Professor of Women's Studies and American Literature at Oberlin College, and Distinguished Lecturer of English Literature at the City College of New York.

hooks returned to her native Kentucky in 2004 to join the faculty of Berea College, the South's first interracial and co-educational college. She was honored by the college in 2010 with the bell hooks Institute, which "houses her collection of contemporary African-American art, personal artifacts and copies of her books," according to the Herald Leader. The bell hooks center opened on campus in 2021 as "an inclusive space where historically underrepresented students can come to be as they are, outside of the social scripts that circumscribe their living."

"I want my work to be about healing," hooks said. "I am a fortunate writer because every day of my life practically I get a letter, a phone call, from someone who tells me how my work has transformed their life."

ON MY MIND

THOUGHTS FROM THE EDITOR

By Sandra Williams

What I'm Hoping for in 2023

As I'm typing these words, I'm feeling a mix of emotions. Since this column is one of the last things that I work on for the paper each month, the fact that I'm picking through what's left of my brain for something to say right now means that I'm within an arms reach of the finish line.

On the one hand, I think the emotion that I'm feeling most of all right now is relief. Before I took the leap to start the Black Lens, I sat down with Bob Lloyd, who had been the editor and publisher of the African American Voice, which published in Spokane in the 90s. I asked Bob what was the hardest thing about publishing his paper and he said the deadlines.

I didn't really know what Bob was talking about then, but seven years into this grand experiment called the Black Lens, I have a profound understanding of what he was saying and why he said it.

While some of the monthly deadline pressure is certainly self-inflicted, and is there because I truly recognize and honor the responsibility to the Black community that I took on when I signed up for this gig. Some of the deadline pressure is just an inherent part of this work.

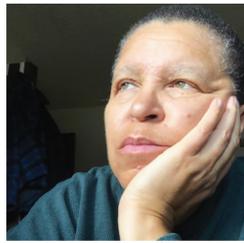
I think the monthly deadline builds character, to be sure, and has taught me a good deal about what Sandy Williams is actually made of. I mean, it takes a particular kind of strength to put one's raw emotions on the back burner in order to continue to produce a newspaper through everything that's happened in my life, in this country, and on this planet over the past seven years. There is tremendous value in discovering that you have that kind of strength. But, I would be lying if I didn't say that I also feel a tremendous amount of relief at the thought of getting to know what it feels like to have my last week of the month back again, at least for a year.

I'm also, right now, feeling a good deal of sadness. I mean, I know that the Black Lens has become an important part of this community over the past seven years because of the interactions and reactions that I have consistently gotten from the people that I've come in contact with. I have repeatedly said that I haven't given up hand delivering the newspaper to locations around town each month, despite how busy I've become and even when folks have offered to take that job off of my hands, because it's one of the things that I love most about publishing the paper. At every stop along the way, there are smiles and greetings and lots of conversations. It's why it takes me so long to get the papers delivered, and it feeds my soul. I'm going to miss that very much.

I also have sadness because I am aware of the significance that the Black Lens has for so many in this community. As a voice for a people that have felt ignored and overlooked and abandoned for so very long, I am aware that the absence of the paper will symbolically be much more than just not having something to make time to read each month. And to be honest I do have some concerns about what that absence could mean in the bigger scheme of things.

But in my sixty years on this planet, I have learned to trust what feels right, and focusing on the Carl Maxey Center at this moment in time feels right. So, off I go.

My hope is that when the Black Lens returns in 2023, we will have learned the lessons that we need to learn from COVID-19, both as a country and as a people, that we will discover our humanity along the way, and that our new normal will be something that I am excited to write about. My hope is that the 2021 film "Don't Look Up" doesn't turn out to be a documentary. (If you haven't seen it yet, please do). And for the love of God, I hope that in 2023 I do not have to write about another Trump run for President. See you in a year!



A Note to Black Lens Subscribers

The Black Lens will be taking a 1 year break from publishing. This issue, January 2022, will be the last printed newspaper until January/February 2023. The subscription software will allow me to freeze everyone's subscription right where it is. So, however many issues you have remaining on your subscription after the January 2022 issue, you will have the same number of issues remaining on your subscription once the paper starts back up. You don't have to do anything. If you would prefer a refund, feel free to let me know by sending me an e-mail at sandy@blacklensnews.com. Thank you.

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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WE GON' BE ALRIGHT; A SPACE FOR BLACK HEALING

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YOU SHOULD KNOW

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

ART AND HISTORY *by Bertoni Jones Bey*



Ida B Wells
July 2015

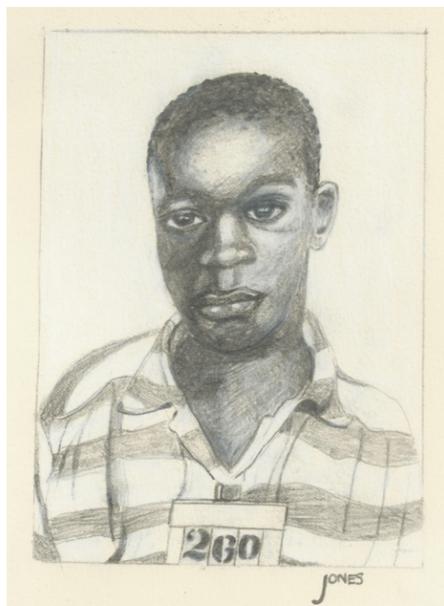


Indigenous Moors
January 2022

When Europeans landed ashore in North America and Canada, they encountered the Micmac Nation of people. Residing in Eastern Canada and Northeast Maine, the Micmac were a small confederation within the larger Algonquian Nation. Some scholars have found the Micmac writing system to be remarkably similar to Kemetic hieroglyphs and have proposed a connection between the Moors and the indigenous people of the Americas.



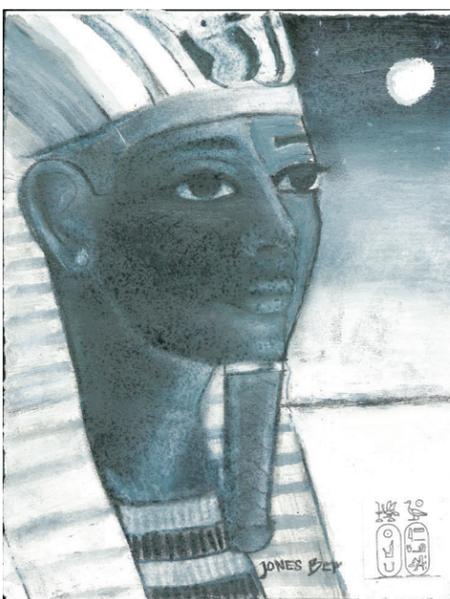
Ahmed Baba
October 2021



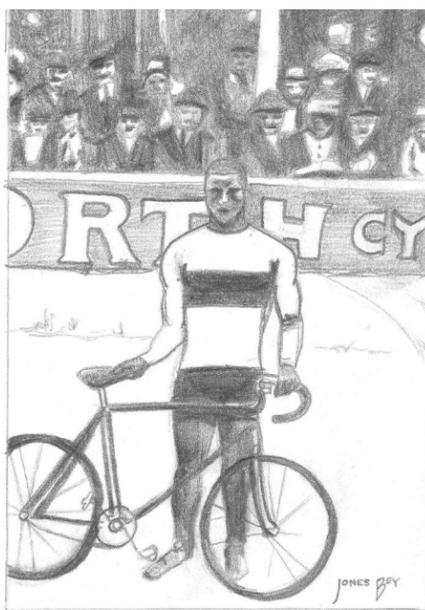
George Junius Stinney Jr.
February 2016



Aida Overton Walker
December 2020



Queen Ma'at ka Ra Hatshepsut
May 2017



Marshall "Major" Taylor
April 2018



Dr. Wouton Basson
October 2019

Thank you Bertoni for 7 years of sharing your art and researching history, and educating our community on so many things that we didn't know that we didn't know. Your section has become one of the most popular parts of the Black Lens.

A Different View

with



Photo Credit: Maddie Pearson

Betsy Wilkerson, Spokane City Council

Goodbye 2021! I had such great hopes for you. Some of my hopes were met and others not so much. So much has happened in 2021 that even the Black Lens Newspaper can't capture it all. But... the Old Folks in the church would say, "every year has it's number," the number of folks who God calls home this past year. So, before we welcome 2022, let's pause for a moment to remember our loved ones who are no longer with us.

Hello 2022, what might you hold for us? For me you hold hope, which is no different than in past years. But this year we actually have some money that can make things more than just a "hope" but can be a real difference in our community. As your elected representative, I can tell you that the current alignment of people in key positions is amazing. I say amazing because these folks care and are wholly committed to some of the same issues, same ideas and the great possibilities that we care about.

Here are my priorities for 2022:

HOUSING - We need housing at all entry points, regardless of someone's economic status, but for Communities of Color what's most important is actual home ownership. A lot of data and studies points to home ownership as a guaranteed way to build generational wealth. As a part of the American Rescue Plan, I will be supporting an Ordinance to fund \$2,000,000 for down payment assistance for first-time homeowners whose incomes fall below 80 percent of the average median income (AMI). For tenants, there will be \$300,000 through the ARPA funds for an eviction legal defense and education program for the city.

PUBLIC SAFETY - We are committed to funding the resources that our officers need to protect us, through

community engagement, enhanced training, and building trust. We also have to ask ourselves what part will we play, to educate ourselves, be supportive, but still hold them accountable? It will take all of us to see the results that our community needs.

BROADBAND - Yes, Broadband! We have spots in our urban core where families and businesses cannot get the access and speed required to be successful in this day and age. It's not just out in the country y'all! With the likelihood of virtual conferences, remote working and remote testimony for the Legislature and Congress sticking around, we need to make sure everyone's voices are heard and that their literal links and connection to society is properly invested in.

YOUTH INTERNSHIPS - We need to work with the Business Community and other organizations to grow and expand paid, yes paid, internships for the youth of our City. This exposure to the many types of jobs/careers will open possibilities for them and hopefully convince them to stay in Spokane after high school or pursue Higher Education that will one day benefit our community.

SMALL MINORITY OWNED BUSINESSES - No more needs to be said than investment will be the key to OUR economic growth. My commitment is more than just talk. We are making an allocation with the ARPA funding for small businesses and our nonprofits that serve our communities, especially those that have systematically been left out of the game. Now let's not forget that nonprofits hire people too and that they must provide for their families.

EAST 5TH AVENUE INITIATIVE - Continuing the work on how we revitalize our neighborhoods leads to

my work with our State Legislators to release the surplus land in East Central that is not needed for the North/South Corridor Freeway. For those who are too young to remember, housing, businesses and even a church was torn down to make room for the I-90 freeway when it was first built. That is why this is important. For the East Central neighborhood to get a chance to say what we want first instead of last and how it impacts our community. To that end we are allocating \$1,000,000 for sub-area planning to increase housing along transportation corridors. We want to hear from you! So when the opportunity arises please participate in the community engagement.

And last but not least, to the Black Lens that for 7 years has kept us informed from the Black Perspective (especially to the incredible Sandy Williams). You deserve a break but your voice will be missed. I'm looking forward to the return of the Black Lens in 2023!

But until then Spokane let's keep working. Let's keep lifting each other up, and most of all, let's keep our eyes on the prize, because we all deserve the best city that WE can make together.

Warm wishes and cheers to a successful 2022,

Council Member Betsy Wilkerson
Spokane City Council District 2, Position 2
bwilkerson@spokanecity.org



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BLACK NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Local, State, National and Around the World

Keechant Sewell First Woman to Lead NY Police Dept

By Stacy M. Brown

NNPA Newswire Senior Correspondent
(reprinted from blackpressusa.com)

Nassau County Police Department's Chief of Detectives Keechant Sewell has beat out top candidates from around the country to land New York City's head law enforcement job.

Chief Sewell, the first African American in her current role in Nassau County, has earned selection as the first woman Police Commissioner in the NYPD's 176-year history.

She's just the third African American appointed as commissioner.

Mayor-elect Eric Adams determined that the seasoned veteran and New York native would best serve the needs of the 55,000-person department that includes more than 35,000 officers.

"I want to let them know that we are absolutely focused on violent crime. Violent crime is the No. 1 priority," Chief Sewell told the New York Post, adding she plans to "hit the ground running" when she takes over.

Chief Sewell has vowed to fully assess what's happening in the Big Apple before deciding on a strategy to address rising shootings and other crimes.

She said more plain-clothes officers would hit the streets under her regime.

"They are able to be in places where they are not able to be easily recognized, and if you use a surgical approach, use well-trained officers and know what their objectives are, you can get measurable results," Chief Sewell insisted.

A 23-year veteran, the chief has held numerous leadership positions, including hostage negotiations. In addition, she created Nassau County's Professional Standards Bureau, which oversaw internal affairs.

A member of the New York-New Jersey Joint-Terrorism Task Force, Chief Sewell grew up in housing projects in Queens where a formal press conference to announce her hire occurred on Wednesday, December 15.

"Keechant Sewell is a proven crime-fighter with the experience and emotional intelligence to deliver both the safety New Yorkers need and the justice they deserve," Mayor-elect Adams told reporters.

When Chief Sewell takes over as commissioner in January, she'll have to manage a strained relationship between the department and the unions who reportedly have battled over policing tactics and other issues.

"We welcome Chief Sewell to the second-toughest policing job in America," Patrick Lynch, the president of the city's police union, said in a statement.

"The toughest, of course, is being an NYPD cop on the street."



Photo: NCPD

Travis Hunter: Nation's Top College Football Prospect Chooses HBCU

(Source: ddooleyhbcu, newsone.com)

The nation's number one college football prospect in the Class of 2022 has decided to attend Jackson State University and play football for the Tigers next fall.

Travis Hunter announced on December 15 that he switched his commitment from blue blood powerhouse Florida State University to sign with the current SWAC Champions and attend the historically Black university (HBCU).

Hunter is one of the best athletes in the class of 2022 and has superstar-level talent as a defensive back. He made the surprise announcement in a dramatic signing day celebration.

Sports Illustrated and 247sports have Hunter ranked as the number one overall prospect in this upcoming class. ESPN has Hunter ranked as the number 2 prospect. This win for Jackson State head coach Deion Sanders is gigantic for not only the program in Jackson, Mississippi but also for all of HBCU athletics.

The 6-1, 165 pound standout from Collins Hill High School in Georgia is looking to be a catalyst to a movement of top athletes deciding to go to HBCUs.

"Florida State has always been a beacon for me. I grew up down there, that's where my roots are, and I never doubted that I would play for the Seminoles," Hunter wrote in a social media post. "It's a dream that is hard to let go of, but sometimes we are called to step into a bigger future than the one we imagined for ourselves. For me, that future is at Jackson State University."



Photo: ABC7 Chicago

HBCUs have produced football legends such as Jerry Rice, Doug Williams and Jackson State's very own Walter Payton, to name a few. Hunter will look to join that group of HBCU legends and ultimately be part of the current group of HBCU NFL standouts led by Colts' linebacker Darius Leonard.

"Historically Black Colleges and Universities have a rich history in football," Hunter wrote in the post. "I want to be part of that history, and more, I want to be part of that future. I am making this decision so that I can light the way for others to follow, make it a little easier for the next player to recognize that HBCUs may be everything you want and more: an exciting college experience, a vital community and a life-changing place to play football."

Kim Potter Found Guilty of Manslaughter in Death of 20 Year Old Daunte Wright

By Amy Forliti and Scott Bauer

Associated Press
(Source: afro.com)

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Jurors on December 23rd convicted Minneapolis police officer, Kim Potter, of two manslaughter charges in the killing of Daunte Wright. He was a Black motorist that Potter shot during a traffic stop after she said she confused her gun for her Taser.

The mostly white jury deliberated for about four days before finding the former Brooklyn Center officer guilty of first-degree and second-degree manslaughter. Potter, 49, faces about seven years in prison on the most serious count under the state's sentencing guidelines, but prosecutors said they would seek a longer term.

Judge Regina Chu ordered Potter taken into custody and held without bail and scheduled her to be sentenced on Feb. 18.

Potter looked down without showing any visible reaction when the verdicts were read. Potter's attorneys argued against her being held with no bail, saying she was not going to commit another crime or go anywhere. Chu rejected their arguments. "I cannot treat this case any differently than any other case," Chu said.

Potter, who is white, shot and killed the 20-year-old Wright during an April 11 traffic stop in Brooklyn Center. Potter and an officer she was training, Anthony Luckey, pull over Wright for having expired license plate tags and an air freshener hanging from his rear-view mirror. During the stop, Luckey discovered there was a warrant



for Wright's arrest for not appearing in court on a weapons possession charge, and he, Potter and another officer went to take Wright into custody.

Wright initially obeyed Luckey's order to get out of his car, but as Luckey tried to handcuff him, Wright pulled away and got back in the car. As Luckey held onto Wright, Potter said "I'll tase ya." The video then shows Potter holding her gun in her right hand and pointing it at Wright. Again, Potter said, "I'll tase you," and then two seconds later: "Taser, Taser, Taser." One second later, she fired a single bullet into Wright's chest.

Naisha Wright, Daunte's mother told ABC News that her son had called her during the police stop. He was afraid of the police, she told them. "He had a 2-year-old son that's not going to be able to play basketball with him. He had sisters and brothers that he loved so much," his mother said in April. "He just had his whole life taken away from him. We had our hearts pulled out of our chests. He was my baby."

BLACK NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Local, State, National and Around the World

Eight African American College Students Selected as Rhodes Scholars

(Source: *Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*, jbhe.com)

Recently, the Rhodes Trust announced the 32 American winners of Rhodes Scholarships for graduate study at Oxford University in England. Rhodes Scholarships provide all expenses for two or three years of study at the University of Oxford in England and may allow funding in some instances for four years. Being named a Rhodes Scholar is considered among the highest honors that can be won by a U.S. college student.

The scholarships were created in 1902 by Cecil Rhodes, an industrialist who made a vast fortune in colonial Africa. Rhodes last will provided for the establishment of the scholarship. While Rhodes critics have labeled him a white supremacist, who was an architect of apartheid, and argue that Black students should renounce the scholarship, to date, 3,578 Americans have won Rhodes Scholarships, representing 327 colleges and universities.

This year more than 2,300 students began the application process in the United States; 826 were endorsed by 247 different colleges and universities. A total of 235 finalists were chosen representing 76 colleges and universities and a total of 32 scholars were chosen, two from each of 16 districts across the United States.

This year, eight African Americans were chosen as Rhodes Scholars. In both 2017 and 2020, there were 10 African American Rhodes Scholars, the most in any one year.

Here are brief biographies of the eight African American Rhodes Scholars selected this year. Once again this year, JBHE would like to thank Peggy Terry for her assistance in the research on this post.



Hannah M. T. Blakey is a senior at the United States Military Academy, where she majors in Persian and French. Hannah is third-in-command of West Point's entire Corps of Cadets as well as president of a leadership initiative for students from underrepresented

backgrounds. A track and field athlete, she has set school records in the 400-meter relay and 400-meter hurdles. A native of Detroit, Blakey will study for master's degrees in refugee and forced migration studies and in evidence-based social intervention and policy evaluation.

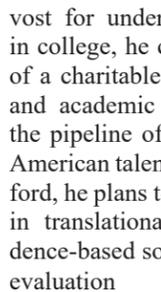


Tawreak J. Gamble-Edgington of Springfield, Massachusetts, graduated in 2021 from Union College in Schenectady, New York, with honors in both history and political science. At Union College, he was awarded

the Frank Bailey Prize last spring, awarded annually to the senior who has rendered the greatest service to the college in any field. He is currently completing a master's degree in race, ethnicity, and conflict at Trinity College Dublin, where he is a Mitchell Scholar. He plans to obtain a second master's degree in comparative politics at Oxford.



