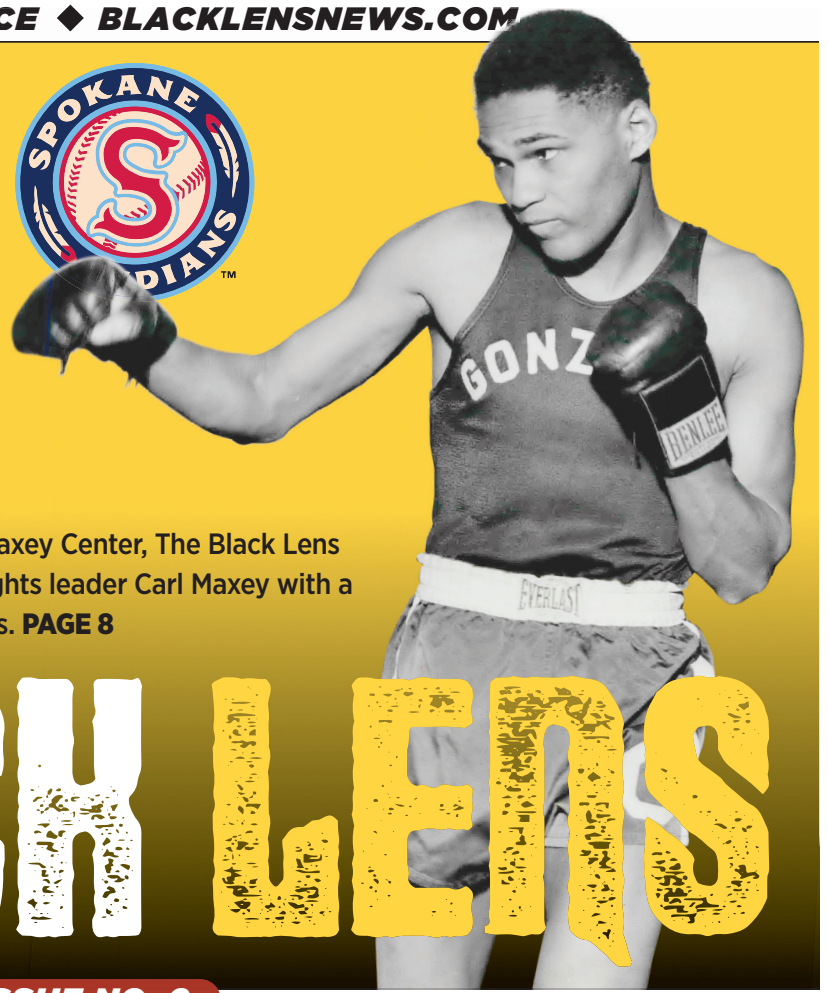




# A TRIBUTE TO King Carl



**BLACK LENS EXCLUSIVE:** The Spokane Indians announce partnership with Carl Maxey Center, The Black Lens and the Maxey family to celebrate the life and legacy of Spokane attorney, civil rights leader Carl Maxey with a nod to his boxing career, themed merchandise and multiple Black-centered events. **PAGE 8**

# THE BLACK LENS

MARCH 2024 - VOL. 9 - ISSUE NO. 2



## WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

FROM OUR EDITOR  
**Honoring Black women for Women's History Month**

PAGE 2

# Blueprint for resistance

*Ida B. Wells was more than a journalist and educator*



**Black women pioneers set their own beauty standards**

PAGES 6-7



COURTESY

A young Ida B. Wells-Barnett, in a photograph by Mary Garrity from circa 1893.

By April Eberhardt  
 THE BLACK LENS

Ida B. Wells is the blueprint for resistance. Emboldened to fight back through the power of the pen, Ida B. Wells prioritized her community in the face of Jim Crow and gave power to truth. Wells personalized the popular catch phrase used in modern day anti-bullying campaigns: "if you see something, say something."

At the turn of the century, Wells stood as a vanguard for change. Wells was a journalist, abolitionist and feminist who led an anti-lynching crusade and was integral in groups striving for African American justice, including cofounding

the nation's oldest civil rights organization, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1909.

It is on her legacy that independent newspapers such as The Black Lens stand. Wells exercised the very rights denied her through the first amendment; she dared to hold the government accountable to her people through the press. Knowing that she had a target on her back for speaking the truth, Wells strategically used a moniker at times to maintain anonymity. This allowed her to continue to investigate, expose, and denounce the sins of racism through journalism in an effort to rouse the nation's conscience.

Wells risked her life to help

save the lives of others and forced America out of oblivion by turning whispers into shouts. She refused to kowtow to the lie of racism, to the normalization of terror against her people, holding true to her own words: "Burning and torture here lasts but a little while, but if I die with a lie on my soul, I shall be tortured forever. I am innocent."

When Night Riders in hoods haunted Black families in the humid air of Southern twilight, she was one who dared to avenge the innocently slain. One who was courageously unafraid to speak the truth about murderers set out to destroy her people. She risked all

See **WELLS, 5**

### COMMENTARY

## WHY ARE BLACK PEOPLE STANDING WITH PALESTINIANS?

Examining transracial and transnational solidarity

What does Palestinian liberation have to do with Black people? That's a question many Black Americans may have asked themselves as we collectively witness the ongoing violence in Gaza.

The Israeli government has launched a genocidal military operation in the name of eradicating Hamas, after Hamas brutally attacked peaceful Israeli concert-goers and took hostages.

In response, Israel has unapologetically targeted refugee camps and hospitals, set up blockades to cut food, water, and electricity supplies, and manufactured conditions in which there are many ways for civilians to die. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has made it clear that he has no intentions of facilitating

See **PALESTINE, 5**



By Union Carter  
 THE BLACK LENS CONTRIBUTOR



### INSIDE

#### NEW HATE CRIME BILL: WHAT TOOK SO LONG?

Senate Bill 5917, introduced by Sen. Andy Billig from Spokane's 3rd Legislative District, expands hate crime protection to public spaces and addresses vandalism of public property. **PAGE 2**



#### SPOKANE'S MANDI PRICE AT THE EMMY'S

Twice Emmy-nominated TV produced Mandi Price, who grew up in Spokane, talks about identity as a biracial woman in Eastern Washington and in Hollywood. **PAGE 3**

#### BLACK LENS RELAUNCH WEEK FILLED TO BRIM

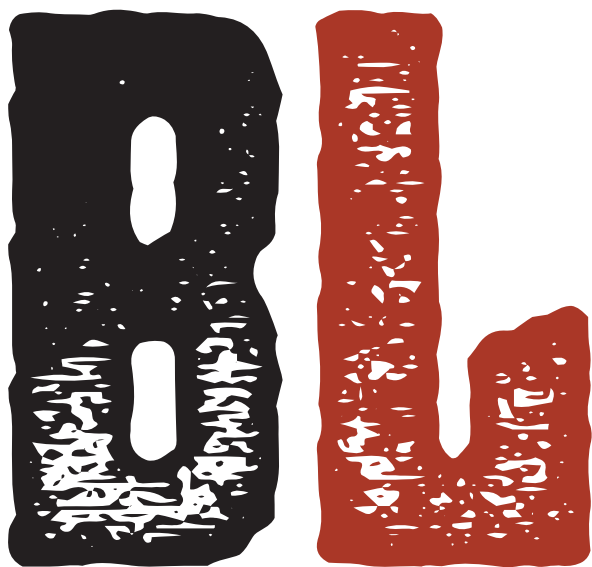
The first week of February saw multiple events celebrating the relaunch of Sandy Williams' The Black Lens, including a launch party, The Sound of (Black) Music, TV appearances and more. **PAGE 12**