Elvin N. Irihamey from Sammamish, Washington, is a senior at Indiana University where he is majoring in neuroscience. He has been a student advisor to the Indiana University president and also to the vice provost for undergraduate education. While in college, he co-founded and is president of a charitable corporation using industry and academic partnerships to strengthen the pipeline of Black, Latinx, and Native American talent into the workforce. At Oxford, he plans to study for master's degrees in translational health science and evidence-based social intervention and policy evaluation



MacKenzie E. Isaac, from Indianapolis, received a bachelor's degree in sociology from the University of Notre Dame in 2020. She is currently completing a master's degree in health education at Columbia

University's Teachers College. She also works for Health by Design, an Indianapolis-based non-profit organization, overseeing the organization and implementation of park remodeling projects in two historically African-American neighborhoods. Isaac will study for the Ph.D. in population health at Oxford.



Samantha C.W. O'Sullivan from Washington, D.C., is a senior at Harvard College, where she majors in physics and African-American studies. At Harvard, she founded and led a student organization that promotes activism related to the legacy of slavery and has published articles on dress codes and bias against Black girls. She has done advanced research in plasma physics at Princeton University and nanoscale systems at Harvard and the University of Maryland, and astrophysics at the Carnegie Institute of Astrophysics. O'Sullivan plans to pursue master's degrees in the philosophy of physics and applied linguistics at Oxford.

Sydni Scott is a senior at Columbia University from Unionville, Connecticut, majoring in political science. She has done significant work on diversity, equity, and inclusion issues, including developing training for dozens of universities participating in The Women's Network. She also founded The Amendment Project, an organization mobilizing high school students around the issue of reparations, and worked to help secure passage of a local reparations resolution in Tulsa, Oklahoma. She is a track and field athlete at Columbia, competing in the long jump and triple jump. Scott will study for a master's degree in comparative government at Oxford.



Sarah Skinner is a senior at the United States Naval Academy, where she serves as a company commander responsible for 150 midshipmen. Skinner joined the rugby team at the academy having never played the

sport. In 2020, she was one of five finalists for the Sorenson Award, given to the nation's top female collegiate rugby player. At Oxford, Skinner plans to pursue a master's degree in international relations.



Klarke J. Stricklen is a senior at the University of the South in Sewanee, Tennessee, where she majors in American studies and African American studies. She is a research assistant for The Roberson Project on Slavery,

Race, and Reconciliation. Stricklen also serves as president of the local NAACP chapter in Sewanee. At the University of Oxford, Stricklen will pursue a master's degree in economic and social history.

In 1907, Alain LeRoy Locke, later a major philosopher and literary figure of the Harlem Renaissance, was selected as a Rhodes Scholar to study at Oxford University. It is generally believed that at the time of the award the Rhodes committee did not know that Locke was Black until after he had been chosen. It would be more than 50 years later, in 1962, until another African American would be named a Rhodes Scholar. Other African Americans who have won Rhodes Scholarships include Randall Kennedy of Harvard Law School, Kurt Schmoke, former mayor of Baltimore, and Franklin D. Raines, former director of the Office of Management and Budget and former CEO of Fannie Mae. In 1978 Karen Stevenson of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill was the first African-American woman selected as a Rhodes Scholar.

For information about the Rhodes Scholarships visit: rhodesshouse.ox.ac.uk/office-of-the-american-secretary.

Lee Elder: First Black Golfer to Play in Masters Tournament Passes Away

By Derek Major
(Source: blackenterprise.com)

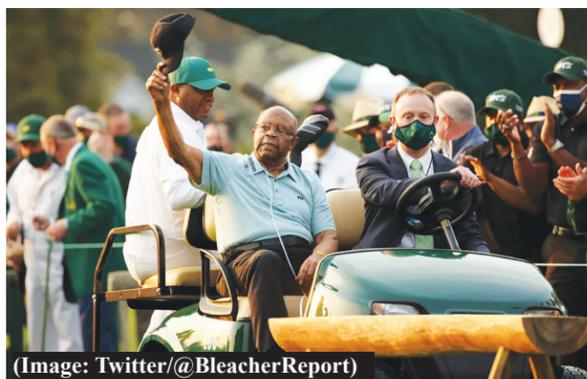
Lee Elder, the first Black golfer to play at The Masters, passed away at the age of 87 on Monday, November 29, according to the PGA Tour.

Elder, who broke the color barrier of the PGA Tour's most notable tournament in 1975, was honored at the 2021 Masters as an honorary starter in the ceremonial first tee shot along with Jack Nicklaus and Gary Player.

In an interview with CNN in 2015, Elder called his Masters debut a "very nerve-racking experience."

"I was shaking so badly, I did not know if I was even going to be able to tee up the ball," Elder told CNN. "How I got through it I do not know, just with the help of the Almighty I got there and was able to put my ball on the tee."

Elder broke into golf during the 1960s and 1970s and became one of the most recognizable faces in the sport, but also dealt with many of the same issues faced by Jackie Robinson and Willie O'Ree, who broke color barriers in baseball and hockey. Elder turned pro in 1959, two years before the racial prohibition was removed from PGA by-laws after legal pressure from California Attorney General



(Image: [@BleacherReport](https://twitter.com/BleacherReport))

Stanley Mosk. That didn't stop Elder as he played in United Golfers Association (UGA) tournaments for African American players. According to the PGA, Elder thrived in the UGA winning four UGA Negro National Opens and, in 1966, had a stretch in which he won 18 of 22 starts. Additionally he participated in 448 PGA Tour events winning four. Elder also won another eight events on the PGA Champions Tour.

Elder, who got his start in golf as a teen caddie, playing his first round at the age of 16 with scavenged golf balls and wooden-shafted clubs bought at a second-hand store, was

a native of Dallas, TX and the youngest of ten children. He lost both of his parents before he was 10 and was taken in by his Aunt Sarah who he lived with in Texas, Kansas and Los Angeles.

"My aunt was an incredible person," Elder wrote in *Golf Digest* in 2019 after being named the first Black man to win the Bob Jones Award. "She gave me love and discipline, didn't let me get too far out of line. Her resources were limited, but she carried herself with great dignity, communicated well with people and taught me right from wrong. I was on my own after about age 16, but she got me to a point where I could care for myself."

According to PGAtour.com, forty-five years after his trailblazing appearance at Augusta National, Elder was recognized by the club, which established scholarships in his name at HBCU Paine College and invited him to be an honorary starter at the 2021 Masters, along with Jack Nicklaus and Gary Player.

In 1975, after Lee made history as the as the first African American to play in the Masters Tournament, he told reporters, "I don't want to go down in history just for this, I want to be remembered, if I'm remembered at all, because I was a good golfer."

AFRICA NEWS

News Highlights From and About the Continent of Africa

Kenya Marks 'Jamhuri Day' With Independence Day Speeches and Military Bands

(Source: [tricedneywire.com](https://www.tricedneywire.com))

Jamhuri, the Swahili word for "republic", is celebrated across Kenya on Dec. 14 - when the country attained its independence from the British in 1963 and became a republic in 1964.

That was followed by a flurry of new national holidays. Some survived, others are being questioned and maybe heading for the dustbin of history.

The now-abolished Moi Day was created to celebrate the presidency of Kenya's longest serving head of state, President Daniel arap Moi.

The same was true of Kenyatta Day, which was initially set aside to remember the Kenyans who fought for independence but quickly became a celebration of Kenya's first president, Jomo Kenyatta.

In 1964, as the first President addressed a crowd, he was barraged by whites who asked if the 60,000 European settlers should fear Black leadership and the rebels, known by the colonists as "Mau Maus."

"There's no grounds at all (for fears), he told an interviewer, "neither from those who were in the forest nor from those who were home guard have anything to fear from us at all, because all of them are brothers and sisters."

Several whites at the event affirmed that since the transfer of power, things had



gone better for them than they expected. "Oh, far better," said a white seen in a video on Youtube. "They've gone infinitely better than I thought they would."

This year's speech by President Uhuru Kenyatta, offered a commentary on Uhuru Gardens and why the Founding Fathers chose the former site of a concentration camp to mark Independence Day.

"During the liberation war," he began, "the Lang-ata camp was the most notorious clearing house for our liberation fighters. In fact, it is estimated that up to 10,000 of our gallant and most feared liberators were confined in this camp at some point or an-

other. And most of them did not survive the wrath of the colonizer.

"In fact," he continued, "using 15 'quack scientists', the colonizers argued that devotion to the cause of Mau Mau was a mental illness. And the only way to deal with it was by creating mass detention camps where 'shock therapy' and torture would be administered as a cure.

"By creating this garden as a place of remembrance, our Founding Fathers wanted generations to recall the darkness of our colonial past, but not to be stuck in the pessimism that dark memories can breed." Uhuru Gardens, closed for almost two

years, is slated to reopen to the public with a historic memorial park and the refurbishment of some dilapidated buildings and monuments.

Meanwhile, the son of Deputy President William Ruto, took to his Twitter account to attack the President for betraying his father, the Deputy President William Ruto, and for favoring another candidate as his successor in the upcoming elections despite Ruto Sr. having actively campaigned for the President in 2013 and 2017.

Ruto also mentioned Uhuru's political reform project - Building Bridges Initiative - which was declared unconstitutional in a ruling upheld by the Kenyan Court of Appeals.

Michelle Gavin of the Council on Foreign Relations wrote of the Appeals Court ruling: "The Kenyan judiciary's rejection of BBI could herald important changes to the unwritten rules of Kenyan politics. Rather than bending the institutions of the state to their will, political leaders are finding that they must work within the bounds of the 2010 constitution."

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More Than 160 Migrants Drown Off Coast of Libya

(Source: [Aljazeera, aljazeera.com](https://www.aljazeera.com))

More than 160 migrants drowned in two separate shipwrecks off Libya during past week, a United Nations migration official has said.

Safa Msehli, a spokeswoman for the International Organization for Migration, said on Tuesday that at least 102 migrants were reported dead after their wooden boat capsized off Libya on Friday. At least eight others were rescued and returned to shore, she said.

The second shipwreck took place on Saturday. The Libyan coastguard retrieved at least 62 bodies of migrants, Msehli said. The same day, the coastguard intercepted a third wooden boat with at least 210 migrants on board, she said.

The fatalities were the latest disasters in the Mediterranean Sea involving migrants seeking a better life in Europe. The new deaths have brought the tally in the central Mediterranean route to about 1,500 migrants drowned this year, Msehli said.

Recent months have seen a surge in crossings and attempted crossings from Libya as authorities accelerated their deadly crackdown on migrants in the capital of Tripoli.

About 31,500 migrants were intercepted and returned to Libya in 2021, compared with nearly 11,900 migrants the previous year, according to the IOM. About 980 migrants were dead or presumed dead in 2020, the UN agency said. The IOM said that 466 migrants were intercepted or rescued at sea and returned to Libya between December 12 and 18.



Libya has emerged as the dominant transit point for people fleeing war and poverty in Africa and the Middle East. The oil-rich country plunged into chaos following a NATO-backed uprising that toppled and killed longtime ruler Muammar Gaddafi in 2011.

Human traffickers have benefitted from the chaos in the oil-rich nation and smuggled people through the country's lengthy border with six nations. They pack desperate people into ill-equipped rubber boats, then embark on risky voyages across the perilous Mediterranean Sea.

Those returned have been taken to detention centres rife with abuses, including forced labour, beatings, rapes and torture. The abuse often accompanies efforts to extort money from families before migrants are allowed to leave Libya on traffickers' boats.

UN-commissioned investigators said in October that abuse and ill-treatment of migrants in Libya could amount to crimes against humanity.

Burundi Organizes Africa's First Intn'l Women's Cycling Tour



Photo: Africa News

By Francine Sinarinzi
with [Africanews \(africanews.com\)](https://www.africanews.com)

In November Burundi hosted the first-ever women's cycling competition in Africa. Five African countries took part, including Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Burundi.

The event presented an opportunity for the women cyclists to show their ability.

"I am very satisfied. This stage ended well. I started biking in 2020 when I was in 8th grade. In the days to come, I'm dreaming of continuing until I reach the world level," said Annick Kaneza, a Burundian cyclist.

The spectators did not hide their joy at the first stage of the 40.5 km race in the

economic capital Bujumbura. They all cheered up to the athletes.

"It's a good show. I am very happy. My girls have a future and they are here. I wish them victory," a spectator said.

The first three winners of the first stage were two Kenyans and a Ugandan. A Burundian came fourth. In total, the cyclists rode 358.5 km through the country's provinces.

The second stage was held over a distance of 57 km between Gitega and Karusi in central Burundi.

The first International Women's Cycling Tour of Burundi ended Sunday, November 28.

Tongues of Fire

By Beverly Spears

No Lie Can Live Forever



I find myself reflecting a lot on the Civil Rights Movement of the mid 1950s-mid 1980s. I hardly need to note the years. In the minds of most people, it is “The” Civil Rights Movement. Racial justice movements certainly came before it, but none made such nationwide impact or resulted in more immediate change.

I re-watched the ground-breaking PBS series *Eyes on the Prize*, which should be a requirement in the core curriculum of any American History class, from the fifth grade on. *Eyes on the Prize* tells the story of the mid-20th century civil rights era, from the point of view of the extraordinary, ordinary Black people who the series producers say, “launched a movement that changed the fabric of American life...” That historical Movement certainly changed laws, laws that ended legal segregation and disenfranchisement. But did it really change the *fabric of American life*?

I have the deepest respect and undying gratitude for the women, men and children who put their very lives on the line to throw off the yoke of legal oppression that Black people had lived under since before America was America. It’s awe inspiring to know people were grounded in such deep faith in a just and loving God, and such deep trust in the power of non-violent protest, that they could summon the strength, courage and resolve to give their bodies over to be broken for the cause. In my heart, I truly believe they bled and died for me.

They succeeded in many ways. Without the Civil Rights Movement, Barack Obama would never have been elected President of the United States, and Kamala Harris would almost certainly never have been the Vice President of the Nation now.

But many of the victories Black people won in those years are eroding. The most critical of them, voting rights, is threatened in more serious ways than have existed for sixty years. It’s no longer Birmingham, Al-

abama Police Chief, Bull Conner, and his racist police department with their vicious dogs attacking young Black people, but police all over America continue to brutalize Black bodies, in most cases with impunity. White backlash to a Black man being elected President gave us Donald Trump, and an explosion of hate groups not seen since Jim Crow. The dominant power in America is still white and it still reigns supreme. White supremacy still ensures that Black lives do not matter and does all it can to see that they never will matter.

The mid-century Civil Rights Movement did not truly change the fabric of America. When racism is woven into the cloth –the fabric wears like medieval chain mesh armor. It is woven into the fabric of judicial robes and police uniforms – into the suits of corporate leaders, and the clerical robes worn by so-called people of God. The threads of racism bind the textbooks in classrooms across the country.

I re-watched *Eyes on the Prize* because I need hope and inspiration in what is seemingly the never-ending struggle for human and civil rights for Black people in this country. I frequently find myself depleted of both. I sometimes question whether Dr. Martin Luther King Jr’s *long arc of the moral universe* actually does bend toward justice. One thing is for sure, it’s a very long arc.

I find myself channeling the spirit of the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) prophet Habakkuk. Habakkuk loved God, but he was like Tevye in the movie *Fiddler on the Roof*, he wasn’t afraid to question God, and complain if need be. Habakkuk cried out and asked why God let the wickedness, violence, injustice, and wrongdoing he saw in his Nation continue unabated. He felt God was ignoring the situation.

“How long, Lord, must I call for help, but you do not listen? Or cry out to you, “Violence!” but you do not save? Why

do you make me look at injustice? Why do you tolerate wrongdoing? Destruction and violence are before me; there is strife, and conflict abounds. Therefore, the law is paralyzed, and justice never prevails. The wicked hem in the righteous, so that justice is perverted.” (Habakkuk 1:1-4)

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the prophetic voice of both his time and the current moment, had tremendous faith in God, but I believe as he experienced and witnessed the oppression of his people, there must have been times when he shook his fist and implored, where are you God?

The Prophet, Dr. King, made many, many profound declarations in his speeches. One of the best-known being August 28, 1963, at the Lincoln Memorial on the Washington, D.C. National Mall, when he delivered his famous “I Have a Dream” speech. In it, Dr. King implored us to recognize and heed “The fierce urgency of now.” We didn’t think then, though perhaps we should have, that *the fierce urgency of now* comes in waves over space and time. That fierce urgency cries out to us again in 2022.

After his historic march from Selma to Montgomery, on March 25, 1965, on the steps of the State Capitol in Montgomery, Alabama, Dr. King in his speech “Our God is Marching On” said: “How long? Not long, because no lie can live forever... because the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice.”

That was then and this is now, and right now this country is in a cascade of political, economic, cultural, moral, and viral crises. Overarching is the existential crisis – the question of how long we can continue to exist this way? Almost sixty years after King’s speech in Montgomery, America struggles with systemic racism, access to voting, police violence, how we teach the whole story, not just the dominant white caste version of American history to our children. Power rarely concedes power.

Toppling racist tyranny is not the work of any one generation.

The struggle for human and civil rights is always a *movement*, a thing in motion. It is not a project, which at some point comes to an end. A movement is dynamic! It ebbs and flows, but it never ends. The racial and social justice marches and protests of 2020 ushered in a new Civil Rights era. Our evolving Movement honors, integrates, and transcends the Civil Rights Movements that came before it. The new Movement seeks to eradicate the disease, and not just treat the symptoms of racism.

When like Habakkuk and Tevye, I ask God how long the trials of injustice and oppression must go on, God’s answer is always the same; “it will go on as long as you let it go on.” Message received. God, the Universe, the Divine transcendent, the power that is greater than us, works through us to transform the world. The work of justice lives in our hearts and in our actions or it does not live at all.

In the year ahead may we hold on to hope and find strength in one another. We don’t know exactly when but justice *will* come, because as Dr. King reminds us, *no lie can live forever*.

Since the Black Lens News won’t be back for a year, I want to thank its founder, editor, and my dear friend, Sandy Williams for all she is and all she does to speak truth, to educate, to enlighten and to challenge us. This truly is an extraordinary publication, and on its return, I know it will be even more dynamic. Thank you, Sister Sandy and all who have contributed over the years to this exemplary publication.

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Rev. Beverly Spears is an ordained American Baptist minister, teacher and preacher of Evolutionary Christianity.



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Beyond Viet Nam: The Speech We Never Hear

Editors Note: I originally printed this article in the very first issue of The Black Lens. January 2015. I first heard this speech by accident when I was in my mid-twenties, long after I had graduated from college with my Masters Degree. I was angry that in all the years that I had been in school learning about Dr. King, in all the MLK Birthdays that I had celebrated, in all the I Have a Dream speeches that had been played, I had never heard these words. Words that feel even more appropriate now than ever before. So I share these words every year and in January 2022 as we look towards an unclear future, I will share them again.

When Martin Luther King Jr. is remembered and celebrated around the world in January, his famous “I have a dream” speech is the one that is recounted over and over again as his legacy and the primary representation of who he was and what he stood for. A Civil Right leader.

But when Dr. King was assassinated on April 4, 1968 in Memphis, Tennessee, he was there for a march in support of striking sanitation workers. He was not only a Civil Rights leader, he was also a champion of the poor, an advocate for economic justice, and a vocal critic of the Vietnam War and America’s foreign policy, although this is not talked about nearly as often.

On April 4, 1967, a year to the day before his assassination, Dr. King delivered what was considered a “controversial” speech against the Vietnam War and against the principle of war in general.

Speaking at Riverside Church in New York City in front of an audience of thousands, the speech, titled “*Beyond Vietnam: A Time to Break Silence*” was condemned by many Civil Rights leaders at the time who felt that King’s anti war stance was damaging their cause.

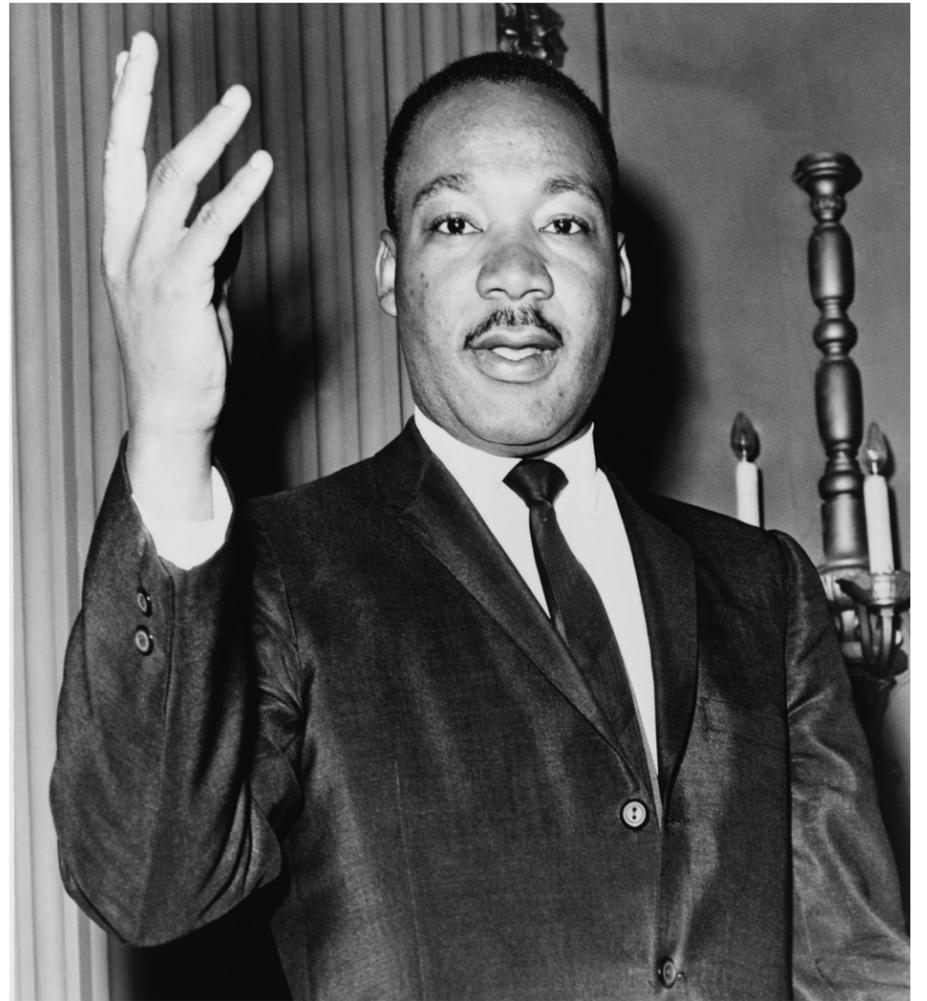
The speech angered many in the United States government, making King a target of FBI investigations. According to the Tavis Smiley documentary “MLK: A Call to Conscience”, 168 major newspapers denounced King the day after the speech, and an angry President Lyndon Johnson dis-invited him from the White House. Despite the negative impact of the speech, King felt that he could no longer in good conscious remain quiet about the war and called on others to do the same. The rarely heard speech is considered by many to be one of King’s greatest, and still relevant as wars continue around the world.

Following are excerpts from Dr. King’s fifty minute speech:

I knew that America would never invest the necessary funds or energies in rehabilitation of its poor so long as adventures like Vietnam continued to draw men and skills and money like some demonic, destructive suction tube. So I was increasingly compelled to see the war as an enemy of the poor and to attack it as such.

We were taking the black young men who had been crippled by our society and sending them eight thousand miles away to guarantee liberties in Southeast Asia which they had not found in southwest Georgia and East Harlem. So we have been repeatedly faced with the cruel irony of watching Negro and white boys on TV screens as they kill and die together for a nation that has been unable to seat them together in the same schools. So we watch them in brutal solidarity burning the huts of a poor village, but we realize that they would hardly live on the same block in Chicago. I could not be silent in the face of such cruel manipulation of the poor.

I knew that I could never again raise my voice against the violence of the oppressed in the ghettos without having first spoken clearly to the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today: my own government. For the sake of those boys, for the sake of this government, for the sake of the hundreds of thousands trembling under our violence, I cannot be silent.



I cannot forget that the Nobel Peace Prize was also a commission to work harder than I had ever worked before for the brotherhood of man. This is a calling that takes me beyond national allegiances. But even if it were not present, I would yet have to live with the meaning of my commitment to the ministry of Jesus Christ. To me, the relationship of this ministry to the making of peace is so obvious that I sometimes marvel at those who ask me why I am speaking against the war. Could it be that they do not know that the Good News was meant for all men—for communist and capitalist, for their children and ours, for black and for white, for revolutionary and conservative? Have they forgotten that my ministry is in obedience to the one who loved his enemies so fully that he died for them? What then can I say to the Vietcong or to Castro or to Mao as a faithful minister of this one? Can I threaten them with death or must I not share with them my life?

Here is the true meaning and value of compassion and nonviolence, when it helps us to see the enemy’s point of view, to hear his questions, to know his assessment of ourselves. For from his view we may indeed see the basic weaknesses of our own condition, and if we are mature, we may learn and grow and profit from the wisdom of the brothers who are called the opposition.

Increasingly, by choice or by accident, this is the role our nation has taken, the role of those who make peaceful revolution impossible by refusing to give up the privileges and the pleasures that come from the immense profits of overseas investments. I am convinced that if we are to get on to the right side of the world revolution, we as a nation must undergo a radical revolution of values. We must rapidly begin, we must rapidly begin the shift from a thing-oriented society to a person-oriented society. When machines and computers, profit motives and property rights, are considered more important than people, the giant triplets of racism, extreme materialism, and militarism are incapable of being conquered.

True compassion is more than flinging a coin to a beggar. It comes to see that an edifice which produces beggars needs restructuring.

The Western arrogance of feeling that it has everything to teach others and nothing to learn from them is not just.

A true revolution of values will lay hands on the world order and say of war, “This way of settling differences is not just.” This business of burning human beings with napalm, of filling our nation’s homes with orphans and widows, of injecting poisonous drugs of hate into the veins of peoples normally humane, of sending men home from dark and bloody battlefields physically handicapped and psychologically deranged, cannot be reconciled with wisdom, justice, and love. A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual death.

To view the complete text or listen to the audio of this speech visit American Rhetoric at <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/mlkatimetobreaksilence.htm>



Local KSPS Program to Pay Tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

By Zana Morrow

Arts & Culture Coordinator for KSPS-TV

Courtesy of KSPS-TV

Monday, January 17th at 7:30pm PST, KSPS-TV PBS Spokane will be airing a locally-produced special “Inland Sessions: Honoring Dr. King” where regional poets and musicians from the Inland Northwest will be addressing the mission of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. through original works and personal renditions which they each choose specifically to creatively honor Dr. King and share their experience of his powerful political, social, and spiritual legacies.

We can all get more together than we can apart. And this is the way we gain power. Power is the ability to achieve purpose, power is the ability to affect change, and we need power. -Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Coming together from disparate backgrounds and generational divides, five talented independent local artists are sharing their voices, music, and words in an effort to speak to their own lived experience of Dr. King’s civil rights campaign and where we are 59 years after his famous “I Have a Dream” speech.

Featured artists include:

Two singers, **Yolanda Kinlow-Jones** and **Latrice Williams**, will grace us with their presence as noted singers in our community who will each perform a favorite traditional gospel song to celebrate their own religious faith and show respect to Dr. King’s lifetime spent as a Baptist minister.

Spoken word artist, and poet **Bethany Montgomery**, better known as “B.Lyte” and co-founder of Power 2 The Poetry is not pulling punches and will share some of their most powerful works which aims



to bring our collective anger and pain into focus to make change.

Ricky “Deekon” Jones is a local hip-hop artist who founded a non-profit to help local indigenous youth find purpose through sports and music called New Developed Nations and will be bringing along the band to perform some searing tracks that speak directly to his experiences in a way that lets us step into his shoes.

Kiantha Duncan, current president of Spokane’s NAACP Chapter, will be host-

ing the pre-recorded event. As host, Kiantha plans to address the recently reported King Family wish that Martin Luther King Day be celebrated with direct action and protests toward voting rights legislation this year.

Arndrea Waters King, wife of Martin Luther King III, told CNN on December 15th, 2021, “If we’re really talking about celebrating the legacy of Martin Luther King Jr., voting rights was a cornerstone of his legacy.”

Dr. King also understood the power of music which bookended so many of his sermons and speeches, as a way to get everybody on the same emotional page, and respected the encouraging words of artists to help him express himself. Before Martin Luther King Jr. took the stage on August 28th, 1963 during the March on Washington, he asked his friend noted gospel singer Mahalia Jackson to perform, “I’ve Been ‘Buked, and I’ve Been Scorned”.

After Dr. King took the stage and was already speaking, Mahalia spoke up and said, “Tell them about the dream, Martin,” which led to him putting down his previously prepared speech, and begin his famously improvised “I Have a Dream” speech which still reverberates with the simple revolutionary clarity of his passionate mission nearly 60 years later.

“In this way, we could work creatively against the despair and indifference that so often caused our nation to be immobilized during the cold winter and shaken profoundly in the hot summer.”

– Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

“Inland Sessions: Honoring Dr. King” will premiere on KSPS-TV PBS on Monday, January 17th at 7:30 pm PST on all KSPS-PBS Spokane/Edmonton Translators across Eastern Washington, Northern Idaho, Western Montana, as well as across South-Western Canada. The episode can also be watched after January 17th at kspso.org or through Passport via your KSPS Membership.

“Inland Sessions” is a locally-produced studio-concert series seeking talented area musicians, poets, and performers to submit their creative works for consideration for upcoming shows. Email zanam@kspso.org for more information.



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Jemar Tisby: Courageous Christianity and the Journey Toward Racial Justice

Whitworth University welcomed author and historian Jemar Tisby to campus on November 2 to discuss his new book, *How to Fight Racism: Courageous Christianity and the Journey Toward Racial Justice*. *How to Fight Racism* has been called a handbook for pursuing racial justice, with hands-on suggestions bolstered by real-world examples of change. Tisby offers an array of actionable items to confront racism in relationships and in everyday life through a simple framework, the A.R.C. of Racial Justice, that helps readers consistently interrogate their own actions and maintain a consistent posture of anti-racist action.

Tisby is the New York Times bestselling author of *The Color of Compromise* and president and co-founder of *The Witness: A Black Christian Collective*, where he writes about race, religion, politics and culture. He is also the co-host of the *Pass the Mic* podcast and has spoken at conferences across the country. His writings have been featured in *The Washington Post* and on CNN and Vox.

Tisby agreed to an interview with the Black Lens. This is an excerpt of the interview.

I always start off by asking people a little bit about themselves and their background. Tell me about you as a kid. Were you always interested in religion? Were you made to go to church?

I was a nerd. I loved reading and was content to do that for hours at a time. We did not grow up particularly religious. The only thing my mom made me do was get baptized when I was eight, but that was about it for a long time. I grew up in the Midwest and had a pretty racially and ethnically diverse friend group. It was in high school that I became a Christian through the ministry of a white evangelical youth group. So, I held these dynamics between race and religion because I was always a minority in those spaces.

That's interesting. Tell me about that. What was it about the experience of being in a white evangelical youth group that prompted you to become Christian when it wasn't really a part of your family?

It was friendship and a sense of community. You know, in high school you're always trying to find your place and where you "fit". I wasn't in the athlete's group. I wasn't in the theater group. I wasn't in the skaters group, and it was really the proactive reaching out from folks in this youth group that kind of hooked me in. Even though I knew good and well that this was a bunch of white folks, they just made a place for me and made me feel welcome and that went a long way.

I know you got your masters in divinity, did that take you on a journey where you were thinking that maybe you were going to be a minister?

Sure did. All the way back in high school, I knew I would end up going to the seminary. I told you I was a nerd. I



don't know how many high schoolers are dreaming of going to seminary, but I knew that would always be in my future somewhere. I quickly became one of the leaders of that high school youth group and that continued in college, when I went to college at the University of Notre Dame. I got involved in an ecumenical group on campus and I was one of the leaders there. I worked in campus ministry after I graduated, so there was this trajectory. I thought of doing full time work in the church in some way shape or form.

You said you knew it. What made you know that you were gonna go into the seminary? Did something happen?

I was at a youth group retreat in high school as a participant. I never get to any meeting early, but for some reason I got to our next chapel meeting early. It was just me and two of my friends. I went into the pulpit and started pretending like I was preaching. One of the guys who happened to be one of the only other people of color in the group just yelled out sort of joking, "there's the preacher" and something clicked right then. I was like, huh, that seems like something I want to pursue. So, from about that moment on I started thinking about full time ministry as a pastor and then I figured seminary would be a good thing to have in preparation.

Let's talk about your books. I wanna talk about both *The Color of Compromise* and *How to Fight Racism*, but start with the *Color of Compromise* because I found it fascinating talking about the history of racism in the church. Where did that book come from? What sparked it? Why did you decide to write it?

It comes from a couple of factors. One, on a biographical level, I'm trying to make sense of my experience in white evangelicalism and all of the racism and othering that I had experienced. On another level, I'm trying to make sense of our national context. The idea for the *Color of Compromise* happened right around the 2016 election, a little bit after that, and trying to figure out why white evangelicals supported this man (Trump) so much, and then in the midst of that also the Black Lives Matter movement and trying to figure out why white Christians were so opposed to something as simple and as true as the fact that Black Lives Matter. Then, the third level was I was taking graduate courses in history at the time and I was finally being exposed to all of the stories that you don't learn growing up in school, mainly about all of the racism that permeates every sector of our national life, including the church. I figured this is history people need to know, and my hope was that they would have the same reaction I did. Once we learned this sordid history, you would be angry enough to act. But I also knew not everybody has the opportunity to read dozens and dozens of books on history, so I said, what if we took representative examples in a historical survey and put it in one book that was accessible to the broader populous.

What was the reaction? Was it what you expected or was it different?

I was completely unprepared for the hunger for this kind of book. To be sure, there were and are detractors and you can look at the reviews on Amazon or Good Reads to see them, but by and large, even from white evangelicals, there was a clamoring to know this history that had never been taught and certainly had never been organized in the way that I did in the *Color of Compromise*. So, I was really quite flabbergasted in 2019 when the book came out to just constantly be getting calls for interviews and podcasts and booked for speaking at colleges and universities. I didn't expect that at all. Then 2020 comes around with the racial justice uprising, historic levels of participation, which also translated into a book like mine, as well as many other similar ones about race, hitting the New York Times best-seller list. And that was a year and a half after the book initially came out. So, I've been pleasantly surprised by the sober but enthusiastic response to the book.

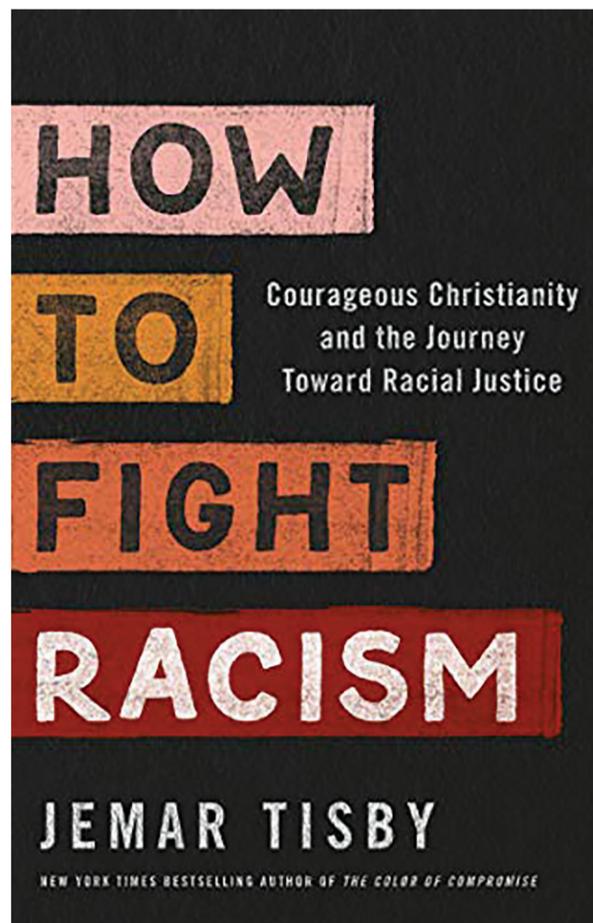
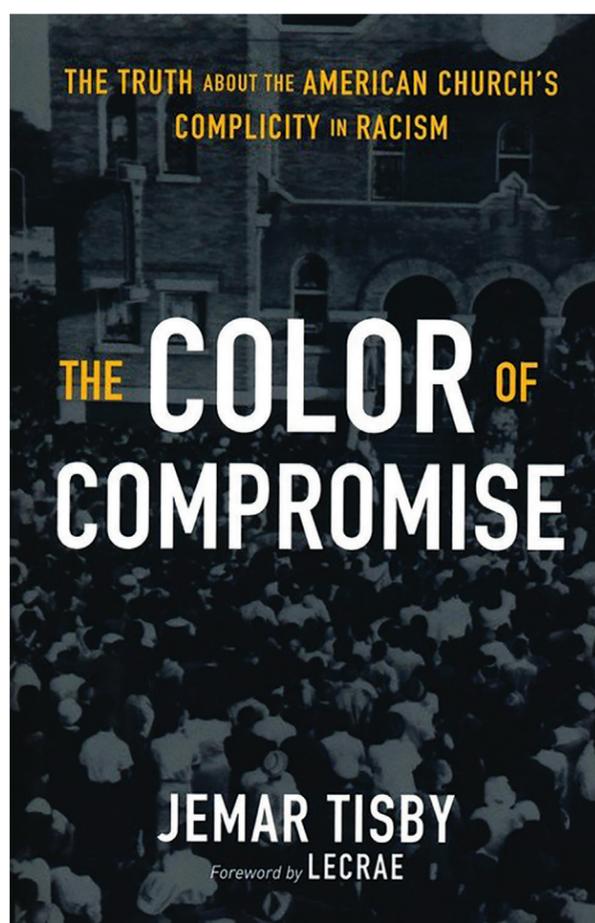
So what about the other book? *How to Fight Racism*? How did you evolve into that book?

I actually thought that would be the first book I wrote. I had been so deeply embedded in racial justice work that my burden was to help catalyze and activate other people to get involved. I wanted to write a book right out of the gate about here's how you do it. But along the way, I was learning more and more about history and I said, we've got to understand the depth of the problem before we can do anything about fixing it. So, *The Color of Compromise* sort of diagnoses the issue, and then *How to Fight Racism* comes along and says, here's what we can do about it. It's really in response to the question I get most frequently whenever I speak, teach or write about racism. That question is "what do we do? It's a practical question. It's a question that says, I agree there's a problem and I want to be part of the solution, but I don't know how. *How to Fight Racism* prioritizes the practical. Every chapter has multiple suggestions, concrete actionable suggestions on how to get involved in the struggle against racism. But the real value of the book is the framework that I call the A.R.C. of racial justice. That stands for Awareness, Relationships, and Commitment. Those three pillars are what we need to have a holistic approach to racial justice that is not simply reactive to current events but sustainable over the course of time.

After I saw that was going to interview you, I pulled up the book *How to Fight Racism* and there were two things that struck me. First, you started the book by saying "it's different this time". I was fascinated by that statement. Tell me what in your view is different this time?

It's a controversial statement. I was just on CNN this morning and Mayors who are in mayoral races, some of them have pivoted back to talking about law and order, where a year ago, or even less, they were talking about dramatic police reform. So, it is a controversial statement because are things really different now? The reason I say it's different this time is a couple of things. Number one, the volume of participation. People turned out in protest in greater numbers than we've seen in the history of this nation.