#### GET CONNECTED READIES KIDS FOR COLLEGE

The Get Connected Conference is a one-day college and career conference for students of diverse racial and cultural backgrounds to connect with each other and their future career. **PAGE 4**



**CELEBRATING  
WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH**



**NEWS**

BLACKLENSNEWS.COM

**We want to hear from you!**

**THE BLACK LENS** would like to hear from the Black community in Spokane on how it believes Spokane can live its motto, **"IN SPOKANE, WE ALL BELONG."** Please send ideas to editor@blacklensnews.com with the motto in the subject line.

**STATE'S NEW  
HATE CRIME BILL:  
WHAT TOOK  
SO LONG?**

**The Black Lens staff**

Senate Bill 5917, introduced by Sen. Andy Billig from Spokane's 3rd Legislative District, expands hate crime protection to public spaces and addresses destruction and vandalism of public property.

This bill comes after a string of vandalism targeting the LGBTQ+ community in Spokane, according to the city. In 2023, after years of advocacy, the city of Spokane approved one of the first neighborhood rainbow crosswalks in the Perry District, supporting our LGBTQ+ communities. Once complete, the crosswalk was repeatedly vandalized, including the Odyssey Youth Center, which serves LGBTQ+ youth and was co-founded by Sandy Williams, the founder of The Black Lens and the Carl Maxey Center. A second crosswalk at the corner of Spokane Falls Boulevard and Wall Street was vandalized, recently with paint poured on the crosswalk.

"We have all seen the increase in hate crimes around the nation, and we are all too familiar with how hate can find its home

in Eastern Washington, but in the end, we know love will win," said City Council Member Paul Dillon.

While we have seen numerous hate crimes targeting communities of color, religious communities and the LGBTQ+ community, protections have focused on individual harm and damage to private property. Public spaces will now receive similar protections. To be found guilty under the statute, a person must act maliciously and intentionally based on a person's race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity, or mental, physical, or sensory disability.

As our city, county, state, and country grapple with removing symbols of oppression, slavery, genocide and hate and replace them with symbols of inclusion, diversity and love, having a new law to protect those symbols sends a critical message that hate has no home here. According to Dillon, "This bill gives us a new, much-needed tool and helps us all to aspire to live our city motto 'In Spokane, we all belong.'"

**Reporting a hate crime**

Human Rights Spokane believes hate-motivated crimes and incidents create distrust and harm our communities.

We want to document these occurrences to create a community record of hate-motivated crimes and incidents in Spokane County.

Collected information will be used to support and coordinate educational, programmatic and awareness activities of HRS along with improving response and prevention efforts to hate in our community.

You may file a report anonymously or provide your name. If you provide your name and contact information, we will reach out to you.

These reports are confidential and not connected to law enforcement. If you are a victim of a hate crime and want police to respond, call 911.

Report hate online at [www.humanrightsspokane.org/hate-report](http://www.humanrightsspokane.org/hate-report)

Source: Human Rights Spokane



**NEWS**

**FROM THE EDITOR**

**HONORING BLACK WOMEN FOR  
WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH**



By **Natasha Hill**  
THE BLACK LENS EDITOR



We are spotlighting Black women during Women's History Month. From pioneering leaders to unsung heroes, the resilience, strength and unwavering spirit of Black women have left an indelible mark on culture, society and progress. Black women have been at the forefront of social movements, advocating for civil rights, gender equality, and justice. Their voices instrumental in shaping history, yet, their contributions too often overlooked or marginalized.

Despite facing intersecting oppressions of race and gender, they have continuously risen above adversity with courage and determination. Figures like Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, and Ida B. Wells-Barnett paved the way for future generations by fearlessly

advocating for abolition, suffrage, and civil rights.

In the realm of academia, Black women scholars have made significant contributions to various fields, from STEM to the humanities. Figures like Dr. Mae Jemison, the first African American woman astronaut, Katherine Johnson, whose mathematical genius contributed to NASA's success in the space race, and Dr. Shirley Jackson, a pioneering physicist, exemplify the brilliance and innovation that Black women bring to the table. Their achievements not only break barriers but also serve as beacons of inspiration for future generations of scholars and scientists.

In arts and culture, Black women have made significant strides, enriching our lives with their creativity, talent and beauty. From soul-stirring writers like Maya Angelou, Toni Morrison, bell hooks, to the groundbreaking music of Ella Fitzgerald and Billie Holiday and electrifying performances of Tina Turner and Beyoncé, their artistic expressions have resonated across generations, inspiring millions and shaping cultural movements.

Black women have excelled in business and academia, defying stereotypes and breaking barriers. From Madam C.J. Walker, who became the first female self-made millionaire in America, to Oprah Winfrey the first Black woman billionaire and Rhianna becoming

the youngest self made female billionaire, exemplify the tenacity and entrepreneurial spirit of Black women.

Amidst these remarkable achievements, Black women continue to face systemic injustices and disparities. From the gender pay gap to health care disparities and the disproportionate rates of violence and incarceration, all pose formidable challenges to the well-being and advancement of Black women. It is crucial to acknowledge and address these inequities, recognizing that the fight for gender and racial justice is interconnected. Intersectional approaches that center the experiences of Black women, including queer and transgender women, are essential in creating meaningful change and building a more inclusive and equitable society for all of us.

As we celebrate Women's History Month, let us all commit ourselves to amplifying the voices of Black women, celebrate their achievements, uplift their stories, and ensure that their contributions are fully recognized and valued. This means supporting initiatives that promote economic empowerment, educational equity, health-care access, and political representation for Black women. It means challenging stereotypes and biases, advocating for inclusive policies, and standing in solidarity with Black women-led movements for justice and liberation. Let's go!



ULYSSES CURRY/INNATAI FOUNDATION

**Black Lens editor Natasha Hill speaks at the Black Lens launch event Feb. 2 at the Steam Plant rooftop event center. Read more on the relaunch week on Page 12.**

**State residents can up tax refunds this year**

**The Black Lens staff**

Washington state launched the Working Families Tax Credit (WFTC) in 2023, giving a rebate of up to \$1,255 per family.

The WFTC has already provided over \$116 million in refunds to 163,000 Washington households, with an average refund of \$714 per household. According to state Sen. Andy Billig, this program has already positively impacted 249,000 kids.

To find out if you or your family are eligible, visit [workingfamiliescredit.wa.gov](http://workingfamiliescredit.wa.gov).

Applications opened on Feb. 1 and are available through the end of the year.

**WORKING FAMILIES TAX CREDIT**

How is the Working Families Tax Credit different from an IRS refund?