Continued on Page 30



Spokane Civic Theatre to Hold Auditions for Jackie Robinson Play

After more than eighteen months without productions, beginning January 28, it lights up at Spokane Civic Theatre with the regional premiere of the outrageously hilarious *The Play That Goes Wrong*. Founded in 1947, Civic's Welcome Back season includes Neil Simon's *Plaza Suite*, the classic musical *Funny Girl* and the organization's thirty-second playwrights' forum festival.

In April, Spokane Civic Theatre will present a special encore production of Resident Playwright Bryan Harnetiaux's epic historical drama, **National Pastime**.

The play, now published by Playscripts Inc., New York, premiered at Civic in the Spring of 1998. It is a re-telling of the journey of Jackie Robinson and the breaking of the color line in major-league baseball on April 15, 1947 — 75 years ago this spring.

It has not been performed in Spokane since the 2003 Onyx Theatre Troupe production, which featured legendary Black player/manager Buck O'Neil as opening night guest.

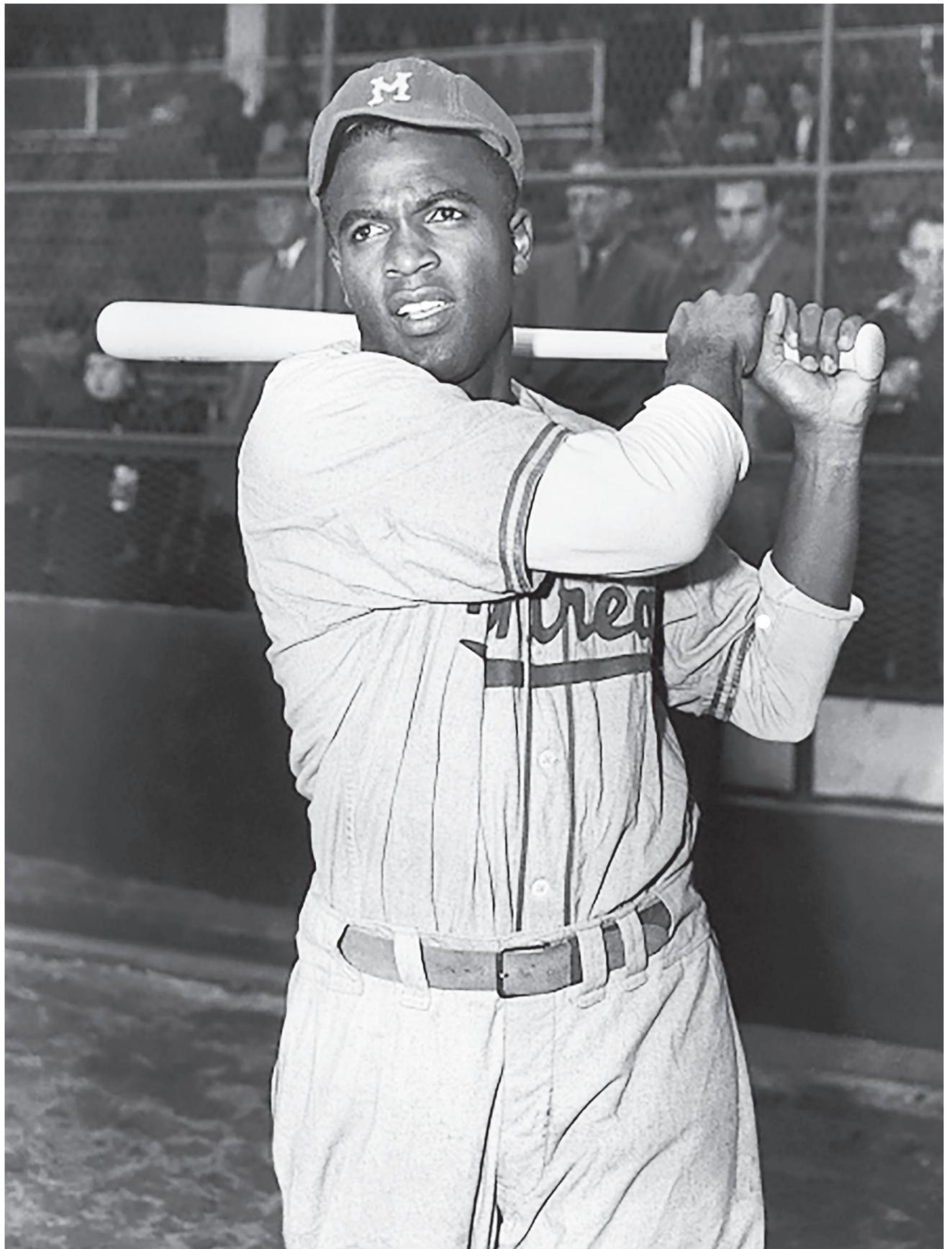
Some consider the breaking of the color line in major league baseball as the dawn of the civil rights movement in this country. With the emergence of Black Lives Matter, the story is more relevant and compelling than ever, particularly in tracing how two men, Jackie Robinson and Branch Rickey — one Black, one white — worked hand-in-hand to overcome the intractable racist culture that pervaded major league baseball. Ultimately, the play is as much, if not more, about racism than baseball.

The storytelling here is brutally honest, yet laced with humor and served up on a grand scale. The script requires 13 actors, six Black and seven white (9 male, 4 female). The role of Robinson is particularly demanding, portraying him from age four through forty-three.

At the helm of this production is a guest director from New York City, whose credits include Broadway (*A Streetcar Named Desire* directed by Emily Mann, Assistant Director), Off-Broadway, regional, and international stage and film productions.

Auditions for *National Pastime* will be in late January. All talent is encouraged to audition, regardless of training or experience.

For more information about auditions and the production, visit the Community tab at SpokaneCivicTheatre.com, call 509.325.2507 or email Production@SpokaneCivicTheatre.com.



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BECIN Launch Announcement 2022

Equity has been at the forefront of many people's and organizations' minds but many struggle with what equity might look like for Spokane's local business community. In order to offer a solution to this problem, Spokane's Black Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) business associations have come together to form the **Business Equity Coalition of the Inland Northwest**, also known as BECIN.

The founding members of this coalition are Carl Maxey Center/Black Business and Professionals Alliance, Hispanic Business and Professionals Association (HBPA), AHANA/Multi-Ethnic Business Association, Sister Sky Inc./Native Business Center, SIMBA/INBA (Spokane Independent Metro Business Alliance/Inland Northwest Business Alliance), and Community Development Initiative.

BECIN is committed to building an equitable small business ecosystem based on our values of racial equity, collaboration, and leadership. We see supporting and organizing our local business communities as an essential strategy for achieving community autonomy and the elimination of structural racism because of the long history of unjust racialized capitalism in America and in globalized colonialism more broadly. In order to eliminate racial wealth gaps and build economic power we have come together to better meet our member's needs.

BECIN's objectives:

- Increased resources for capacity building and technical assistance for multi-ethnic businesses (BIPOC) and other disadvantaged business groups.
- Improved equitable access to capital for startup and existing businesses.
- Increased access to equitable contracting opportunities with corporations and government.
- Building up the next generation of BIPOC and other disadvantaged business leaders.

BECIN envisions a business community in the Inland Northwest where everyone has access to the business resources and support that they need. We see an Inland Northwest with a thriving business ecosystem that strengthens the community through racial equity, collaboration, and leadership. We look forward to working with the Spokane business community in the new year.

BECIN's website is under currently construction, but will be available soon with information: BECIN.org.



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Pandemic's Heavy Toll on Children's Mental Health

By Charlene Muhammad

California Black Media

Precinct Reporter News (blackpressusa.com)

The Covid-19 pandemic is taking a heavy toll on the health, finances, and mobility of people around the world, affecting almost everyone on the planet.

Youth, in particular, have been experiencing an uptick in mental health cases, including depression, in a trend U.S. Surgeon General Vivek Murthy is calling an emerging crisis.

On Dec. 7, Murthy released a 42-page health advisory drawing the country's attention to the "urgent" need to help youth facing mental health problems. He said one in three students in the U.S. say they experience sustained periods of sadness and hopelessness. That number represents a 40% increase from 2009 to 2019. The pandemic has made those conditions worse.

"The future wellbeing of our country depends on how we support and invest in the next generation," said Murthy. "Especially in this moment, as we work to protect the health of Americans in the face of a new variant, we also need to focus on how we can emerge stronger on the other side. This advisory shows us how we can all work together to step up for our children during this dual crisis."

Recently, a panel of experts tackled the issue during a news briefing organized by Ethnic Media Services titled "The Pandemic's Heavy Toll on Teen Mental Health."

Michelle Cabrera, Executive Director of the County Behavioral Health Directors Association (CBHDA), spotlighted the health needs of minority youth. She explained that all over the nation — and in California — youth are suffering from a mental health crisis, leading to increasing numbers of suicide and high levels of anxiety in schools.

"The numbers of children and youth in acute mental health crises shot up two and sometimes three-fold. We have had children as young as eight-years-old who have been hospitalized due to suicidal ideation," stated Cabrera.

Behavioral health experts say transitioning students back to in-person learning results in higher rates of children and youth experiencing mental health crises, she said.

According to Cabrera, existing programs lack support for youth in Black and Native populations, and records show that major



Photo: Shutterstock

disparities are also present among professionals within the behavioral health field.

"For example, the access to services and programs that may be used in White communities to combat mental health problems are not made available in Black communities," she said.

Cabrera mentioned that there is also a career crisis in behavioral health, and that by 2022, these benefits will be put in place to help abate the employment crisis in California and all over the nation.

"The pandemic has also changed the statistics about drug and substance abuse in America," Cabrera continued. "Data has shown an increase in alcohol and opioid consumption in young people, who are also experiencing a lot more overdoses because of their consumption of fentanyl in the drugs that are used," she said.

Youth also struggle with returning to school physically, bullying, and a lack of programs to address their mental health issues.

Dr. Latonya Wood is the director of clinical training at Pepperdine University in Malibu. She delved specifically into the data about Black children who are suffering from mental health-related issues. She ex-

plained that depression is being expressed and understood differently among Blacks. For example, young Black males interpret their emotions and mental conditions differently. They may not act in ways that are typically associated with depression, such as sadness or melancholy. Black youth typically translate those emotions into aggression and more physical reactions.

In addition, the pandemic has amplified some of the disconnections in the Black community, said Dr. Wood. She explained that there has not been consistent help in public health organizations that serve Black communities.

"Seldomly, there is relatability to the Black community. So African American are going to be lacking resources because they don't know how to reach them," she said.

Wood said historically Black people have not had a reason to fully trust mental health providers. A recent survey asked a group of Black youth about mental health care during COVID. It found that Black youth do not feel like mental healthcare providers care for them, that they only want money, and they do not understand the lived experiences, according to Dr. Wood.

"I think that really reflects the lack of culturally informed and trauma-informed care

and really understanding the experiences of Black youth in some ways were traumatic during COVID," said Dr. Wood."

More Black people are seeking Black providers, but they number just short of about 4% of the psychologists in America, according to a 2020 Workforce Study, completed by the American Psychological Association, she continued.

As a result, Black people suffer usually long wait times to even be seen by a therapist or to receive care. Wood stressed that finding the right care for people dealing with mental disorders in the Black community is very important.

Solutions for these issues were suggested at the level of community-based care provided at places where people congregate like school, church, and the barbershop, among others. Those spaces can serve as supportive places venues where mental health care or interventions can be accessible.

"The youth need support systems in place in order to help guard against the extreme negatives that come with poor mental health," said Wood.

The post Pandemic's Heavy Toll on Children's Mental Health appeared first on Precinct Reporter Group News.

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Is Spokane Ready for a Black Focused Childcare Center?

Kerra Bower Set to Open RAZE Early Learning Child Development Center

By Amber D. Dodd

Community Journalism Fund
Spokesman Review Partnership

Kerra Bower has been providing home childcare services since September 2013 when she opened an at-home facility in the Spokane area. But a needs-based study on Black children in early preschool programs prompted her to take another route: education rooted in teaching children about their history. In addition to Little Scholars, a child development facility that centers children of color in a safe, educational space, Bowers is now looking to open Raze, a cultural center that connects Black children to their history.

“A lot of the responses that I’ve gotten have been about if there was a 50 year plan to end racism, that this is where it starts,” Bower said. “You start with the kids, you start by teaching that no, we are not all the same. We are beautifully different and this is how our differences have shaped this place that we are in. And I think that is (something) we have to be very intentional about.”

Bower opened her very first child care center in 2009, where her basement was converted to a child care center. After giving birth to her son, she recognized her desire to help her children through pre-K as she “recommitted to her family.” She served in Spokane’s West Central area where her passions for abused and disadvantaged children came alive.

“I just started seeing this need, you know?” Bower said. “There were times that I was the only person, outside of the child’s mother, that was on the child emergency contact list for behavioral issues. I was eight, nine months pregnant and had my whole childcare center with me getting one of my students, that was at school, from underneath the principal’s desk.”

After that situation, Bower knew that if the child had someone in their lives who could empathize with their emotional episodes or understand their life at home, approaches to their behavior didn’t have to escalate.

“It took somebody understanding his trauma and I knew what he was going through,” Bower said. “I had invested enough in that family to understand what needed to be done in that moment to calm him down, get him to a safe space. So that’s where I started.”

By 2013, Bower had given birth to her daughter. Her growing family required as much space as they could get in their home. The at-home children’s facility was relocated to a storefront, but still close to the West Central neighborhood.

“That community is just so incredibly important to me, so I was making sure that we’d be able to meet the needs there,” she said. “But then I wanted to marry the two concepts of coming from a place to understand the importance of cultural exposure and understanding your history and being rooted in who and what you come from.”

The late English politician Winston Churchill is popular for the phrase, “History is



Dan Pelle/Spokesman Review

written by victors,” which, in the case of America can rob younger children at an early age of understanding their history from a balanced point of view of both the oppressor and oppressed. This can lead to a tug-of-war between what children are taught in schools and their lived realities.

But, with the help of local educators, Bower looks to implement a curriculum that dives into the relationship between Black people and Americans on the local and national levels. She hopes to bring books about Spokane, such as Dwayne Mack’s ‘Black Spokane’ and Jerrelene Williamson’s ‘African Americans in Spokane’ to the early childhood centers.

“We need to know how (Black people) have shaped this city,” Bower said. “People always say, ‘Oh no Black people live here,’ but there’s a whole book written just about Black people in Spokane and the amazing

things we’ve done. Black people need to be at this program...this is a program built for us. However, it is not enough for us to just sit around the table and talk about how great we are. There needs to be a common conversation that’s being had all over Spokane, no matter what or how the home life is like.”

Student treatment is also another concern which led to Bower putting together an inclusive day care. A study done by the U.S. Department of Education examined the relationship between Black children and discipline. Inequalities in education start early for Black children, who make up just 18% of preschool enrollment, yet make up 48% of the disciplinary actions in preschool. On a local level, Spokane Public School’s data on kindergarten readiness troubled Bower.

“The district released their 2020 Kindergarten Readiness Rates and Black students

were graduating or were entering kindergarten at 40% of kindergarten readiness,” Bower said. “If you look at the requirements for a kindergartner, I mean, its as basic as recognizing one letter in your name or knowing what a police station is or even a police officer. I mean, they’re basic things that only 40% of our entering students know. So I have this idea that I wanted to bring a preschool development center to Spokane.”

Outside of the numbers, Bower understands the importance of safe, educational spaces for students of color. She recalled the brutal discrimination her son faced while in school and the school administration’s attitudes toward her.

“My son was brutally assaulted...I was not notified until the end of the day after I had left the school,” Bower recounted. “There’s so much we went through (during) this whole process. We wanted to pull both of our children out. I tried to give (Freeman’s administration) time to figure it out. I offered to write a curriculum. I’d offered to contact the police department who provide bullying training and support — all of that was denied.”

Years later, as she worked to develop Raze, Bower won a fiscal feasibility grant and realized that everything was coming together. Talks of the physical space began to rev up. Parents were excited to enroll their children by fall 2022 and Bower began talking with local educators, such as Dr. Scott Finnie, director of Eastern Washington University’s Africana Studies.

“I did focus groups. We did surveys,” She said. “I spoke to, what I call, the Black church circuit. I got a resounding yes.”

With community opinions trickling in from diverse points of view, small tweaks were made to the plans for the early child care center. Recognizing the need for extended hours of care for parents without traditional white-collar 9 to 5 jobs, Bower decided to expand the care center from closing at 6:30 p.m. to closing at 11:30 p.m.

But this is just one of the ways Little Scholars and Raze will be able to benefit the community. Whether it be lowering the costs of child care for those in need of financial assistance through a black-tie event, or forging bonds with organizations like the Big Brother, Big Sister mentorship program, Bower is ready to take on the task of raising Spokane’s next generation of scholars to impact the city for years to come.

“I always wanted to know if Spokane was ready for a Black-focused center,” Bower said. “This is a project and a program that is teaching, hopefully laying the foundation for people to really start understanding not just what it means to be a Black person in America currently, but what a Black person in Black history has done for this country that we are all a part of and love.”

Raze is a Black American focused early learning, development center and before and after school program. Little Scholars is a family centered holistic education center. For more information about Raze and Little Scholars call (509) 443-3752.



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Parents Raise the Alarm About Violence in Schools

By Stacy M. Brown

NNPA Newswire Senior National Correspondent @StacyBrownMedia (blackpressusa.com)

A new poll revealed that parents continue to express “legitimate concerns” about violence in schools, increased bullying, and a lack of mental health resources.

Alarming, the poll released by the National Parents Union found that 59 percent of parents are very or extremely concerned about how schools are teaching race and diversity.

“Many Black parents are worried that schools are being harsher on students of color compared to white students,” researchers noted in the poll.

The National Parents Union counts as a network of parent organizations and grassroots activists committed to improving the quality of life for children and families in the United States.

Conducted from November 19 to November 23, the survey included 1,233 parents who also count as registered voters.

Researchers found that 84 percent of parents are concerned about how schools address the threat of violence, and 59 percent identified increased bullying or violence in school as a significant issue.

About 52 percent said student mental health after coping with the pandemic is a significant issue, as well.

“Parents have very legitimate concerns about violence in schools, increased bullying, and a lack of mental health resources,” Keri Rodrigues, co-founder, and President of the National Parents Union, said in a statement.

“Now, it is incumbent on schools to do something about these issues, especially given the federal funds available. It’s not rocket science. Rather than repaint a football field, first, make sure that there are enough counselors to help students cope with mental health issues,” Rodrigues asserted.

The poll also asked the parents who responded that they were concerned about the threat of violence, which worries them the most.

The top three most pressing concerns remain:

44 percent: schools not having enough counselors, psychologists, or social workers to work with students

42 percent: schools not having resources to keep weapons out of schools

39 percent: schools not having school resource officers or police accessible on campus

59 percent of parents are extremely or



very concerned about how schools are teaching about race and diversity;

Among Black parents, 69 percent share this sentiment, which drops slightly to 67 percent among Hispanic parents.

Of the overall number of parents who are at least somewhat concerned (79 percent):

48 percent say what concerns them the most is schools are not teaching accurate information about the issue of race.

42 percent are most concerned about schools pushing a progressive agenda onto students

56 percent of GOP parents who are concerned say this is their top concern

32 percent are most concerned that schools aren’t focused on the issue enough

46 percent of Black parents who are concerned say this is their top concern

78 percent of parents are concerned about how schools are handling disciplinary issues

Nearly half (46 percent) of Black parents who said they are concerned

about how schools are handling disciplinary issues are worried that schools are harsher on students of color compared to white students

38 percent of parents trust Democrats to do a better job of handling education; 31 percent trust Republicans; 14 percent trust both equally; 11 percent trust neither

Among parents who identify as Independents, 28 percent trust Republicans and 20 percent trust Democrats.