Working Families Tax Credit (WFTC)	Internal Revenue Service (IRS)
The WFTC refund comes from the <b>Washington State Department of Revenue (DOR)</b> .	The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) refund comes from the <b>IRS</b> .
If approved for a WFTC refund, you'll receive a separate deposit or check from the DOR.	If approved for an EITC refund, you'll receive a separate check or deposit from the IRS.
A refund of state sales tax paid as a resident of Washington.	A refund of income tax paid anywhere in the nation.
You submit a WFTC application and attach your complete federal tax return form (1040).	You submit your federal tax return form (1040).
ITIN holders are eligible for a WFTC refund.	ITIN holders are not eligible for an EITC refund.

**WORKING FAMILIES TAX CREDIT**

Ways to submit your Working Families Tax Credit (WFTC) application

- MyDOR**
  - Convenient and free. Apply on your own!
  - Available in English and Spanish.
- Paper Application**
  - Available in 13 languages.
  - Download from website or pick up at a DOR office.
- Modernized e-File**
  - With your tax preparer (they may charge a fee).
  - At a VITA or AARP site (free).

WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF REVENUE

**THE BLACK LENS**

Serving Spokane's Black community since 2015

IN MEMORY OF SANDRA WILLIAMS  
FOUNDING EDITOR AND PUBLISHER

**NATASHA HILL, EDITOR**

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**Statement of Independence**

The Black Lens is a not-for-profit, independent newspaper that focuses on all aspects of the Black community in Eastern Washington. The Black Lens editor reports to its own board of directors, which was set up under the guidance of the founders' family.

As journalism calls for increased transparency, The Black Lens believes in being transparent about its work. The Black Lens is funded through foundations, donors, subscribers and the community. That funding pays for the work of the editors, reporters, photographers, designers, correspondents and columnists who produce The Black Lens newspaper, website and other platforms.

The Black Lens retains full authority over its editorial content. This organization maintains a strict firewall between news coverage decisions and funding sources and in-kind help. Acceptance of financial support does not constitute implied or actual endorsement of donors or their products, services or opinions.

All story decisions made by The Black Lens newsroom and its leaders are made independently and not on the basis of donor support. This organization does not give supporters the rights to assign, review or edit content, and if a supporter is covered in a story or other editorial content, The Black Lens will disclose this at the bottom of the story.

The Black Lens is a partner of the "comma" community journalism lab. The Black Lens will be located within the community journalism lab newsroom that is set to be stationed on the main campus of Gonzaga University in Spokane. Though The Black Lens and lab may be housed at Gonzaga, the university has no control or authority over the journalism created by The Black Lens or other newsrooms located within the lab. The comma community journalism lab is a nonprofit news organization with its own board of directors, separate from the university and separate from The Black Lens. The Black Lens' board of directors works closely with the comma community journalism lab and its leaders to

ensure that journalism's protected First Amendment rights continue to be an essential part of our nation's democracy.

Though much of the content created by The Black Lens may appear in regional publications, newspapers or news websites, those organizations have no rights, authority or influence over the content created by this publication. The Black Lens' publications are only responsible to boards of directors for The Black Lens and the comma community journalism lab. Though other publications, including The Spokesman-Review, may assist in distribution, The Black Lens is not a publication of any of its third-party distribution partners.





## NEWS



... You can walk into a room, and you are not just there to be someone to look at. You know that your purpose is exact. To me that is so important. When I look at the women in my life, they have all those qualities.”

**Mandi Price**

Spokane-raised Emmy-nominated TV producer

## TWO-TIME EMMY-NOMINATED TV PRODUCER MANDI PRICE, OF SPOKANE, TALKS ON IDENTITY

By April Eberhardt  
THE BLACK LENS

Identity. Womanhood. Representation. Art. These are the themes that arose from a candid conversation with a hometown “shero,” Spokane native Amanda Kay Price, who most call Mandi. Price is a twice Emmy-nominated producer.

Her credits include: “Boomerang” (BET), “Little Fires Everywhere” (Hulu), “Daisy Jones and the Six” (Amazon Prime), “Lawmen: Bass Reeves” (Paramount+), and the newly released documentary “Becoming King” (Paramount+). She has worked with powerhouses like David Oyelowo, Lena Waithe and Kerry Washington. She transparently shared about her own relationship with identity growing up without much connection to Black culture here in Spokane, and her personal journey in understanding her identity as a Black woman.

Price was adopted and grew up in a white family in Spokane.

“I didn’t know a single Black person, ever; until I went to college (it) was like the first time I’d genuinely interacted with another Black person.”

Price recalls attending Shadle Park High School and seeing only one Black teacher at the time. She saw Black basketball players at Gonzaga, but it was when she attended college at Southern Virginia University that she first had real connections with other Black people; it just wasn’t the norm for her in Spokane. On her first day of college, she recalls being enthusiastically greeted by other Blacks on campus. She laughs at the surprise she felt in that moment, as she looked around and asked, “Are you talking to me?” She was not privy to the cultural insights that many Blacks relate to.

With the nuances that skin complexion and hair type add to the equation of Blackness, there is just a lot to unravel when it comes to understanding the nuances of Black



Mandi Price holds an Emmy that was awarded to the music production team of “Daisy Jones and the Six.”

identity, including assimilation, stereotypes, and colorism that have caused controversy for centuries. “Everyone has to define what Blackness means to them. Or maybe we shouldn’t define it at all,” she said.

The shared collective history is ours, yes. There are certain cultural markers that anchor us as a people. But there are nuances. There are different paths that Black peoples’ lives take.

“Often what we forget

about ... to me a big part of being Black is community,” Price said. “Because we rely on our community.”

When the world watched the murder of George Floyd, Price recalls the reckoning of race that she could no longer ignore. Though her limited exposure to Black culture made it hard for her to relate to some things, watching the scene of a knee on the neck of Floyd smother the life from his

body unfold on national television triggered something in her. It was a question on the value of humanity. She talks about this being the moment that she owned the reality of her identity. While she related more to the experiences of growing up in a predominantly white world, there were also her experiences of being pulled over and profiled.

Price recalls the disbelief that some in her life had when she shared these encounters with responses like, “but Mandi

you’re not Black ... you’re just really tan.” Her response? “You might see me as that, but someone else very much identifies me in ... the otherness of myself.”

Herein lies the conundrum of understanding oneself through the complexity of identity in America, where questions like “where exactly do I fit?” or “how do others actually see me?” emerge. And this was the impetus for Price deciding to own her place between two races; between two different lived experiences.

“That is what made me decide that, no, I need to own this,” she said. “If I can bridge the gap, then I feel like that’s what my role is.”

In Hollywood, she is aware of how identity can provide both access and denial. Being a woman can equate to being sought after less, she reflects. As a woman of color, there are times when she is sought after even less. She knows that there are some projects she has gotten because she is Black and there are some that she has gotten because she is a woman.

More often than not, Price sees her womanhood as the first barrier in the industry. When asked what strong womanhood looks like, she stated these traits: perseverance, endurance, humility, and fierceness.