“These findings underscore the importance of the very thing we have been imploring school leaders across the country to do – listen to the parents in your community,” Rodrigues stated.

“It also reinforces the need for those running for office to take the concerns of parents very seriously or risk losing elections.”

For information about the National Parents Union poll visit: <https://nationalparentsunion.org/2021/12/13/parents-raise-the-alarm-about-violence-in-schools>

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Deen Centric

A Column from Spokane's Black Muslim Community



By Duaa-Rahemaah Williams

As-Salam-u-Alaikum (“Peace be unto you”) is an Arabic greeting between Muslims and it is responded with “wa-Alaikumu-salam wa-Rahmat-ullah.” (“May the peace, mercy, and blessings of Allah be upon you.”)

I was born Dora, however I prefer Duaa-Rahemaah. My name means supplication of prayer and mercy that connects me to everything in this universe.

My journey to Islam began in October 2014, and I have been a resident of Spokane since September of 2016.

I'd like to thank Sandy and the Black Lens News for giving me this opportunity to have DeenCentric in the pa-

per. DeenCentric started back in April of 2021 at the beginning of Ramadan with the hope of introducing ourselves to the community. With the hope that you would enjoy reading and meeting the African American Muslims in the Spokane community.

And I like to thank my husband and soulmate Jermaine Williams for believing in me and pushing me to follow my dreams.

We will continue to introduce you to more of our community members and share our faith, beliefs, and journey with you, when the Black Lens resumes again.

Wishing peace and prosperity.

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lcsnw.org/spokane

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for unaccompanied Refugee Minor (URM) Foster youth ages 14-17 in the Spokane, WA area.

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Are You a Young Person Worried About Your Housing?

Are you between the ages of 12-24 and experiencing housing instability or uncertainty? You may be eligible for the **Centralized Diversion Fund**, which provides one-time financial support to make a housing solution happen outside of the homelessness system.

Benefits Include:

- ✓ Access to one-time financial assistance for a housing solution
- ✓ Use funds flexibly and creatively, as long as it's related to getting housed, from support with move-in costs to relocation and more
- ✓ Get housed immediately - without joining a waitlist or the backlogged housing system

Am I Eligible for Centralized Diversion Fund?

To request CDF, you must be:

- A currently unaccompanied youth/young adult (age 12-24), OR at risk of becoming unaccompanied
- Experiencing a housing crisis
- CANNOT be used for homeless housing program

For More Info, Contact:

Julius Henrichsen,
Youth Homelessness Community Coordinator
jhenrichsen@voaspokane.org



LOOKING BACK at 2021

6th Anniversary Edition
THE BLACK LENS
 NEWS FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

January

Warnock Wins Georgia Senate Race

Spokane, Georgia, elected its 21st senator, Raphael Warnock, in a historic upset victory over incumbent Republican Kelly Loeffler. Warnock, a pastor and former pastor of the Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, became the first Black U.S. senator from Georgia. He won the race by a narrow margin of 12,375 votes, a difference of 0.14%.

Warnock's victory was a historic moment for Georgia and the South. He is the first Black person to be elected to the Georgia State Senate and the first Black person to be elected to the U.S. Senate from the state. He is also the first Black pastor to be elected to the U.S. Senate.

Critical Questions After Domestic Terrorist Attack at U.S. Capitol

The January 6th attack on the U.S. Capitol building in Washington, D.C., has raised critical questions about the security of the building and the safety of the members of Congress. The attack resulted in the deaths of five people and the injury of over 100 others. It also resulted in the overturning of the 2020 presidential election results.

Questions have been raised about the security of the building and the safety of the members of Congress. The attack has also raised questions about the role of the media and the role of social media in the attack.

January

The Black Lens celebrated our 6th anniversary in January, although due to COVID-19 we were not able to hold a celebration. The cover stories were a celebration of the victory of Rev. Raphael Warnock of Atlanta's Ebenezer Baptist Church, as the first Black U.S. senator elected from the state of Georgia, and coverage of the domestic terrorist attack that happened at the U.S. Capitol on January 6, as thousands of Trump supporters stormed and occupied the capital building in an effort to stop congress from certifying the election that would make Joe Biden President. We introduced the new leadership of the Spokane NAACP; spotlighted an update of the Carl Maxey Center and their partnership with Comcast, and introduced the Lilac City Legends, Spokane's new ABA basketball team.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH
THE BLACK LENS
 NEWS FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

February

The Biden/Harris Administration: What's in It for Black America?

The Biden-Harris administration has taken office, and many are asking what it means for Black America. The administration has promised to address the systemic racism that has plagued Black Americans for generations. It has also promised to support the Black community in its fight for equality and justice.

Black Americans are hopeful about the administration's promises, but they are also aware of the challenges that lie ahead. The administration will need to take bold action to address the systemic racism that has plagued Black Americans for generations.

The Hill We Climb

"The Hill We Climb" is a poem by Amanda Gorman, who recited it at the inauguration of Joe Biden as Vice President of the United States. The poem is a powerful statement about the challenges that Black Americans face and the hope that we have for the future. It is a call to action for all Americans to work together to create a more just and equitable society.

The poem is a beautiful and inspiring work of art. It is a testament to the resilience and strength of the Black community. It is a call to action for all Americans to work together to create a more just and equitable society.

February

February featured the inauguration of Joe Biden as President and Kamala Harris as Vice President of the United States, and the amazing Amanda Gorman, National Youth Poet Laureate, who recited "The Hill We Climb" as a part of the ceremony. We shared an article from Sherri Noble Jones, which included her picture as a young girl on the steps of Grant Elementary, and a photo of her brother, Ivan Corley, who became the principal of Grant Elementary. The article was titled, "We've Come this Far By Faith." We shared an article that discussed the origins of Black History Month; featured workshops and concerts hosted by Imagine Jazz; and introduced Freedom Project East, a local non-profit organization that addresses the systemic causes and impacts of mass incarceration.

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May

Guilty on All Counts

Former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin was found guilty of murdering George Floyd. The video of Chauvin kneeling on George Floyd's neck for nine minutes while Floyd was handcuffed and lying face down on the street calling out "I can't breathe" prompted a racial justice reckoning that spread across the entire globe. Despite Chauvin's guilty verdict, we also highlighted four other Black individuals who were killed by police before and after the Chauvin verdict. We featured a new column from Spokane's Black Muslim community called Deen Centric and we applauded the Native Project for taking care of our community by partnering with Black-led organizations to host a COVID-19 vaccination clinic.

May

The cover of the May issue featured the conviction of former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin who was found guilty of murdering George Floyd. The video of Chauvin kneeling on George Floyd's neck for nine minutes while Floyd was handcuffed and lying face down on the street calling out "I can't breathe" prompted a racial justice reckoning that spread across the entire globe. Despite Chauvin's guilty verdict, we also highlighted four other Black individuals who were killed by police before and after the Chauvin verdict. We featured a new column from Spokane's Black Muslim community called Deen Centric and we applauded the Native Project for taking care of our community by partnering with Black-led organizations to host a COVID-19 vaccination clinic.

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June

Black Lens Teen Journalists

A grant to the Carl Maxey Center from the Samuel & Jane Joseph Family Fund at the Innovia Foundation supported two teen journalists in June who researched and wrote the cover articles. We also introduced the Spokesman Review's new Racial Equity reporter who was funded through the Community Journalism and Civic Engagement Fund at the Innovia Foundation. The position is a one-of-a-kind partnership between the Spokesman Review and the Black Lens. We announced that Juneteenth will become an official Washington state holiday in 2022 after Gov. Inlee's signature and we introduced the Black Future Co-Op Fund, Washington's first all Black-led philanthropy organization which in June awarded \$1 million in grants to 40 Black-led organizations across Washington State.

June

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September

March on WA for Voting Rights

The 58th Anniversary of the March on Washington for Voting Rights was celebrated in Spokane. The march was a powerful statement about the importance of voting rights for all Americans. It was a call to action for all Americans to work together to ensure that every citizen has the right to vote. The march was a historic moment for the Black community and for the entire nation.

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September

In September, the Black Lens featured the 58th Anniversary of the March on WA, and highlighted a devastating flood in Haiti. We celebrated Sheridan Elementary School's name change to Frances L. Scott Elementary School, in honor of Spokane's first Black woman attorney, who was also a longtime educator. We showcased a community fair hosted by the Martin Luther King Center; an East Central Community Celebration sponsored by the Spokane Eastside Reunion Association, and the twenty-seventh year of Unity in the Community, that happened in Riverfront Park despite the impact of COVID-19. We featured a pop-up COVID-19 vaccination clinic, hosted by Freedom Project East, and shared an article on the impact of COVID-19 on our children's education.

VOTE. VOTE. VOTE. ELECTION DAY NOVEMBER 2
THE BLACK LENS
 NEWS FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

Kenyan Delegation Visits Spokane

A delegation of Kenyan leaders visited Spokane to discuss equality strategies with members of the Kenyan Congress. The delegation was led by Kenyan Ambassador to the United States, Honorable David O. Ajakaiye. The delegation was in Spokane to discuss the impact of COVID-19 on the Kenyan economy and to discuss ways to support the Kenyan community in Spokane. The delegation was a historic moment for the Kenyan community in Spokane.

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October

The October issue featured a cover story on the visit to Spokane by a delegation of dignitaries from Kenya to discuss equity strategies. We also covered the outrage over treatment of Haitians at the US/Mexico border. October is the Black Lens election issue. We covered city council and school board races, and included questions and answers from local candidates. We featured articles on redistricting, gentrification, the widening racial wealth gap due to COVID-19, and an explanation of Critical Race Theory. We mourned the loss of Bishop Carl Bean, founder of Unity Fellowship Church and the Minority AIDS Project, and we celebrated my 60th birthday with a photo display of my birthday present to myself, a tandem skydiving adventure with my daughter. You have to see the pictures.

Heavy Rains, Flooding Add to Earthquake Woes in Haiti

Spokane in the West Valley News Service
 (Crediting Photo) - Spoken has been hit with a series of natural disasters. Heavy rains and flooding have added to the earthquake damage that has been devastating the country. The damage has been extensive, and many people have lost their homes and lives. The situation is dire, and the need for aid is urgent.

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Treatment of Haitians at Mexican Border Sparks Outrage

The treatment of Haitians at the Mexican border has sparked outrage among Black Americans. The video of a Haitian man being pushed back into the ocean by Mexican border guards has become a symbol of the mistreatment of Haitians at the border. The video has sparked a national conversation about the treatment of Haitians and the need for reform at the border.

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LOOKING BACK at 2021

WOMEN'S HERSTORY MONTH
March 2021
www.blacklensnews.com Vol. 7 Issue No. 3 Spokane's Black Community News Source

THE BLACK LENS
NEWS FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

BRING U.S. TOGETHER



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UNBOUGHT AND UNBOSSSED

How Can You Support the Black Lens?
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March

In the March issue, which is our Women's Herstory Month edition, I was excited to feature a story about my mom, Wilhelmina Williams and the historical marker that was unveiled in Columbia, South Carolina to commemorate the Columbia Hospital's unit for Black patients and nursing students. My mom was one of those Black nurses. We celebrated T'wina Nobles, CEO and President of the Tacoma Urban League, who became Washington's first Black State Senator in ten years; mourned the loss of Cicely Tyson at age 96; spotlighted a grant that the MLK Center received from Inland Imaging; and featured an article by two young adults who shared what they gained from attending an anti-oppression and mass incarceration workshop carried out by the Freedom Project.

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April

April raised awareness about the restrictive voter laws signed into law by Georgia's Governor and efforts to overturn the laws. Members of Spokane's Black Muslim community shared an article that explained the holiday of Ramadan. In state news, Washington Gov. Jay Inslee named Karen A. Johnson as Director of the newly created state Office of Equity. We featured an important article written by Karen Boone about Black Women and Sexual Assault, an article by the Spokane NAACP on Environmental Justice, and an article that introduced Raze, a new Black focused Early Learning program in Spokane that will address the Pre-School to Prison Pipeline. We offered COVID-19 resources; information about Bitcoins, and mourned the passing of Civil Rights leader, Vernon Jordan.

THE BLACK LENS
NEWS FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

Georgia Governor Signs Restrictive Voter Laws
NAACP & Civil Rights Groups Sue in Response

By Isaac N. Cummings
The Georgia State Board of Elections on Monday signed into law three restrictive voter laws that will significantly impact the ability of Black voters to cast their ballots. The laws, which take effect in November, include: requiring voters to show photo ID at the polls; limiting early voting to 10 days before the election; and requiring voters to appear in person at the polls on Election Day. The NAACP and other civil rights groups have filed a lawsuit to challenge the laws, arguing that they are discriminatory and violate the Voting Rights Act.

Virginia Governor Restores Rights of Nearly 70,000 Formerly Incarcerated

By Aranya M. Lawrence
Virginia Governor Ralph Northam on Monday announced that he has signed an executive order restoring the rights of nearly 70,000 formerly incarcerated individuals. The order, which takes effect immediately, allows these individuals to apply for state and federal jobs, receive financial aid, and register to vote. This is a significant step towards addressing the long-term consequences of mass incarceration.

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July 2021 www.blacklensnews.com Vol. 7 Issue No. 7 Spokane's Black Community News Source

July

In July, the Black Lens honored Dorothy Webster, a lifelong member of the NAACP and a pillar in Spokane's Black community, who passed way on June 15. The July issue also featured one of my most popular editor's columns of the year, "A Juneteenth Fairytale." People are still asking me who the young princess was. Smile. We featured the Martin Luther King Center's new Teen Tech Center; celebrated Roberta Wilburn who was named Interim Chief Diversity Officer at Whitworth University; introduced Malik Roberson, the New Ferri HS Football Coach and the first Black head football coach in the Greater Spokane League's history; announced the release of Bill Cosby from prison; and through pictures celebrated a weekend of Juneteenth activities in the East Central neighborhood.

THE BLACK LENS
NEWS FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

Honoring Ms. Dorothy Webster
Spokane Loses an Icon & Lifelong NAACP Member

By Kiantha Deane
The passing of Dorothy Webster, a lifelong member of the NAACP and a pillar in Spokane's Black community, is a significant loss. Ms. Webster was a dedicated activist and leader who worked tirelessly for the betterment of her community. Her legacy will continue to inspire future generations.

Millions Face Eviction or Foreclosure Amid Soaring Housing Costs & Racial Wealth Gaps

By Charles Crawford
The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated existing housing and racial wealth gaps, leaving millions of Americans at risk of eviction or foreclosure. The report highlights the impact of rising housing costs and the stark disparities in wealth between Black and white households.

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August

The August issue featured The National Urban League's 2021 State of Black America® report, "The New Normal: Diverse, Equitable & Inclusive," which was released on July 15 and we celebrated Zaila Avant-Garde, the first African American Scripps National Spelling Bee Champion, who is also a basketball prodigy. We celebrated the opening of the Chas Dental Clinic in the East Central neighborhood; featured an article from the National Alliance on Mental Health called "The Effects of Racial Trauma on Mental Health"; featured an article discussing how to protect Black skin from cancer; and spotlighted two COVID-19 vaccination clinics, one at the Black Lives Matter Mural in downtown Spokane and the other for African Immigrants at Riverside State Park.

THE BLACK LENS
NEWS FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

All the Black Women in Us Are Tired

By Lisa Rappaport
The phrase "All the Black women in us are tired" is a powerful statement that resonates with many Black women. It speaks to the exhaustion and frustration caused by systemic racism and the constant struggle for equality. This article explores the experiences of Black women and offers ways to find strength and support.

State of Black America 2021: The New Normal

By Marc Marz
The 2021 State of Black America report, "The New Normal: Diverse, Equitable & Inclusive," provides a comprehensive look at the current state of Black America. It highlights both progress and challenges, and offers a vision for a more equitable future.

COVID-19 vaccine questions?
Get answers here!
www.blacklensnews.com

November

In November we mourned the loss of Colin Powell, who died on Oct. 18, 2021 at the age of 84, as a result of COVID-19 complications. Powell was the first Black national security advisor in U.S. history, the first Black chairman of the joint chiefs of staff and the first Black man to become secretary of state. In November, the Black Lens also announced that the paper will be going on hiatus after the January 2022 issue and will be back in 2023. We celebrated the ribbon cutting of Frances L. N. Scott Elementary School and the 90th birthday of Archbishop Desmond Tutu. We honored our Black Veterans in Spokane and introduced the Kootenai County Idaho branch of the NAACP (yes there is one) that was recognized in 2019 and hosted its first Freedom Fund Banquet in September 2021.

THE BLACK LENS
NEWS FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

COLIN POWELL: A PATRIOT AND A BLACK MAN
The 'Two-ness' of the African American Experience

By Chad Williams
Colin Powell's life and career are a testament to the resilience and leadership of Black Americans. His journey from a young man in a small town to the highest levels of government service is a story of perseverance and excellence.

It's Not Goodbye, Just So Long for Now
Black Lens Going on 1 Year Hiatus from Jan 2022 - Jan 2023

The Black Lens will be going on a one-year hiatus from January 2022 to January 2023. This decision was made to allow the editorial team to focus on other important community issues and to ensure the highest quality of content when the publication resumes.

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December 2021 www.blacklensnews.com Vol. 7 Issue No. 12 Spokane's Black Community News Source

December

The cover of the December issue featured the verdict in the trial of the three men who murdered Ahmaud Arbery. After two years, on November 24, the jury found the three men guilty of the shooting death of Arbery. We celebrated the inauguration of Betsy Wilkerson who retained her seat on the Spokane City Council and NASA astronaut Jessica Watkins who will become the first Black woman to board the international space station. We announced a new COVID-19 variant discovered in South Africa and shared an article on what parents should know about vaccinating their children. We featured the opening of Liberty Park's new library, the Spokane Minister's Fellowship Thanksgiving Service, and Black Santa who joined the Carl Maxey Center at Riverfront Park's tree lighting.

THE BLACK LENS
NEWS FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

"THEY ALMOST GOT AWAY WITH IT"
All Three Men Convicted of Ahmaud Arbery's Murder

By Chris Adams
The verdict in the trial of the three men who murdered Ahmaud Arbery is a landmark moment in American history. It is a testament to the power of the justice system and the resilience of the Black community.

Never forget that this is not an example of the justice system working. Police didn't arrest these men.

The video of the shooting of Ahmaud Arbery is a stark reminder of the violence and injustice that Black Americans face. It is a call to action for all of us to stand up for justice and equality.

What Do I Do IF...COVID Decision Guide

Reprinted from [BlackDoctor.org](https://blackdoctor.org)

1. When Should I Get Tested

– The most obvious time to get tested for COVID-19 is **when you have noticeable symptoms.**

The Symptoms of COVID are:

(note that many resemble conditions such as seasonal allergies, the common cold and the flu...that's one reason we strongly suggest getting the flu shot immediately!)

A cough
Sore throat
Minor congestion
Low-grade fever
Headache
Fatigue
Loss of taste or smell (mainly associated with the Delta variant)

– If you were **exposed to someone who has COVID-19**, you should get tested whether or not you have symptoms yourself. This test should be done 5 days after exposure.

CDC definition of exposure or close contact is being within 6 feet (2 meters) for a total of 15 minutes or more, over a 24-hour period.

– Get tested between **three and five days after traveling internationally** regardless of your symptoms.

If you're traveling domestically:

Fully vaccinated people should get tested only if they develop symptoms

Unvaccinated people should get tested three to five days after returning

Before attending gatherings:

You should use home tests or PCR tests before attending gatherings with people that you don't live with, especially if you don't know everyone's vaccination or booster status

2. When is Someone With COVID Contagious?

– A person with COVID-19 is considered infectious starting **two days before they develop symptoms, or two days before the date of their positive test** if they do not have symptoms

The original variants had an incubation period of four to five days but with omicron it's two to three days.

3. What Are The Different Tests

– Currently, there are two types of diagnostic tests

Molecular (RT-PCR) tests that detect the virus's genetic material. These require testing by a laboratory service. They often require 1-3 days to get results.