“Like this idea that ... you can walk into a room, and you are not just there to be someone to look at. You know that your purpose is exact. To me that is so important,” Price said.

“When I look at the women in my life, they have all those qualities.” At the intersection of race and gender live undeniable realities that impact a person’s personal and professional journey. Let us not forget, skill and talent preceded each of those markers, and those are the traits that got Price through the door to begin with, despite the convolution of identity.

As Price is evolving into understanding her own identity more, she

realizes that the media has a major influence on how people relate to each other. This is directly in her lane as a producer. It is here that she also sees a duty to tell stories that provide insight into identity, culture, and personhood. Representation matters.

“I love that I get to celebrate, especially in the arts and ... that I get to celebrate all sorts of Blackness,” she said.

Her work is the window through which the world can see and understand what they don’t know, what they have never learned, and what they may have never even considered.

“We need to do better, and I think we need to be exposed to more,” Price said. “I am just as excited about getting into these deep dives. The great thing about my job is that I get to focus my time and energy on whatever project I am doing.”

Each project affirms for Price that she can reach into uncharted territory to tell new stories about people the world does not know. And she welcomes that. Equally as important is making sure that she holds the door open for others like her to enter through so the work continues to elevate.

“I may be the first...but I won’t be the last,” Price said.

This is where Price sees herself as both a student and a bridge to bring new learning to life.

“If someone can look at me and say, like, ‘Well, she did it. I can too’ then I’ve done it. Like, I did the thing.”

When asked what she would tell a young woman on her journey, Price replied: “Your dreams are not big enough. Dream bigger. There will be a lot of tears ... You will have to fight your way through it, but I promise you, the other side is so worth it ... and it’s not instant. There’s no such thing as overnight success. Give yourself 10 years and then ask for help. It’s OK to ask for help.”

This is the sound of community.



“Daisy Jones & The Six” producer Mandi Price, left, poses on the red carpet with executive producer Brad Mendelsohn and his wife Stefanie Schwartz, global head of platform partnerships for Jellysmack, at the 75th Primetime Emmy Awards at Peacock Theater on Jan. 15.



NEWS

# GET CONNECTED CONFERENCE

Three decades of diverse college readiness in Spokane

By April Eberhardt  
THE BLACK LENS

Jada Richardson, a 2021 graduate of Innovation High School, a charter school in Spokane, recalls the first time she attended a Get Connected Conference as a freshman. She had heard about it as a student member of Spokane Public School's Diversity Advisory Council. She immediately saw the value of connecting diverse students and diverse professionals, and took the information back to her high school and rallied to have her school attend.

"I am very blessed to have been around Black people who lead," Richardson said. "Being able to watch the impact these adults have on other people other kids who looked like me, that was super cool."

The mission of Get Connected continues nearly three decades later. Bernice Buchanan, a 44-year veteran of Spokane Public Schools is one of several community members who developed the Get Connected Conference in the late 1990s. She and others saw a gap that needed to be filled for students of color to see professionals and community members from diverse backgrounds in Spokane. As a native of Mississippi that arrived in Spokane in 1975, Buchanan saw an opportunity to foster inclusivity and stimulate positive identity development in students and create a better sense of belonging. Buchanan says that the aim was to "build capacity in our children and our families to show that they could go far in education."

The first Get Connected was held at Spokane Falls Community College. Buchanan asserts that when students see themselves reflected in different capacities, their entire demeanor changes. Limited exposure in



Bernice Buchanan

the Pacific Northwest can create a sense of cultural isolation for some, she explains. Many students have not been out of their immediate surroundings, so, "we needed to bring the world to them."

As a first generation Spokaneite, Richardson recalls never having a Black teacher in her K-12 education. She shares that she learned her potential through family and community connections, and credits them for helping to shape her awareness about the world.

"When you look at me," Richardson emphasized, "just know that Black women did it. I have always seen Black women in professions killing the game."

Get Connected is a protected space, says Richardson. Having spent time at an HBCU, when she sees local students celebrating Black culture in ways that parallel what she also witnessed in the South, it affirmed the universality of Blackness. She describes it as liberating.

"No matter where we are in the world," Richardson said, "it takes Black to identify Black, and watching it all operating in one space is like watching a piece of the Black collective. There is power in culture. At the end of the day, we're all just



IF YOU GO

**Get Connected**

**WHAT:** A one-day college and career conference designed for students from diverse backgrounds in grades 9-12

**WHEN:** 8 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Thursday, March 14

**WHERE:** Gonzaga University

looking for a place to belong."

Reflecting on what it is like growing up in predominantly white spaces, Richardson said that representation is so important because it serves as a reminder of potential.

"Recognizing that not everyone is exposed to that, it is important to see people in those spaces you want to occupy, because sometimes you need to see someone like you to give you permission to step into those doors, to walk into those spaces," Richardson said. "Representation gives boldness and bravery to students to say, yeah, I am going to do that too. We're going to go our whole lives being Black in America ... and sometimes being the only one in the room."

Imposter syndrome is a common reality faced by many who have not had the privilege of seeing themselves in abundance, in every facet of society and do not feel they belong. This occurs when there are too few Black educators as well, as Richardson points out "there is a heavy weight on being everything to every student of color,



No matter where we are in the world, it takes Black to identify Black, and watching it all operating in one space is like watching a piece of the Black collective.

There is power in culture. At the end of the day, we're all just looking for a place to belong."



Jada Richardson

2021 Innovation High School grad, past Get Connected Conference attendee

due to scarcity." The pressure on these few educators to fill this need while also learning how to navigate professional spaces oneself can be daunting.

The best part about Get Connected is seeing, in one place, the abundance of Black and Brown professionals who can advise the younger generation on their way up, according to Richardson. Buchanan emphasized that is just as important to sustain the capacity of Get Connected today, as it was to build the capacity over the last 30 years.

And then there is the cherished talent show portion of Get Connected.

"Giving students the freedom to perform during the talent show, getting to see them vibe, is just joyful," Richardson said.

"There is nothing like seeing Black kids just joyful ... there are so many things impacting our kids. Giving them just one day to be kids, is important, I am a huge believer in not 'adultifying' Black kids."

Richardson is now a Student Support Specialist for Spokane Public Schools and on the planning committee for Get Connected.

"Supporting Get Connected and programs like it is one way that we can crush the scarcity mindset," Richardson said.

Richardson said having local leaders and professionals pour into current students, with the perspective of having grown up here, is also valuable.

This year's Get Connected Conference is happening on March 14 at Gonzaga University.