This is the most accurate test option for determining the presence of a virus.

The PCR test is not a test that we use after a Covid infection because it is so sensitive that it can identify traces of the virus many weeks after a person is no longer infectious and can stay positive for weeks to months.

Antigen tests that detect specific proteins on the surface of the virus. These are the "home tests" that provide results immediately. While not as accurate as the PCR for initial diagnosis, they have a very useful place in our COVID arsenal.

Samples are typically collected with a nasal or throat swab, or saliva collected by spitting into a tube. Results available in 15 minutes.

Most accurate if you have symptoms of COVID... sometimes the test can read negative at first but becomes positive as the exposure progresses.. so feel free to retest as that's why the kit contains two tests. Please get a PCR test to confirm the results.

Antibody tests are also available for some special purposes. They look for antibodies that are made by the immune system in response to a threat, such as a specific virus. Antibodies can take several days or weeks

to develop after you have an infection and may stay in your blood for several weeks after recovery.

4. Quarantine and Isolation: What Do I Need To Know?

– What Is the difference between the two?

Quarantine separates and restricts the movement of people who were exposed to a contagious disease to see if they become sick.

Isolation separates infected and sick people with a contagious disease from people who are not sick.

How do I separate myself from others whether I am quarantining or isolating?

Health officials recommend a "sick room" or area for those who are infected and a separate bathroom, if possible

That means you should stay in a separate room and use a separate bathroom from other people in your household, if possible, the CDC says.

You should also wear a mask if you have to be around other people. Avoid sharing items (like cups and towels). Avoid public transportation and generally avoid contact with other people

Monitor yourself for symptoms. You will likely get specific instructions from your doctor's office about what to watch for, which might include things like taking your temperature every day.

5. What should you do if you test positive?

– **Everyone**, regardless of vaccination status:

Isolate by staying home for 5 days

Assume that you're infected and can spread the virus to others: it takes time for symptoms and tests to emerge as positive...you still can spread the virus to others before you feel ill or test positive.

If you have **no symptoms** or your symptoms are resolving after 5 days, you can leave your house

Continue to wear a mask around others for 5 additional days.

The BCAC respects the CDC's guidance but take a more cautious approach regarding continual mask wearing when around other people

If you have a **fever**, continue to stay home until your fever resolves.

Don't forget to **tell your close contacts** that you tested positive and they may have been exposed.

6. What To Do If Symptoms Develop?

– COVID symptoms can appear anywhere **from two to 14 days** after someone is exposed to the virus

Anyone with symptoms should **get tested for COVID** immediately and contact their healthcare provider.

You should **immediately quarantine** until a negative test confirms that the symptoms are not due to COVID-19.

If you're having severe symptoms:

Call your doctor's office and get their advice because:

There are of course other things like the flu that are out there that can mimic COVID symptoms.

They may recommend that you receive Monoclonal Antibodies.

If you're having mild or lingering symptoms and your at home test was negative:

Retest in three to five days...that's why most of these kits actually come with two tests.

7. When Should You Call a Doctor?

– When you have **tested positive and have symptoms**

– The CDC urges those who have or may have COVID-19 to **watch for emergency warning signs**

and seek medical care immediately if they experience symptoms including:

Trouble breathing
Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
New confusion
Inability to wake or stay awake
Pale, gray, or blue-colored skin, lips, or nail beds, depending on skin tone

8. What Do I Do If My Child Under 5 Is Exposed To A COVID Positive Person

– They do not need to see the doctor if there are no COVID symptoms. Your child should quarantine at home for 14 days and watch for symptoms.

– They do need to get a COVID-19 test

– If needed, the CDC says that you can shorten your child's quarantine to 10 days as long as your child shows no symptoms, or to 7 days if your child has a negative COVID-19 test on or after day 5.

9. What About Monoclonal Antibodies?

– Monoclonal antibodies are laboratory-produced molecules that act as substitute antibodies that can restore, enhance or mimic the immune system's attack on cells

– For COVID, Monoclonal Antibody treatment is available to individuals with serious disease but they must be administered within five days of when you first started developing symptoms.

Qualifications:

Test positive for COVID-19 (PCR or antigen test), AND:

Have had mild-moderate symptoms for 7 days or less (must still be symptomatic),

AND:

Age \geq 65 years

OR

Age 12 years and older weighing at least 40 kg

Have at least one of the following:

Overweight as defined by BMI $>$ 25 kg/m², or if age 12-17, have BMI \geq 85th percentile for their age and gender based on CDC growth charts

Pregnancy

Chronic kidney disease

Cardiovascular disease (including congenital heart disease, hypertension)

Diabetes

Down syndrome

Dementia

Liver disease

Current or former smoker

Current or history of substance abuse

Immunosuppressive disease or immunosuppressive treatment

History of stroke or cerebrovascular disease

Chronic lung disease

Sickle cell disease

Neurodevelopmental disorders (e.g., cerebral palsy)

Having a medical-related technological dependence (e.g., tracheostomy, gastrostomy)

Post-exposure preventive monoclonal antibodies are available to those who have been exposed consistently with the CDC's close contact criteria

AND who are:

High risk for developing severe COVID-19 AND

Not fully vaccinated OR vaccinated but immunocompromised

AND

12 years of age or older (and at least 88 pounds)

For more information visit: blackdoctor.org.

Chef Bryant Terry's "Black Food"

Stories, Art, and Recipes from Across the African Diaspora

Black Food has early roots in my desire to uplift Black women. When I was growing up, I saw the women in my family as they were: majestic, graceful, and generous. Respected and cherished by loved ones and our Memphis community, they gathered us in welcoming spaces full of chatter and laughter. They fed us delicious meals of tender okra and purple hull peas, low-and-slow-cooked collard greens, creamy potato salad, meltingly tender cabbage sautéed in bacon fat, velvety braised Great Northern beans, and hand-churned ice cream. It didn't occur to me then that my mother, aunts, and grandmothers also had to endure racist contempt and sexism, compartmentalizing indignities as they worked in the wider world.

I decided early that my life's work was to take on poverty, malnutrition, and structural racism, all of which fed off one another.

Dressed in my crisp double-breasted chef's jacket and apron at the Natural Gourmet Institute culinary school, my aim wasn't to become a celebrated restaurateur, but to develop projects to help uplift historically marginalized communities. I launched my first program, b-healthy, in 2001 to reshape New York City public school students' relationship with food through cooking lessons. From there, the work continued.

This book is the culmination of my vow to serve the needs, hopes, and dreams of the people. It's packed with recipes, art, poetry, and essays from more than 100 contributors. I hope it will wake those sleeping on the future, the one in which Black food and the people who carried it across the globe for centuries will finally be centered, supported, respected, and celebrated.

Black Food honors our earliest ancestors, today's innovators, and tomorrow's visionaries. It is grounded in the work of chef Edna Lewis, who celebrated local cuisines with seasonal ingredients, and the countless, nameless Black women and men who paved the way for her. It reaches for tomorrow in the budding greatness of Rahanna Bissret Martinez, a 17-year-old chef who has a cookbook forthcoming with my new publishing imprint, 4

Color Books, that will continue to shine a light on BIPOC voices. It creates space for everyone in between and all who will come after. And as we combine our many unique voices into one, it empowers us all: a global community.

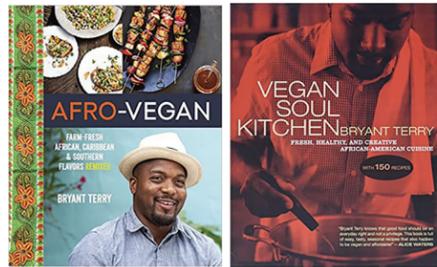
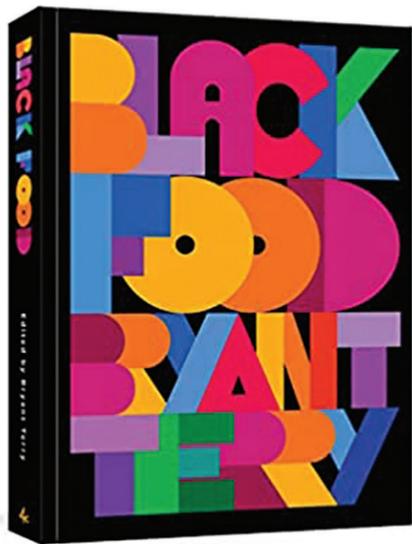
As with my previous books, Vegetable Kingdom and Afro-Vegan, recipes are the through line of Black Food. I asked brilliant colleagues to offer dishes that embody their approach to cooking and draw on history and memory while looking forward. They came up with a wide range of recipes, representing the depth and breadth of Black food and the people who make it. There are starters and mains, drinks and desserts, including Jocelyn Delk Adams's sticky-sweet Cinnamon Roll Pound Cake.

And though I've made my reputation as a vegan food advocate—and there are plenty of vegan dishes in the book—a healthy share of these recipes showcase animal proteins. I made sure, also, to include food representative of the diaspora: across Africa, the Caribbean, and the Americas. Nicole A. Taylor's Cocoa-Orange Catfish honors Black farmers in West Africa and Brazil. Kia Damon's creamy Sweet Potato Grits are an ode to her grandmother, who always had a pot simmering on the stove. And, in a continuation of the book's mission, you'll also find below my Dirty South Hot Tamales With Jackfruit and Cilantro Sauce, an original recipe I developed for Bon Appétit to honor my dad's childhood in Memphis and showcase the cultural crossover between Mexican and African American cuisine in the American South.



More than a collection of recipes, Black Food, which is inspired by Toni Morrison's seminal classic *The Black Book*, samples from the perspectives of essayists, poets, thinkers, and community leaders. I want readers of the book to engage with their various odes to the Black experience, from an examination of Africa's far-reaching culinary influence to a reflection on the deep connection between spirituality and land. And while this book would not have been possible without the support of San Francisco's Museum of the African Diaspora, its true origins remain with the women in my family. This book is dedicated to them. — Bryant Terry

Bryant Terry is an NAACP Image Award winner and a James Beard Award-winning chef and educator and the author of Afro-Vegan and Vegetable Kingdom. He is renowned for his activism and efforts to create a healthy, equitable, and sustainable food system. Reprinted from Bon Appetit (bonappetit.com).



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Remembering Vanport Oregon

Carolyn Hinton: An Eyewitness Account of the Vanport Flood



By Sandra Williams

I studied the history of the Pacific Northwest when I went to school in Spokane. It was required learning. But in my classes, we were never taught about Vanport, Oregon. I had never heard of it. Carolyn Hinton was twelve years old when the flood in Vanport destroyed her home and her way of life, as she knew it. She agreed to share her story with the Black Lens. This is an excerpt from that interview.

Where were you born?

I was born in Arkansas in a place called Fordyce, a small town in south-central Arkansas. I'm an only child.

What was it like for you growing up? What do you remember?

In Arkansas, I remember we lived on a farm. I remember it very well. It was fun actually. I didn't have to do much work, just a little bit. We moved away when I was eight and came to Portland. During those days, I just played with my cousins most of the time and went to a one room schoolhouse.

What brought your family to Portland?

The war. The shipyards. My dad came first and my mother and I followed in August of 1944.

Do you remember coming to Portland?

I remember vividly. I was eight, going on nine. We came on the train and it was a long train ride. The trains were

really crowded because a lot of servicemen were traveling. When we left Fordyce on the train we had a seat, but when we got to St. Louis and changed trains there were no seats available. So, we had to stand up. I'd say until we got to Denver or Wyoming.

My mom made a cubbyhole for me in between the seats. On the train they could let the seats back. One faced this way and one faced the other, so I could crawl underneath and lay down.

When we arrived in Portland, I remember we got off the train at the train station downtown and went out to Vanport. We went into the apartment and it seemed like there were a lot of people staying there at the time. My uncle and his daughter and my cousin were staying there and another man was staying there.

We only had 2 bedrooms, but they worked different shifts, so they used the beds at different times to sleep. They kind of rotated around the clock. While one was working, the others could be sleeping.

What do you remember about Vanport?

I call it my Disneyland because I had so much fun there. I remember the schools. The schools were not segregated. The housing was segregated. There was a certain part where the Black people lived and a certain area where the white people lived. As far as other things being segregated, it was not. *Continued on Page 25*

The History of Vanport Oregon (1942-1948)



Source: Rudy Pearson, blackpast.org; Michael N. McGregor, oregonhistoryproject.org

Vanport, Oregon was the largest WWII federal housing project in the United States, and as such, attracted national attention to the region. At its peak, Vanport was home to over 42,000 residents, making it the second largest population center in the state.

For many long-time Portland residents, Vanport was known as the "Negro Project" despite the fact that African Americans were no more than 25% of residents at any given time.

Meant to be temporary, Vanport was shipbuilding magnate Henry Kaiser's answer to a lack of housing in the early days of World War II, when he was recruiting men and women from across the United States to work in his Portland-area shipyards. Fearful that workers would leave the area due to a lack of housing, Kaiser purchased 648 acres of land outside of the Portland city limits to build a wartime housing complex.

Portland had long had a reputation as what one national Black leader called "the most prejudiced [city] in the west." In the years before the war, only 2,000 Blacks lived in the city, due in part to Oregon's state constitution, which had once prohibited Blacks from residing in the state, and to the activities of the Ku Klux Klan, which in the 1920s had up to 35,000 members.

But because Kaiser did not limit his workforce to white men only, Vanport was open to all, creating at the time the most racially diverse city in Oregon. Construction began on the housing complex in August 1942 and before Christmas of that year the first families were moving into apartments.

Local officials enforced de facto segregation in housing, with Blacks "un-

officially" segregated into the least desirable units. However, the Vanport schools were integrated, as were childcare and recreational facilities. African Americans were able to form several groups that helped them protect and expand their rights. Moreover, Vanport was one of only two housing projects in the Portland area that accepted any Blacks.

When the war was over and the shipyard jobs ended, Vanport residents began an exodus out of the city. Approximately 5,000 African Americans continued to live in Vanport, with another 5,000 crowded into Northeast Portland. They made Oregon their home, despite calls by civic leaders for them to leave.

Many Black residents of Portland believe that local officials kept Vanport open because they did not want more African Americans to move inside city limits.

On Memorial Day in 1948, the Columbia River roared downstream, fifteen feet above the flood plain, and undermined a railroad embankment that had served as a dike, starting a flood that would destroy Vanport, leave 15 dead and its residents homeless.

Despite its short life span, Vanport helped create several "firsts" for Oregon and the Portland area. The first black teachers and policemen in the state were hired in Vanport during the war years. The Vanport Interracial Council worked to establish a Portland office of the Urban League. Vanport College was the precursor to Portland State University where many veterans used the GI Bill to get a new start on life.

In the end, Vanport became part of the story of civil rights and African Americans in the West.

An Eye Witness Account of the Vanport Oregon Flood

Continued From Page 24

Except for church. The church was segregated. They didn't have any real churches but they used the community centers for churches.

Tell me about the schools. The schools were segregated where you came from. What was it like going to an integrated school for the first time?

It was a very interesting experience. I didn't know what to expect but it was easy. I didn't have any problems personally with being in the class with white people. I was in the fourth grade and my teacher was a nice teacher. Nobody bothered me and there were several other Black children in the class. It was predominately white.

Did you have white friends?

At school. Not after school. I didn't see any of them because we all went different ways. But I had white friends at school.

What do you remember about the flood? Did you have any notice at all that anything was going to happen?

For days they had talked about it, but they were saying don't be alarmed. The dike is safe. It's not going to break. That morning of the flood, people had driven around and put notices on everybody's door that it was okay. It was a Sunday, it was a holiday, Memorial Day. People drove around and said the dikes were safe.

So, I started bugging my mom about going to the movies, which I did about every Sunday, providing I went to church first, Sunday school or somewhere. She kept saying no and I said mom they said the dike is safe, it's not going to break. She still said no. And I kept bugging her until finally she told me not to ask her anymore. You know how moms can sound with that stern voice. So, I went on about my business.

I guess around 4pm the sirens started blowing. A big truck was riding up and down the street saying "the dike broke, the dike broke, get outta here, you gotta go." And that's what we did. We ran.

We got in a car with our neighbor. We didn't have a car. And we headed out. There was only one way out. We were driving down the street that we lived

on, called Cottonwood Street. There was a traffic jam.

I looked out the rear window and I saw a wall of water. It was way back, but it was coming fast. I wanted to get out of the car and run, but we got up to the highway, which is the interstate. There was a real jam up there. By that time, the water had reached us. So, my mother and I jumped out the car and the water was there. I got wet up to my knees. We climbed up an embankment.

I looked back down and my dad had stayed behind to help a neighbor man get his car. Men were out pushing those cars, trying to get them up the hill. It was pandemonium.

I stood there and watched. Some of the units were floating and they were crashing into each other and making a horrible sound.

So, you stood with your mom on the embankment?

We got separated from my dad and for hours we walked and looked. It was so many people. We walked and looked for him. Back and forth. We finally walked up on him sometime in the evening. After that, I don't remember nothing. I found out we did go a place downtown. I think it was an armory. But I don't remember how we got there or anything.

What happened the next day?

The next day, the Red Cross helped us a lot. We had food lines. I remember my mother signing up for different places to go to stay. We didn't really have anywhere to stay right then until maybe about two days later a friend of my parents offered us a place in his house. He had a place over on the other side of the town, so he let us stay there for a couple of days. Then we got a place living on Swan Island. It was a shipyard in Portland during the war and they had army barracks. So, the three of us stayed in a one room barrack and we went to the cafeteria that they had set up for our food.

How long were you there?

All summer. I'd say from June until probably the latter part of August. I remember when I started school, we had gotten another place. We moved to a housing project called University



Carolyn Hinton with her mother Floy Louise

Homes. We stayed there, seems like forever. I didn't like it there. I didn't have any friends like I had in Vanport. They were all scattered. We lived in North Portland, in the projects, until about 1950.

Tell me about Albina.

After the flood, I liked coming to Portland because a lot of my friends, their families had found places over in what they called the Albina area. It was a redlined thing. We weren't allowed to have a house in certain areas, but they let us live in Albina. Most of the Black people bought homes or rented homes in the Albina area.

First we rented a house and then we bought a house a couple years after that. I guess it was four bedrooms. One of them was downstairs. It was three bedrooms upstairs. I had the best room in the house.

As an adult you moved away from Portland. How did you end up back in Portland?

My husband's last duty station was in Norfolk Virginia and we really hadn't planned to come back when we retired, but my mom, in the meantime, got sick and passed away. My dad ran a little grocery store (in Albina) and my husband promised him when he retired we would come back and help him. When time came to retire, neither one of us were really ready to come back, but we did because he made the promise that we would, so we did. We came back in 1970.

I saw so many changes there because the Emmanuel hospital bought a lot of the property and it displaced a lot of Black people. People were moving out and moving away, but so many changes in that area, the Albina area.

Is Albina still there?

It's still called that. But it's not the same. Not even close. The freeway goes through Albina. The coliseum. The sports arena. Everything goes through there.

Did you go back to your home in Vanport?

We went back around July or August. It was pretty much dried up by then. Our building didn't move off the foundation like some did. We lived on the lower floor. There was dried mud on the floor. The piano had come unglued. That Sunday, we had a roast for dinner. It was a beef roast. It was still on the table when we left, but when we came back, do you know that the pan the roast was in was sitting on top of the door. It had floated up there and got stuck. It was still sitting up on top of the door.