# KING CARL CAMPAIGN

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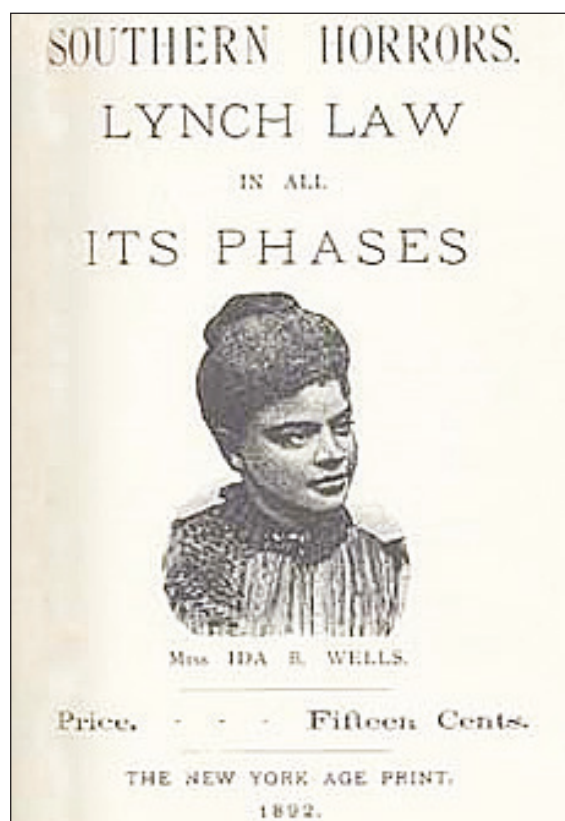


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FROM THE FRONT PAGE

# LOCAL NEWS ANCHORS CHANNING CURTIS & SYDNEY CHARLES SHARE WHY THEY CHOSE JOURNALISM AND SPOKANE



On Oct. 26, 1892, Ida B. Wells began to publish her research on lynching in a pamphlet titled *Southern Horrors: Lynch Law in All Its Phases*.

## WELLS

Continued from 1

to protest lynchings and the mutilation of falsely accused Black people, primarily Black men. These same lynchings that White families would gather in the town square to watch in the name of entertainment.

Born enslaved in Mississippi in 1862, Wells saw early examples of grassroots activism through her father who was involved in the Freedman's Aid Society. He started Shaw University which was later renamed Rust College, one of several early historically Black colleges and universities formed in the late 1800s. While attending Rust College in 1882, Wells realized the power of her voice through print media when she wrote passionate anti-lynching editorials and exposed other aspects of discrimination, becoming the co-owner and editor of the Memphis Free Speech and Headlight newspaper.

In 1892, after losing three friends to a white mob in a triple lynching, Wells traversed southern states to investigate serial incidents of lynching. The result of this investigation was the publication "Southern Horrors. Lynch Law In All Its Phases." Wells permanently moved to the North for her own safety after her press was set afire and she was run out of Tennessee. Controversy did not deter her; she continued

to fight for justice.

In 1894, she helped establish the British Anti-Lynching Society, crossing the globe to galvanize others in the fight. In 1895, Wells published another work detailing chronic lynchings for her Northern audience titled "The Red Record." There was no room for denial in Wells' America, and she made sure that the North was fully aware of the atrocities happening in the South. In 1896, Wells co-founded the National Association for Colored Women. In 1898, she challenged President William McKinley to make reforms to end lynching.

Wells challenged racialized fear and hate and understood the power of grassroots activism. She waited for no one's approval, sometimes even at the chagrin of her contemporaries. Uncompromising when it came to advocating for Black people, Wells said the hard things. She did not acquiesce to respectability politics. She was an aberration to the expectation of the docile subordinate. Her words brought discomfort, by emphasizing and exposing the true culprit of the crimes that caused discomfort. With resounding confidence, she defied White supremacy and spoke openly against the hypocrisy of mob justice and the literal hunting of Black people. Ida B. Wells exemplifies what Black women can do with their talent and passion for their people.

## Channing Curtis

I am a morning News Anchor with KREM 2 News. I think most people are shocked to learn that I never intended to be a news anchor, or to work in news at all. I was working as a sports reporter and play-by-play analyst for women's basketball while working on my master's at Boston University when a professor of mine asked me to anchor our presidential election night coverage. It was 2016 and I had no interest in news, but I did like politics, so I agreed to do it. I spent the election night and subsequent days covering Trump's win and the protests that followed and I've worked in news ever since. I've always been passionate about storytelling, and I love being able to give people the opportunity to share their experiences. I think we're at a time in history where everything is so divisive that sometimes we forget that we all have a lot of similarities, in spite of our differences. And that's the goal of every story I tell, to remind us all that at the



SCOTT LUCE PHOTOGRAPHY

end of the day, no matter our color, gender identity, or background, we're all just people.

I'm a newcomer to Spokane, to Washington and to the entire Northwest, but my goals have always been the same, no matter where I live or the station I work for. If I were to have a motto in life it would be that every-

one has a story worth telling. I've always been a voracious reader and I love the feeling that you get when you're truly immersed in a story. That's why I became a journalist, to share people's stories, to give a voice to those who are too often silenced and through my storytelling, spark thoughtful conversations with people

of differing opinions. Being here in Spokane, where our Black community isn't always reflected within the major media outlets, it is also important to me to not just tell our stories, but to be another positive figure within our community. Every single day I do my best to show up, represent and be a resource for my people.



KXLY-TV

## Sydney Charles

I am a Breaking News Anchor and Producer at KXLY 4 News Now. I've been living in Spokane for nearly two years. My passion for journalism begins with my mom. A fiery, outspoken, extremely intelligent Black woman, she always had a passion for the arts and writing. When she was very young, she fell in love with my father, and her dream of becoming a broadcast journalist was cut short when she became pregnant with me. However, that didn't stop her from passing her own love of literature and journalism on to me. From a young age, I remember my mom and I would discover hidden worlds, combing through book after book together. We would read short stories, poems and everything in between. Eventually, she helped me bring my own stories to life. I credit her with my love of learning, my appreciation for the written word, and the reason why I've chosen a career as a news anchor. When I get ready in the morning, I think of her and the lessons she's taught me, along with the strength she's instilled within me.

I decided to move here because it's not too far from my family in California and I wanted to learn more about producing for a news station. One of my goals is to get connected with local organizations, and attend more events where I can meet with community leaders. I love telling stories and the more connected I get with the community in Spokane, the more I am able to get a pulse on the topics and issues people care about.

## PALESTINE

Continued from 1

another humanitarian pause similar to the four-day pause at the end of November 2023, despite international calls for a ceasefire. There have been at least 29,000 Palestinian and 1,139 Israeli lives taken, and 73,000 Palestinians and 8,000 Israelis injured since October 7th, according to a live tracker updated by Al Jazeera; and thousands remain missing.

Individualist culture has taught us to only fend for ourselves and has actively combated opportunities for transnational and transracial solidarity by pitting groups against one another. However, the shared experiences of displacement and violence show that the Palestinian community and the Black community are fighting similar forces of oppression. To understand on a deeper level, we must examine Palestinian history, Black history, and what this moment truly means for all of us.

Israel's war on Gaza may have caught international attention following the Oct. 7 Hamas attack, but there are decades of Israel's mistreatment of Palestinians leading up to what is happening now. The Nakba in 1948, known as a time of mass displacement and dispossession of land for those who lived in Palestine by



COURTESY OF SCOTT WARD

Protesters walk through downtown Spokane with signs calling for a ceasefire in Palestine.

the direction of The United Nations' Partition Plan to establish the state of Israel. This resulted in Palestinian land being cut in half, an Arab-Israeli War, and permanent displacement of Palestinians. The struggle for Palestinian liberation is interconnected with Black liberation in several ways, including their shared history of displacement.