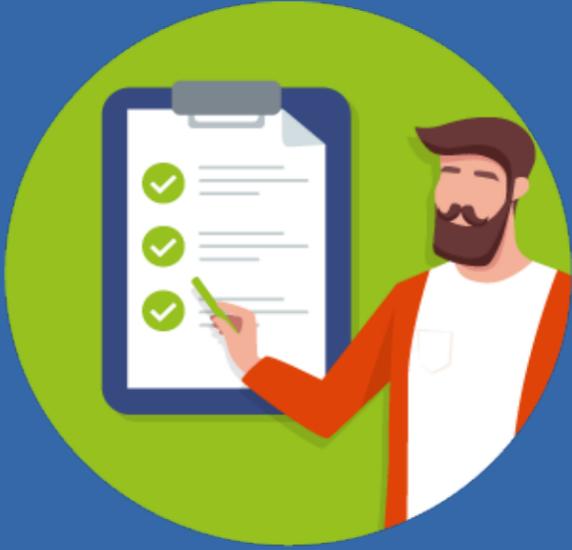
What was that like to go back in your place?

It was sad. You look at whatever you have. We didn't have much anyway, but you look through the things that you did have and that you wish you could have kept. Nothing was salvageable. That bicycle was my most important thing. I found it, but I never was able to get it fixed right.



Carolyn's prized bicycle that was destroyed in the flood.

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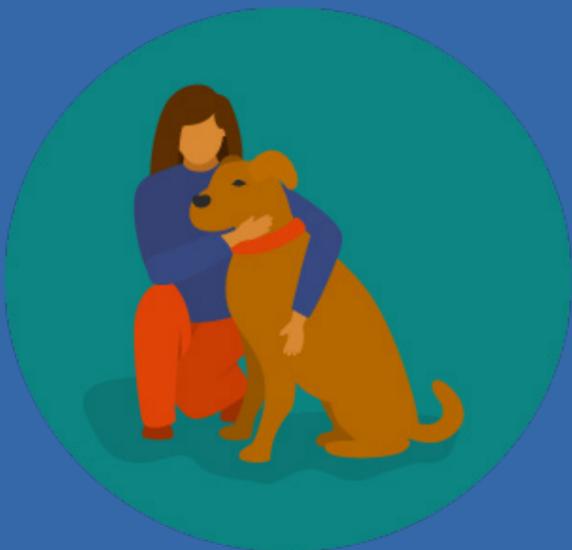
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Prison Time Shortens Life Spans for Black Americans, But Not Whites

By Jason Henderson

Reprinted from BlackDoctor.org

A stint behind bars can significantly shorten the life expectancy of Black Americans, but not their white counterparts, new research has found.

Black Americans who have spent time in jail or prison are 65% more likely to die prematurely, even if it's been years since their incarceration, according to an analysis of data from a decades-long federal study.

However, jail time did not appear to have any meaningful impact on the long-term health of white former inmates, researchers recently reported in the journal *JAMA Network Open*.

“That is on top of the fact that Black individuals are much more likely to become incarcerated in the first place than white individuals,” lead researcher Dr. Benjamin Bovell-Ammon, a visiting fellow in general internal medicine at Boston Medical Center says.

“Those two factors combined suggest to us that mass incarceration could be contributing to the overall disparities in life expectancy that we see between Black and white individuals,” he adds.

The United States puts more people behind bars than any country in the world, with its incarcerated population quadrupling over the last four decades, researchers said in background notes.

Black people and those in other minority groups have been disproportionately affected by mass incarceration, with a stint in prison during young adulthood as common among Black men as college graduation is for white men, the researchers report.

What the study shows

Previous studies have suggested that jail time itself might be harmful to people's long-term health. To examine that possibility, Bovell-Ammon's team analyzed data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth, a study run by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) since 1979.

The BLS study recruited more than 7,900 people between 15 and 22 years of age in 1979 and followed them through 2018. About half were male, and 38% were Black.

“This is the first generation of Americans coming of age in what many call the era of mass incarceration, which started to take off in the '80s,” Bovell-Ammon notes. “These individuals would be approaching 60 years of age, so any deaths that have occurred are by definition premature.”

During an average follow-up of 35 years, 478 people had been jailed at least once and 818 had died. The BLS data did



not track how long each person spent behind bars or their cause of death, Bovell-Ammon says.

Black people had a higher death rate after they'd spent time imprisoned, the researchers found. On the other hand, white former inmates lived as long as they would have otherwise.

How does prison affect long-term health?

The way prisons are run could have something to do with this increased rate of death, Bryan Sykes, an assistant professor of criminology, law and society at the University of California-Irvine says. Inmates in poor health also can expect to receive poor medical care, Sykes adds.

Prisons “tend to be highly unequipped — the medical personnel and medical expertise, even just medical supplies — to deal with immediate health concerns while incarcerated,” Sykes shares. “For some inmates, they have to wait considerable lengths of time before they can even see a medical professional because sometimes the medical professional comes once a week.”

The struggles Blacks face after getting released from jail

Bovell-Ammon suspects that the stress Black convicts face upon their release from confinement probably has even more to do with their long-term health than their treatment behind bars.

Black people re-entering society after serving their time also must deal with disruptions in their social networks, educational opportunities and ability to access programs, like low-income housing and food stamps, Bovell-Ammon adds.

Further, Black people are less likely to have enough money on hand or enough connections to successfully pick themselves up and become productive members of society, compared with white people, he notes.

“If you or your family have some sort of cushion of wealth to fall back on or a family or social network where there is access to opportunity, there's just much more opportu-

nity to bounce back from a setback like incarceration,” Bovell-Ammon says.

How to overcome the long-term health effects

Criminal justice reform is needed to protect non-violent offenders against these long-term health effects, according to Bovell-Ammon and Sykes. Bovell-Ammon agrees that these findings should prompt the public and policymakers to think more critically about public safety and what it means.

“If our policies to address crime and to try and promote safety are actually reducing the health and safety of some individuals, are there ways to address crime that don't disproportionately cause undue harm to various communities, particularly communities that are already marginalized?” Bovell-Ammon asks.

How to help a loved one

People reentering communities after incarceration tend to be sicker than the general population and may face barriers to accessing health care and other supports.

Empathize with them. This will allow you to be prepared if your loved one doesn't respond or act the way they did prior to their incarceration. In addition, your loved one will feel loved and respected.

Help them achieve their goal. Your loved one may understandably experience a culture shock after being released from jail. You can help them through this by helping them reach their goals. For example, you can help them go over their finances, house hunt or even help them build their resume.

Get them involved. If your loved one has family, friends and a community, they are less likely to end up in jail again. You can try getting them involved in community events.

Develop new hobbies and habits with them. Introducing them to new hobbies and habits will not only keep them away from the old habits that landed them in jail, it will also give you time to bond with them.

Make sure they are taking care of themselves. Your loved one may go through social isolation or depression after being released. You can avoid this by regularly checking up on them and asking them questions. Make sure your loved one is: Getting enough sleep; Going grocery shopping and cooking meals; Drinking enough water; Taking care of their hygiene and health; Practicing self-care

Consider therapy. Your loved one may have experienced some sort of abuse or trauma while in jail and their body may have adjusted to living in an environment of fear and violence. Therapy will be able to help them work through this.

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Stacey Abrams Releases First Children's Book Announces Second Run for Georgia Governor

(Source: NPR.org) - Democrat Stacey Abrams announced on December 1 that she's running for governor of Georgia in 2022, setting the stage for a possible rematch against the current governor, Republican Brian Kemp, who narrowly beat Abrams in 2018.



Her entrance into the contest keeps the political spotlight on Georgia, which has become one of the most competitive and closely watched states in the nation.

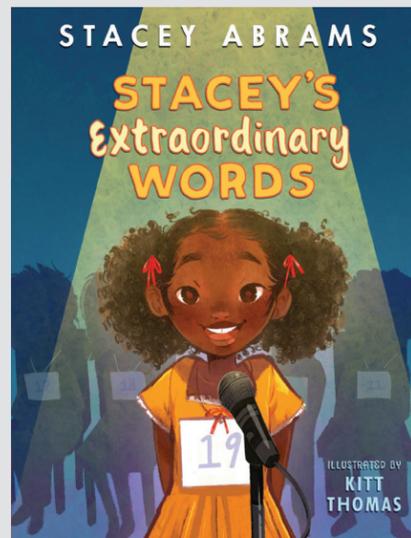
Abrams, a former Democratic leader in the Georgia House who has emerged as a vocal voting rights advocate on the national stage, rose to prominence in the 2018 race, representing, for some, a possible future of the Democratic Party.

Abrams ultimately lost that election to Kemp by a margin of just 1.4 percentage points — the closest Georgia gubernatorial race in decades, according to the Atlanta Journal-Constitution. Abrams refused to concede that election, citing what she called voter suppression on behalf of Kemp, who was then overseeing the election as secretary of state. Kemp denied her accusations.

After her loss, Abrams founded the Fair Fight Action voting rights organization,

and lead the effort to flip Georgia blue in the 2020 election. Despite her national profile, Abrams focused on Georgia in a video announcing her candidacy.

"I'm running for Governor because opportunity in our state shouldn't be determined by zip code, background or access to power," Abrams wrote on Twitter.



The book, *Stacey's Extraordinary Words*, which hit the bookstores in late December, is based on Abrams childhood experience of participating in spelling bees during elementary school. The picture book is an inspirational tale of determination in which a young Stacey learns that win or lose . . . her words are powerful, and sometimes perseverance is the most important word of all.

For information about Stacey Abrams candidacy for Georgia Governor, visit: <https://staceyabrams.com>.

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Black Opioid Overdose Death Rate Rises While White Death Rate Remains Steady

By Maya Pottiger

(Reprinted from wordinblack.com)

A new study published in September found the opioid overdose death rate among Black people is rising faster than the rate of white people.

At previous points in the ongoing opioid crisis, Black people experienced lower death rates than white people. A 2020 study even found that the rate of opioid overdose deaths in Black people was steady from 1999 through 2012, before it started increasing in 2013, which is when the white death rate began to level.

“It points out the fact that we have to do something different, a more intensive intervention in the African-American community,” Dr. Edwin Chapman, an internal medicine and addiction medicine specialist serving the Black community in Washington, D.C., told NPR.

The high profile drug-related deaths of Michael K. Williams and DMX are bringing attention to the issue and creating conversation around drug addiction in the Black community. Especially in the Black community, opioid

overdose deaths are no longer prescription or heroin, but fentanyl.

Dr. Nzinga Harrison, co-founder and chief medical officer of Eleanor Health, recently told New York Amsterdam News that racism is stopping Black people who are seeking treatment. On top of difficulty in getting treatment, Black people stop treatments “up to five times more prematurely than whites,” AmNews reported.

“Even when we do get access to treatment, it’s not quite the standard of care,” Harrison told AmNews. “There are a lot of structural barriers that are leading to disproportionate impacts of substance use disorders on Black folks. One of them, for the opioid epidemic, is seeing the white face in the media, because it makes you think it’s not happening to us when it’s disproportionate to us.”

In the September 2021 study, the authors wrote that “an antiracist public health approach that explicitly examines the role of racism is urgently needed in research, public health, and policy approaches to address the crisis of opioid-related harms.”

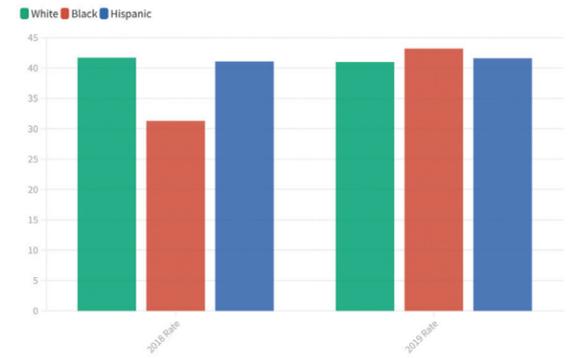
Dr. Andrew Kolodny, the medical director for opioid policy research at Brandeis University’s Heller School for Social Policy and Management, told NPR that the US needs to keep better data on opioid addiction: not just deaths and hospitalizations, but gender, age, community type, and incidence rates.

“We need data we can act on. And that’s not here,” Kolodny said to NPR.

While studies showed opioid overdose death rates were rising in Black communities prior to the pandemic, they have only continued to surge over the last 18 months. Health experts have said the pandemic created the perfect storm for those struggling with addiction: isolation, negative mental health impacts, and further barriers to treat-

2018 vs 2019 Opioid Overdose Death Rates

The rate of Black overdose deaths rose, while white and Hispanic rates remained steady



Source: American Journal of Public Health

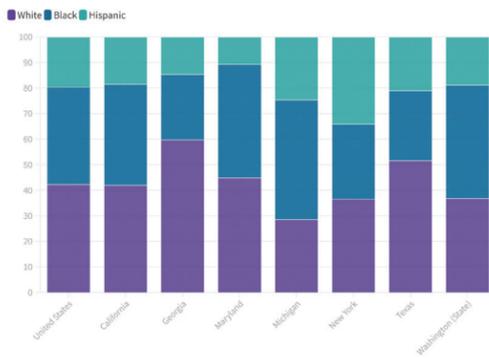
ment (fewer in-person appointments, telehealth, financial stress).

The campaign Stop Opioid Silence offers a platform for people in recovery, along with their loved ones, to share their stories and help end the stigma that prevents people from seeking treatment. In 2020, overdose deaths reached 93,000 during the pandemic, a record high.

“COVID-19 has exacerbated preexisting stressors, social isolation, and economic deprivation disproportionately in Black communities, possibly contributing to increased substance use,” authors wrote in a January 2021 study. “The preexisting racial disparities in accessing substance use treatment may also be heightened by COVID-19-related shifts in treatment availability.”

To read the study “Disparities in Opioid Overdose Death Trends by Race/Ethnicity, 2018–2019, From the HEALing Communities Study” visit: <https://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/10.2105/AJPH.2021.306431>.

2019 Opioid Death Rates in Word In Black Publisher States



Source: Kaiser Family Foundation

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Jemar Tisby: Courageous Christianity and the Journey Toward Racial Justice

Continued From Page 12

The second reason I say it's different this time is because the composition of those crowds was different. In the Civil Rights Movement, it was mostly comprised of Black people and a few allies from other races and ethnicities sprinkled in there. This time we had marches with tens of thousands of people that were predominantly white and other people. So it wasn't just Black people getting involved in the struggle. Another reason I say it's different this time is because while we haven't made nearly all of the gains that we want to see, there have been some significant changes. What I always point to is the state of Mississippi, where I used to live and where I got my PhD, had the confederate emblem on its state flag for one hundred and twenty-six years. That never changed throughout all the movements, all of the pressure, until 2020 when the racial justice uprisings were occurring. So, some change has been made. But mostly the reason it's different this time is because 2020 catalyzed a group of people who weren't very involved in racial justice before but can't not be involved now. It changed them. And they can help change our country.

The second thing was one of your chapters talked about race and the image of God? It bothers me when I go into a Black church and there's a great big picture of Jesus as a blue eyed, blonde, white guy in the front of the church. So talk to me about that. How do you explain race and the image of God?

Christianity in the United States has always been coded as white and this is where the accusation of "the white man's religion" comes from. That's well founded in many ways. What that implies is there's something about Blackness that needs to be redeemed, that needs to be saved, that needs to be whitened. But when you go back to the Bible, all the way back in the very first chapter of the very first book of the Bible, God says that human beings are made in the image and likeness of the creator. Which means we all have inherent dignity and worth, and our skin color is a part of that. Not something that has to be fixed. We understand the dignity of people on an individual basis, but being made in the image of God also means that we are worthy of dignity on a collective basis as well. So, different people groups, different ethnicities, different tribes and nations each have dignity and don't have to be europeanised or whitened in order to be worthy of love and respect and liberation.

There's a saying that Sunday mornings are the most segregated time in this country. They were actually talking about the 50s and 60s, but I would argue that it's still the case now. It feels like the church

sort of has that separation embedded in it. How do you see that?

The observation that 11am is the most segregated hour in America is powerful because it is emblematic of the hypocrisy of many Christians who are racist or who hold racist ideas when they are supposed to be loving like their Savior. But I actually don't think that's the biggest problem we have. One hour, one day of the week. The bigger problem is not what happens on Sunday, but what happens Monday through Saturday. I'm much more concerned about the hours of 8am - 3pm, school hours, being the most segregated hours in America. I'm much more concerned about weekends and holidays in our neighborhoods where we live being some of the most segregated spaces in America. Those are the places of meaningful interaction where barriers are broken and bridges are built when you are in ongoing community with people throughout the week, not just one day a week. We can see that because the evangelical racial reconciliation movement resulted in more multi-ethnic churches. There are more multi-ethnic churches now than ever before, perhaps with the exception of prior to the Civil War when people were forced to be together because white slaveholders wanted to keep an eye on Black enslaved people. But the proliferation of multi-ethnic churches has not resulted in the kind of societal changes around racism that we would hope that they would. So maybe ultimately it's not a problem with just what happens on one occasion once a week, but in our ongoing social networks.

I read in your bio that you're the president of The Witness, which is a Black Christian collective. What is that?

Yes, that is an attempt to build our own table. When we first began we were called the Reformed African American Network and what we were trying to do, what I was trying to do, is make space at existing tables, institutional tables, in white reformed and evangelical circles. To basically raise our hand and say, "hey, we're here", can we sit at the same table and have a voice at this table? What we quickly found, which was accelerated by the Black Lives Matter movement, was that these tables were never built for us. And the effort it took to try to make space at these tables, and make our voices heard at these tables was actually preventing us from doing much richer work. So the witness is our attempt at institution building in a way that is Christ-centered and Black-centered. So that we don't ever have to beg for a seat at the table, we've created our own. It's become a place of healing for a lot of people and not just Black people. We just had a 10 year anniversary this month in October 2021 and there was a white woman who posted be-

low the announcement on social media how healing it had been for her to find it. And then right below that was a Black person who said the exact same thing. So, it's really become a community of people who don't think Jesus and justice are at odds, but see them as harmonious.

What's been the most challenging thing for you in doing the work that you're doing?

Money. It's hard to raise money for a non-profit devoted to uplifting Black people from a faith based perspective and pursuing justice. The white evangelicals tend to shy away from it because it's too controversial, or they just think what we're doing is flat out wrong. And the people we're serving historically have been exploited and therefore don't have the same kind of access to wealth and capital and resources that others do. So, it's been very difficult to do the work that we've been called to do and not have adequate resources to do it. But we are driven by our mission and we have found ways to do incredible things with very little.

One of the struggles here, and I'm sure it's the same across the country, the younger generation is not a gravitating to the Black Church in the way that it has in the past and is not seeing the Black church in a leadership role, nor feeling like the Black Church is representing their perspective. Do you see a way to bridge that divide as we move forward?

It is a massively complicated and convoluted set of issues to address the disconnect between younger generations and the historic Black Church tradition. So, let me just focus on one area. History. We need to teach history. The reason why I think teaching history, and in particular the history of the Black Church, is important is that it gives us a more accurate conception of what the Black church has and hasn't been and what it could be now. So, for instance, we tend to have this frozen in time, stuck in amber view of the Black Church in 1963, in the Civil Rights movement, with Martin Luther King, Jr. and a few others as figureheads.

We have the impression that every Black church was involved in the struggle. But the reality was only a minority, a small minority, of Black churches were actively involved in the Civil Rights Movement, particularly in the South when it could mean your church could get burned or bombed, or you could get fired. So, it was never the case that the "Black Church at large" was always on board with it. As a matter of fact, we had incredibly contentious arguments between folks like King and Joseph H. Jackson, the President of the National Baptist Convention. So much so that they broke off in the early 60s and formed the

Progressive National Baptist Convention. So it's never been every Black church is one reason we need to study history.

The second reason is we need to know how the church has changed over time. It used to be the case that Black churches and denominations were the only places that we were able to build our own tables. They were the only real institutional forums that we had to enact our struggles. Partly due to the activism of previous generations, we actually have more outlets now. Whether it's writing or corporations or universities or whatever, we have more access and so the role of the Black Church in the Black community itself has changed. Are we still looking for the church to be involved mainly on an institutional basis. So, it's the name of the church or the name of the denomination, and only then do we count it as activism and participation. Or do we recognize that the Bible says the church is God's people, and are we looking for the people of God in the movement. That may not fall under an institutional banner, but they are nonetheless handing out water or saying prayers at the beginning of the march or using their homes and their churches as sites of organizing or being elected to the offices of the local group. Now, I'm not saying more can't be done and I think more should be done, but all I'm saying is the way the church interacts with a social movement changes over time and we should not be surprised to see that the way the church interacts now and the way it interacted 50 years ago is different.

You're speaking this evening. What do you want folks to get out of your presentation? What is your goal?

I hope folks walk away with a sense of their own agency. We tend to think that activism, however you define it, is for someone else. It's for the special few. And what I hope people begin to understand is that fighting for racial justice is for all of us and it's going to take all of us to see real change and progress. And by equipping you with these practical tools, I hope to make it a little bit easier for you to see yourself as a member of that struggle.

Is there anything that you wanna say that I didn't ask?

There is a young readers edition of How to Fight Racism coming out in January 2022, so if you wanna read this with a young person in your life, it's geared towards children ages 8 to 12 and it would be a phenomenal way to get them started early in the journey toward racial justice.

For more information about Jemar Tisby and his books visit: jemartisby.com. For information about The Witness visit: thewitnessinc.com.

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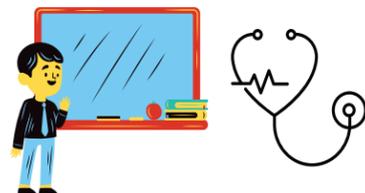
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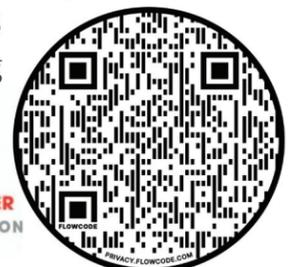
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Executive Director

Background

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Job Description

As Executive Director (ED) of BlackPast you will lead the organization's strategic planning and manage its day-to-day operations; lead, coach, develop and train an evolving BlackPast team, including hiring staff and consultants as needed with special emphasis on equity, diversity, and inclusion; supervise the work of BlackPast volunteers; seek partnerships that further the mission of BlackPast and take primary responsibility for fundraising; responsible for managing the finances of BlackPast and overseeing contracts for maintenance of our online presence; enhance the organization's public image through engagement with the community, including publication of an annual report, and promoting the organization through the news media, and other community institutions and individuals.

Qualifications

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- Past success working with a board of directors.
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To apply

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OUR VOICES

Freedom Dreams Deferred The State of the Black Liberation Movement

By **Jamala Rogers**

A View From the Battlefield
(blackcommentator.com)

I have found this year to be one of extreme distress for the Black Liberation Movement. There were many warning bells going off that apparently were only heard by the freedom dreamers. What we see is an unrecognizable movement around us. How did we get here? Who have we become? How do we get on track?

Robin Kelley talks about the Black radical imagination in his seminal contribution to our struggle, *Freedom Dreams*. Kelley examines the “emancipatory vision” of generations who push our movements in new and radical directions. The vision has been not just been put at bay as Kelley suggests. I believe the accumulation of ancestral knowledge and contemporary lessons that begs for our rigorous study and appreciation has been trampled on by those seeking gratuitous fame on the backs of the Black working class.

Our movements have seen an awakening on many levels that must be summed up, discussed and put into new transformative strategies for the next period. I believe the answers to the above questions can be found in the renewed commitment to building a strong and viable Black Left.

Black folks have gone through some traumatizing shit since the Ferguson Uprising in 2014. On top of the Dr. Joy DeGruy’s Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome and Sean Ginwright’s Persistent Traumatic Stress Syndrome, we had to endure the intensification of white supremacy under the Trump regime. For those who thought that the national media’s attention on the horrific murder of Mike Brown would make it the last Black body to perish at the hands of white cops or vigilantes, they were sadly mistaken. In 2020, the world witnessed the slow and agonizing murder of George Floyd on prime-time television. The incident propelled millions into street protests around the world. The icing on the cake of oppression was a deadly pandemic which aggressively sought out the most vulnerable populations. COVID-19 devastated Black communities, exploiting the conditions of poverty and health disparities worsened under racialized capitalism.

People of African descent across generations and diverse backgrounds watched the insurrection at the Capitol on January 6, knowing full well that had Black protesters stormed the building, it would’ve been a blood bath. Any protesters who survived would be facing more than just felony obstruction laws.

Not surprisingly, urban areas across the country experienced record-breaking homicides rates. No surprise either that our self-medication in response to these conditions resulted in a siege of drug-related deaths. The cheap and powerful fentanyl is ravaging our communities and taking no prisoners.

This is our reality in America. And where is the Black Liberation Movement during this overwhelming and relentless barrage of assaults against the masses of our people? Gasping for political life and relevancy. I have never seen so much venom as I have in the last year by those touting Black Lives Matter. Beat downs, call outs, cancel culture, legal actions, character assassinations and cyber-bullying have been incessant. It’s the proverbial circular firing squad.

We all have witnessed or been victims of some form of public shaming or complete reputation annihilation. I know organizers suffering from insomnia, anxiety attacks, depression and a host of other issues affecting their overall health. Their ability to fully participate in their self-transformation and movement-building have been severely impaired.



With all this time, energy and resources being weaponized against one another, our enemies are gloating but our people are suffering. The call for restorative justice amongst ourselves has been muted. The Black lives in our own organizations don’t seem to matter.

The Black Liberation Movement has been infected by the most negative attributes of the nonprofit industrial complex, like individualism, opportunism and careerism. We’ve made building our personal brands more a priority than building strong organizations.

We’ve been hit by the flood of money washing over our movement and creating a swamp of political stagnation. It’s important to spend some time talking about money because it has played such a divisive role in our organizations and in our movement.

One Struggle KC released a statement back in the summer to explain how the group was grappling with how a section of the Black-led collective took organizational funds to start something new without group consensus. It is unclear whether One Struggle can survive a hit like this so early in their development but they are not alone as other movement groups attempt to address crippling internal issues around resources and personalities.

On a bigger stage, Black Lives Matter Global Network Foundation garnered national attention as they took in \$90 million dollars over the last year. Patrisse Cullors, the only founder of Black Lives Matter to be connected with BLMGNF, was publicly raked over the coals for her use of BLM funds to allegedly enrich her personal lifestyle. Co-founders Alicia Garza and Opal Tometi, who have distanced themselves from the Foundation, are recipients of harsh criticisms because they continue to accept speaking engagements in the name of Black Lives Matter.

BLM Chapters lined up to condemn the BLMGNF and its BLM founders for their cloak of secrecy and for their breach of principles. The #BLM10Plus outlined their concerns in a statement to the movement. Families of victims murdered by police also lined up to accuse them of profiteering off the deaths of their loved ones. Samaria Rice, the mother of Tamir Rice and Lisa Simpson, the mother of Richard Risher, issued a joint statement that broadened the net of condemnation past the foundation and its founders

to include Black attorneys Ben Crump, Lee Merritt as well as Tamika Mallory and Shaun King.

Meanwhile, in Ferguson, activists who helped propel a hashtag into a movement are still bitter that people like DeRay Mckesson parachuted into the media vortex, then launched his political career. Others became the darlings of the cable news network. The people who were doing the work in the St. Louis region before the murder of Mike Brown are still doing the work, probably a bit more jaded. They’re also wondering where their share of the wealth is that they helped to create.

Shortly after the beat down by the Left and the Right, Cullors resigned as the Foundation’s Executive Director. There was an attempt - although short-lived - to add credible leaders in our movement in an effort to set up the infrastructure necessary for effective operations and accountability. Makani Themba and Monifa Bandele, two sistahs for whom I have the utmost respect, issued a statement that they were backing off as senior executives because they were refused the access and opportunity needed to seriously perform their duties.

Their joint statement ends by saying “we are a strong and resilient movement, and that the ecosystem of organizations fighting for Black liberation is as strong as ever.” If all of these public statements swirling around over money and fingers wagging over political pimping are any indication of our movement’s strength and resiliency, we are in deep trouble. We don’t need to stay in place and wallow, we need to organize ourselves out of this swamp we’re currently in.

Our movement has experienced waves of new and younger activists often socialized by the toxins of internalized oppression and corrupted by neo-liberal tendencies. We have been unable to school them on movement behavior and expectations so that they are of service to the revolution.

The fact is that organizations and movements experience growing pains. The speed at which Black Lives Matter grew had all to do with the material conditions of our people and the incredible power of social media. Many contributed to that velocity, creating a new consciousness in this country about police violence and generating resources for which there was no agreed upon infrastructure for collection or distribution. We had no trusted entity to take on that prominent level of stewardship. This a matter of governance, not divvying up money between those with the most access.

Opportunists profiting off the movement is not new. These latest accusations of movement misappropriation goes far beyond the BLMGNF. There is a legion of blood-sucking characters who are cashing in on anything Black-led and Black-dead. We must hold them accountable as effectively and efficiently as we can while not losing sight of why we are fighting and who the beneficiaries of our righteous struggles are.

For the freedom dreamers, it’s time to dive deep into the Black radical imagination. The answers are there. We must respect the values and organizing principles that bind us while we do this important transformative work. It’s time to redirect our fragmented energy into nurturing healthy relationships and bolstering networks united around a shared revolutionary vision for a more just and democratic society. A strategically focused and unapologetic Black Left will get us there.

*Jamala Rogers is a BlackCommentator.com Editorial Board member and Columnist. Rogers is founder and Chair Emeritus of the Organization for Black Struggle in St. Louis. She is an organizer, trainer and speaker. She is the author of *The Best of the Way I See It – A Chronicle of Struggle*. Other writings by Ms. Rogers can be found on her blog jamalarogers.com.*

OUR VOICES

King Family And Justice Organizations Urge No MLK Day Celebration Without Voting Rights Legislation

By Marc H. Morial

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - "After decades of struggle and a year of our leaders choosing the Jim Crow filibuster over our voting rights, our time is now. On this day of action, I call on Congress and the White House to eliminate the filibuster and pass voting rights to protect millions of Black and Brown voters. The arc of the moral universe is long. Join me on January 17 to demand that it bends toward justice." -- Martin Luther King III

More than five and a half decades ago, Martin Luther King, Jr., led 2,000 marchers to the Edmund Pettis Bridge in Selma, Alabama, where they knelt and prayed for an end to voter suppression. This MLK Day, his children will lead marchers to the Frederick Douglass Memorial Bridge in Washington, D.C., to culminate a weekend of action in defense of democracy.

Throughout MLK Day weekend, marches will take place around the nation on bridges, not only to recall the 1965 Selma to Montgomery marches and the historic "Bloody Sunday" attack on the Edmund Pettus Bridge, but also to contrast lawmakers' inaction on voting rights with their success in enacting a \$1 trillion infrastructure measure for roads, airports, seaports, and bridges.

If Congress can deliver for bridges, it can deliver for voting rights.



Martin Luther King III, Arndrea Waters King and Yolanda Renee King, alongside more than 90 national and grassroots organizations, including the National Urban League, this week announced mobilizations on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day to restore and expand voting rights to honor Dr. King's legacy. The actions will call on President Biden and the Senate to urgently pass federal voting rights legislation, in-

cluding the Freedom to Vote Act and the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act, and ensure the Jim Crow filibuster doesn't stand in the way.

Dr. King's legacy reminds us that our right to vote was not easily won and it must be vigorously defended. It is a right that is foundational to our democracy. Last year, we saw what happens when we make voting more accessible for all, and we were inspired. Those unpatriotic members of state legislatures who would seek to undermine voting rights saw it too, and it scared them.

State lawmakers have introduced and enacted hundreds of antidemocratic voter suppression and election subversion bills since the 2020 election. These anti-democracy bills — introduced in direct response to Black and Brown voters showing up in record numbers — close polling centers, purge voter rolls, eliminate early voting, and gerrymander Black and Brown voters into predominantly white districts.

Furthermore, the Supreme Court's July decision in *Brnovich v. DNC* further gutted the Voting Rights Act, one of Dr. King's signature achievements. Federal voting rights legislation will help overturn these Jim Crow-era state bills and put key protections in place.

The Freedom to Vote Act expands opportunities to vote, thwarts voter suppression, limits partisan gerrymandering, prevents

election sabotage, and promotes election security. The John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act would restore a requirement in the Voting Rights Act that jurisdictions with recent histories of discrimination secure federal "preclearance" before altering their voting laws, and will enhance the ability of the U.S. Department of Justice and other stakeholders to challenge discriminatory voting laws.

President Biden and members of Congress can no longer stand by and allow American democracy to crumble. They must set a new national standard for voting and restore the Voting Rights Act of 1965 to its full strength, even if that means reforming or eliminating the filibuster. Standing on the shoulders of Dr. King, Coretta Scott King, Whitney M. Young and many others, we must hold them accountable for doing so.

The MLK Day mobilizations will begin in Arizona on January 15, Dr. King's birthday, where the King family and local groups will rally supporters across Phoenix, in alignment with the Arizona Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration Committee. On January 17, the family and hundreds of others will cross the Frederick Douglass Memorial Bridge and join the annual D.C. Peace Walk: Change Happens with Good Hope and a Dream.

For more information about the weekend of mobilizations, visit www.deliverforvotingrights.com.

Kwanzaa 2021 - Celebration or Lamentation?

By James Clingman

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - For fifty years Black people in the United States have celebrated the seven principles of Kwanzaa. Established by Dr. Maulana Karenga in 1966, Kwanzaa is an African American and Pan-African holiday celebrated by millions throughout the world African community.

Kwanzaa brings a cultural message which speaks to the best of what it means to be African and human in the fullest sense. Our obvious support and celebration of this occasion suggests our commitment, not only to the principles of the Nguzo Saba, but also to their fruition. Thus, we ask you: What Kwanzaa success will you celebrate this year? What have you done during the year that qualifies as a celebratory event during Kwanzaa?

Have you achieved Unity, Umoja, among Black folks in your locale? Are you unified to the point that you love one another more and support one another more? Do you have proof that you have unified around some pertinent issue or cause? If so, then let the celebration begin. If not, let the lamentation begin.

How about Self-Determination? Kujichagulia. What have you done in your city to demonstrate your commitment to determining the future of your children? Are others still controlling your destiny? Or have you taken it upon yourself to build and support your own institutions, open and grow new business, and create your own jobs?

Can you celebrate an accomplishment during 2021 vis-à-vis collective work and responsibility toward one another? Are you celebrating Ujima this year, or are you lamenting about what we have not done? If you have worked collectively on community projects such as neighborhood clean-up, elderly assistance, or tutoring, then your Kwanzaa celebration is in order.

Now, here's my favorite: Cooperative Economics, Ujamaa. Have you done anything cooperatively this year to increase the economic viability and stability of your community? Have you pooled any of your money to finance a project or to form an investment group to assist micro businesses? Have you purchased Black manufactured products on a consistent basis?

What have you done to build and develop your community in order to restore our people to their traditional greatness?

In other words, what is your purpose, Nia, and have you actualized that purpose? If you have, then you definitely have something to celebrate.

Have you created anything lately? What has been the level of your creativity, Kuumba, this past year? Is there anything, not necessarily something material, that you created to benefit your community? Maybe it was a new financial institution, a volunteer food service program for those in need, or maybe it was a new resolve and commitment to do better than you did the previous year. Creativity covers a multitude of endeavors.



Finally, how much faith, Imani, do you have in the things you are celebrating? How much faith do you have in yourself? How much faith do you have in your brothers and sisters? How much faith do you have in the Creator's ability to carry you through in times of struggle? Are you one of "little faith," or is your faith sufficient to support you in your quest to fulfill the other six principles of Kwanzaa?

Aren't you tired of mere spoken words? Aren't you just a little weary of empty rhetoric, events based on words followed by little or no subsequent action? Wouldn't you like to see us, after fifty years of celebrating Kwanzaa, be able to point to something we built and sustained because of our celebration of values we hold so dear?

On December 26th of every year, after fifty years of celebrating, we should be able to look back and revel in the things we have accomplished through our celebration of

Kwanzaa. What will you see when you look back this year? If nothing is there except a mere celebration of principles rather than progress, then you have some work to do. Use this year's Kwanzaa to act upon the seven principles so that this time next year you will have some tangible accomplishment to celebrate.

Again, my favorite principle is Ujamaa, so I'd like to offer something you can do to celebrate it. Go to www.iamoneofthemillion.com and purchase a few bags of Sweet Unity Coffee for yourself and for Kwanzaa gifts for a few friends. Then celebrate by toasting "sweet unity" among our people.

The founder of Kwanzaa, Maulana Karenga, did more than just come up with some nice words and principles for us to recognize and follow during this season. He has shared many words with us on how we must conduct ourselves at all times—not just during Kwanzaa. One thing he warned against was Black folks getting stuck in a place where most of what we do is lament "litanies of lost battles."

Kwanzaa must be a true celebration of production and progress, not just another lamentation of having lost."

James E. Clingman is a prolific writer on economic empowerment for Black people. His weekly syndicated newspaper column, *Blackonomics*, is featured in hundreds of newspapers, magazines, and newsletters. He is the former Editor of the *Cincinnati Herald Newspaper* and founder of the *Greater Cincinnati African American Chamber of Commerce*.

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JANUARY EVENTS

JANUARY 8

POWER TO THE PEOPLE

2022 Black Legislative Summit
Join a workshop to learn how the Black community can best navigate the Washington State legislative process with a liberated spirit that builds our collective power. Legislative Guest: Representative Jamila Taylor, 30th Legislative District, Chair of the Washington State Black Member Caucus
10:00am – 1:00pm
Zoom Registration:
bit.ly/BlackAdvocacySummit
Facilitated by Emijah Smith, Community Queen and Founder of Colorful Communities LLC; Senait Brown, Anti-Racist Organizer and Policy Director at SurgeNW

JANUARY 17

NAACP GENERAL MEETING

Join the NAACP for our monthly general membership meeting. Meetings are currently online. For more information please check social media or contact the NAACP at 509-209-2425 or visit: naacpspokane.org.

JANUARY 17

INLAND SESSIONS: HONORING DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

Sponsored by KSPS Television. Regional poets and musicians from the Inland Northwest will be addressing the mission of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. through original works and personal renditions which they each choose specifically to honor Dr. King.

Premieres on KSPS-TV/PBS 7:30pm

(On all KSPS-PBS Spokane/Edmonton Translators across Eastern Washington, Northern Idaho, Western Montana, as well as across South-Western Canada. The episode can also be watched after January 17th at kspss.org or through Passport via your KSPS Membership)

JANUARY 24

WE GON' BE ALRIGHT

A Space for Black Healing
Facilitator Kiantha Duncan, Co-facilitator Alethea Dumas. *This is not a space for allies.*
5:30-7:30pm
Virtual Discussion
To register visit: <http://ow.ly/V8de50GaQTW>

VIRTUAL GROUP
A Cup of Culture



Join Me For A Cup Of Culture

SHARING TIPS & INSIGHTS ABOUT DIVERSITY

Saturdays at 12:30 PM PST

Saturdays at 12:30pm

To join the Facebook Group: facebook.com/groups/racialreconciliationwithdrwilburn

LGBTQ+ Seniors of the Inland Northwest invites all LGBTQ+ seniors to join us at our weekly Zoom meeting

Fridays at 4 p.m.

“Senior” is roughly 50+.

If interested in this socialization opportunity, please send an email to Nancy Avery at NancyTAvery@comcast.net requesting to be added to the email list for the Zoom link.

Find us on FB at <https://www.facebook.com/SpokaneLGBTSeniors>

FIND OUT MORE ON OUR FACEBOOK PAGE

A Community Celebration of Black History Month

FEB 4-6TH BLACK BUSINESS EXPO	FEB 7-28TH BLACK HISTORY SCAVENGER HUNT	FEB 19TH ONLINE MOVIE SCREENING	FEB 26TH SPECIAL EVENT
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Proof of vaccination or negative test required for attendance.





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