Enslavement, gentrification and redlining are

all examples of the displacement Black people have faced, causing the division of communities and lost opportunities to compete economically. Even this city is guilty; in Spokane, racist covenants on properties barred anyone who was not White from owning or residing in the property unless they were a domestic servant. Though not actively enforced, many of these covenants remain on the

books.

Today's displacement comes in multiple forms: economic, physical, and cultural. This is applicable to many communities of color, but impacts Black people at higher rates. Displacement due to an inability to afford the rising cost of living, being evicted from an apartment, or seeing culturally significant businesses or people disappear are all ways that this

manifests.

Militarized violence has become a norm in conflicts abroad and at home. American policing has slowly inched towards military-like actions as they use more aggressive weapons and tactics better suited for a battlefield rather than a neighborhood. The history of policing and Black communities is no secret – an alarmingly disproportionate amount of

deaths, arrests, and stops, and rarely justice for the communities who suffer.

The United States is heavily involved through financial and military support to Israel; billions of U.S. taxpayer dollars have been sent overseas and used to kill thousands of civilians. A similar approach has been taken to the funding of police departments nationwide, with millions of dollars allocated for "cop cities" and no real commitment to changing the culture of policing to actually keep our communities safe. Though not entirely the same, the undertones of what Black communities and Palestinian communities face are similar, and fighting against both is necessary for collective liberation.

Emphasizing the importance of creating transracial and transnational solidarity, it is crucial to understand that advocating for the liberation of another group does not diminish the significance of our struggles. By standing in unity against moral wrongdoings such as ceaseless bombings and unwarranted financial support, we build a narrative that condemns such actions universally. Recognizing the intersections of these common struggles fosters a broader understanding of the fight against all oppression and creates a more inclusive and powerful collective movement.



FOCUS

# BLACK WOMEN PIONEERS SET THEIR OWN BEAUTY STANDARDS

BY RENIKA WILLIAMS

In today's American beauty landscape, the definition of beauty is more expansive and fluid than ever before, yet there, at its core, remains a narrative that has long been dictated by a monolithic standard, where the parameters of attractiveness were narrowly defined and rigidly enforced. The beauty industry was never meant for everyone, and it continues to grapple with its contradictions, often celebrating diversity in one breath while upholding conventional beauty ideals in another.

Historically marginalized, Black culture has long been a wellspring of innovation and creativity, influencing global trends across the arts, music, and fashion.

Hairstyles like cornrows, afros, and dreadlocks, once subjected to stigma and discrimination, have found their way into the "mainstream," donning new names like "boxer braids" and "twisted mini-buns."

Frequently showcased on runways and magazine covers, these traditionally Black styles are popularized on mainly non-Black models. This type of co-opting has also sparked debates about cultural respect, representation, and the fine line between appreciation and appropriation.

Despite these challenges, there has been a growing movement within the entertainment and beauty industries to address these issues, with calls for more inclusive representation, equitable opportunities, and the celebration of Black culture in its own right. This long overdue and long-earned progress was driven in part by the tireless efforts of pioneering Black women who have challenged and redefined the norms of the beauty industry.

Among the numerous trailblazers, 10 women stand out for their monumental contributions to redefining and uplifting

Black beauty standards. From Madame CJ Walker's groundbreaking entrepreneurship in the early 20th century to Rihanna's revolutionary Fenty Beauty line, these visionaries have not only broken barriers but laid the foundation for a beauty industry that will one day celebrate us all.

01



**Ophelia DeVore-Mitchell**

A pioneering model and businesswoman who, in 1946, co-founded the Grace Del Marco Agency, one of the first modeling agencies and charm schools to represent Black models and talent, challenging the industry's racial prejudices and paving the way for Black beauty representation.

02

**Eunice W. Johnson**

The visionary behind the Ebony Fashion Fair, which started in 1958. As the director and producer, she revolutionized the fashion industry by showcasing Black models and designers, making high fashion accessible to the African-American community, and inspiring Black women to embrace their beauty.

03



**Madam C.J. Walker**

Born Sarah Breedlove, Walker was a trailblazer in the early 20th century, becoming the first female self-made millionaire in America through her line of hair care products for Black women. Her success laid the groundwork for Black entrepreneurship.

04



**Mikki Taylor**

An influential figure at Essence Magazine, has significantly shaped the portrayal and celebration of Black women's beauty, advocating for inclusivity and diverse beauty standards. Her work extends beyond editing to authorship and public speaking, where she empowers Black women to embrace their unique beauty and confidence.

Through her contributions, Taylor has played a crucial role in transforming beauty norms to reflect and honor the rich diversity of Black womanhood.



05



**Grace Jones**

A model, singer, and actress from the 1970's and 80's, she redefined beauty standards with her androgynous look and darker skin tone, challenging the industry's traditional perceptions of femininity and beauty. Her boldness and unique style made her a symbol of empowerment for Black women worldwide.

06



**Queen Latifah**

Queen Latifah significantly contributed to Black beauty standards through her diverse career. She became a CoverGirl spokesperson, advocating for diversity and inclusion in beauty. She launched her makeup line for women of color, Queen Collection, emphasizing the importance of representation in the beauty industry.

07



**Iman**

A Somali-American supermodel who began her career in the 1970s, she broke barriers in the fashion industry, leading to greater representation of Black models. She later founded IMAN Cosmetics in 1994, one of the first cosmetics lines designed for skin of color, addressing the lack of diversity in beauty products.

08



**Rihanna**

Rihanna launched Fenty Beauty in 2017, revolutionizing the beauty industry by offering an unprecedented range of foundation shades suitable for all skin tones. Her brand's focus on inclusivity has set a new standard in beauty, emphasizing the importance of catering to underserved demographics.

09



**Pat McGrath**

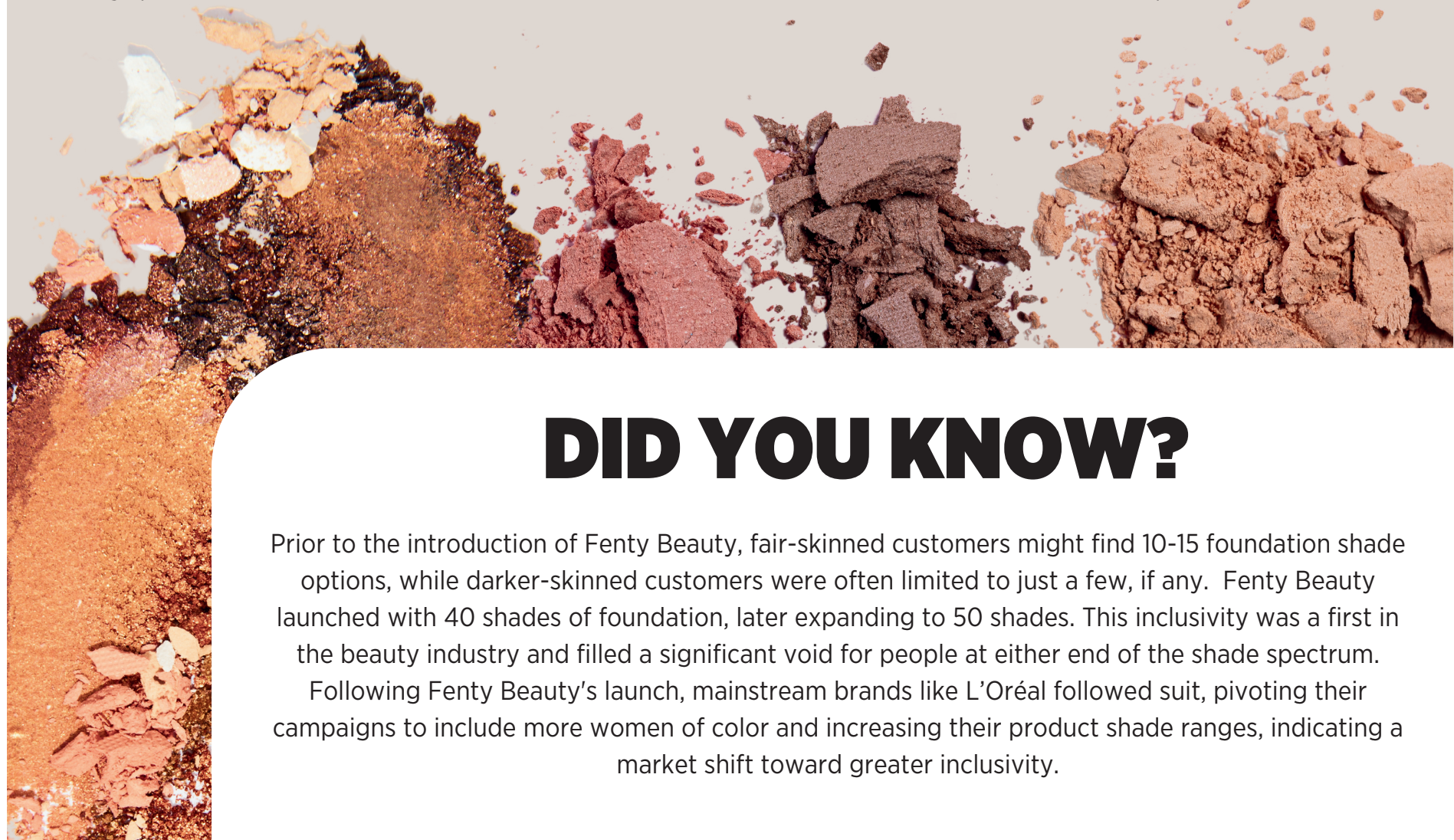
Pat McGrath, dubbed the "most influential makeup artist in the world," has significantly impacted the fashion and beauty industries since the 1990s. Her work has pushed the boundaries of beauty, incorporating bold colors and innovative techniques. In 2015, she launched Pat McGrath Labs, further solidifying her influence on beauty standards and championing diversity.

10



**Jackie Aina**

Jackie Aina, a Nigerian-American beauty YouTuber, has used her platform to advocate for visibility for people of color in the cosmetics industry. She has held beauty brands accountable for diversity and inclusivity, particularly in shade ranges and representation.



## DID YOU KNOW?

Prior to the introduction of Fenty Beauty, fair-skinned customers might find 10-15 foundation shade options, while darker-skinned customers were often limited to just a few, if any. Fenty Beauty launched with 40 shades of foundation, later expanding to 50 shades. This inclusivity was a first in the beauty industry and filled a significant void for people at either end of the shade spectrum. Following Fenty Beauty's launch, mainstream brands like L'Oréal followed suit, pivoting their campaigns to include more women of color and increasing their product shade ranges, indicating a market shift toward greater inclusivity.



FOCUS

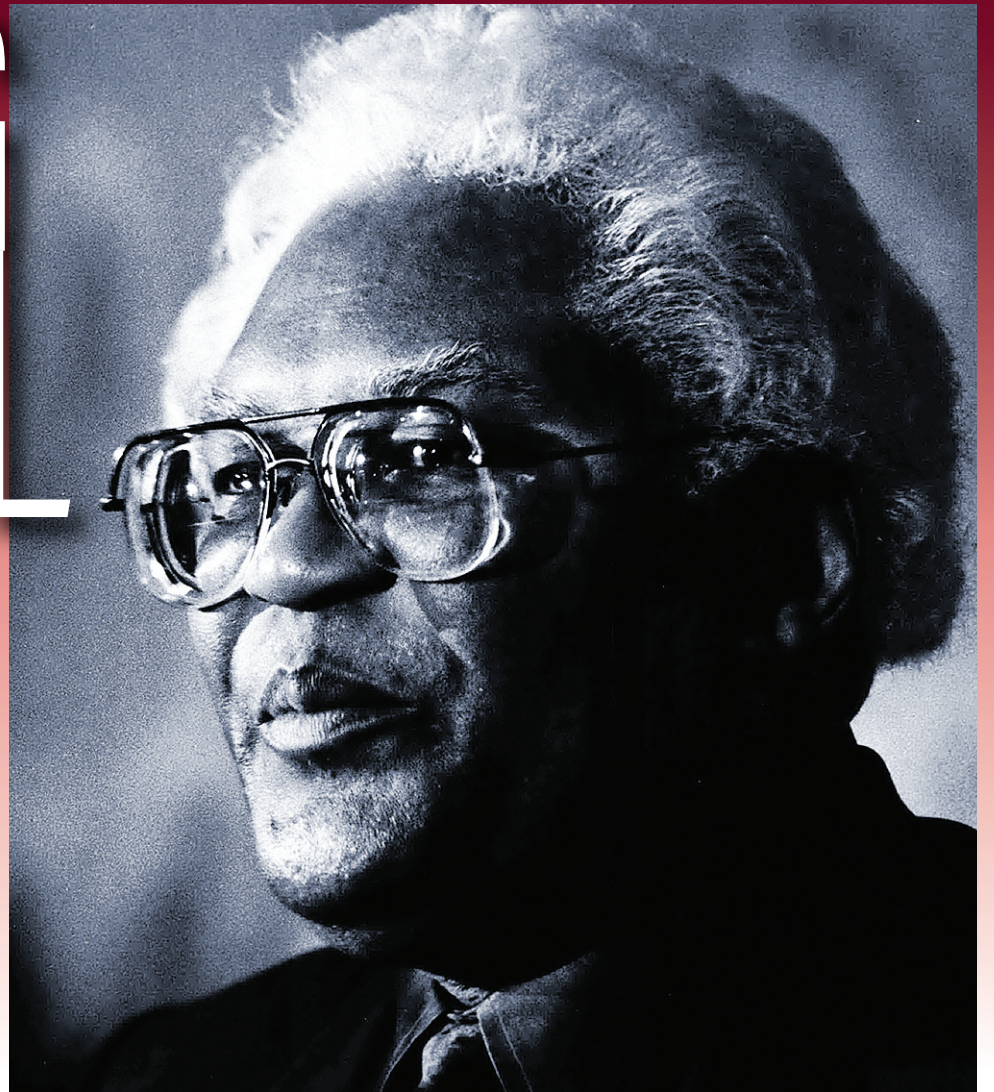
# HONORING KING CARL

THE BLACK LENS

For the 2024 season, the Spokane Indians baseball team will honor Spokane legend Carl Maxey with special uniforms that pay tribute to his life's work.

The team will wear the uniforms during two themed games that pay homage to Maxey and Spokane's Black community. The first will be for the team's Jackie Robinson celebration on April 19 and the second will be for the Juneteenth celebration game on June 19.

The Black Lens is partnering with the Indians for both games, and throughout the season, to help celebrate Spokane's Black community.



## THE INDIANS' KING CARL CAMPAIGN

Spokane Indians baseball players will wear red, black and gold King Carl jerseys at certain points throughout the season, and fans will be able to purchase the special King Carl merchandise. A portion of King Carl merchandise sales will go to the Sandy Williams Fund for the Carl Maxey Center.

The logo of the King Carl Campaign, a red boxing glove raised in a clenched fist and topped with a crown, is the result of months of collaboration between the Maxey Family, the Carl Maxey Center and the baseball team and features several nods to the life and legacy of Carl Maxey.



**BOXING GLOVE**  
Maxey was a boxer.

**CROWN**  
Maxey's nickname was "King Carl."

**GLOVE IN A CLINCHED FIST**  
A reference to the symbol of revolutionary spirit and civil rights activism.

**FEATHER AND BASEBALL STITCHING ON THE GLOVE**  
A reference to the Spokane Indians baseball team and to Maxey's younger years on a reservation.

**COLORS ON THE POINTS OF THE CROWN**  
Represent the Carl Maxey Center. In addition, these are the colors of Black History Month.

**TASSEL**  
Maxey excelled in academics and graduated from Gonzaga University Law School.

**"CM" IN THE LACES**  
Carl Maxey's initials

TM

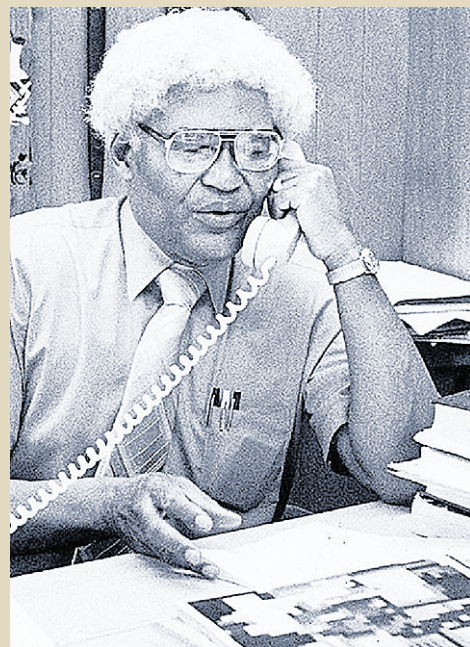
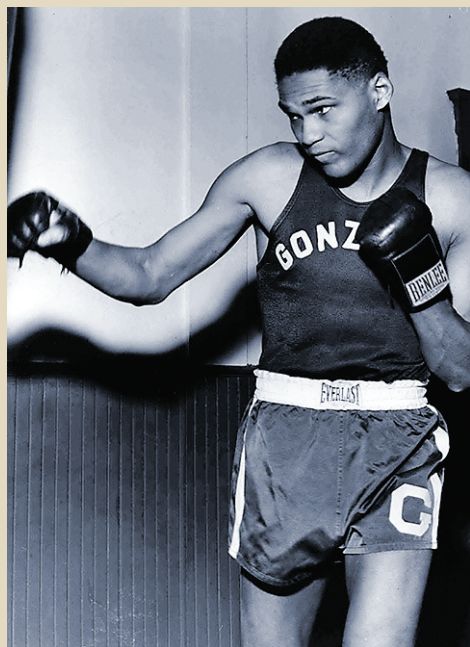
## WHO WAS CARL MAXEY?

Spokane's Carl Maxey was a championship boxer, a lawyer, a fighter for the underdog and a civil rights activist. But before Maxey became a well-known Spokane name, he was an orphan.

Maxey was born in 1924 in Tacoma and was adopted by a Spokane couple, Carl and Carolyn Maxey. Maxey's biological mother was 13 years old. At age 4, Maxey's father left the family and Maxey ended up at Spokane Children's Home, which voted in 1936 to kick out Maxey and the only other Black child at the orphanage.

From there, having committed no crimes but with nowhere else to go, Maxey spent time at the Spokane Juvenile Home before he was placed at a Jesuit-run Native American missionary boarding school in DeSmet, Idaho, where he found a mentor in the Rev. Cornelius Byrne.

Maxey graduated from Gonzaga Prep in 1942 and went on to serve as a



Maxey was undefeated as a Boxer for Gonzaga University. He became the first African-American man to graduate from the Gonzaga School of Law in 1951. At right, he's seen working in his office in 1981.

medic in World War II. He attended Gonzaga University and the University of Oregon, before and after the war respectively, and then Gonzaga Law School. Maxey had an undefeated, 32-0, collegiate boxing career and was on Gonzaga's first sports team to ever win a national championship.

As the first Black lawyer in Spokane, Maxey earned a reputation for challenging racial inequalities. He sued a Spokane barber shop that wouldn't cut a Black man's hair and won. He sued Spokane Public Schools when the district refused to hire a Black teacher.

Maxey was the president of the local NAACP chapter at 27. During the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s, Maxey and a friend traveled to Mississippi to do their part.

Maxey ended his life in 1997 at age 73. An article published after his death said the community was stunned at his loss.



## CULTURE

COMMENTARY

## THE LEGACY OF BLACK FEMINISM



By Nikita Habimana

THE BLACK LENS  
CONTRIBUTOR &  
SHADLE PARK HIGH  
SCHOOL STUDENT

Throughout history, Black people and people of color have been oppressed in numerous ways, socially, physically, emotionally and mentally. Black women have been pillars of strength and symbols of resilience in Black communities across the globe, showcasing the strength, the essence, and what it means to be Black.

The essence of Black feminism is the lessons and legacies our African ancestors and foremothers taught their children that were eventually passed down from generation to generation, preserving Black culture. Culture that emphasizes solidarity, communalism, and traditions, still showcased in Black communities across the globe to this day, from Nairobi, Kenya to New Orleans, Louisiana.

Black feminism is in the way that we walk, the way that we talk, and the way that we greet our neighbors. It's in the way we style and braid our hair. Black



PIXABAY

feminism is in the magic that turns simple ingredients into treasured meals we share and pass down. Black feminism is in the hymns we sing on a Sunday morning backed by the gospel choir.

Black feminism is the powerful force that makes black women who they are. It's the strength that powers black women to push forward despite the many adversaries we face constantly.

The essence of Black feminism was the driving force for the lack of Black women across the globe fighting against slavery and segregation. Maya Angelou, arguably one of the best black memoirists and poet once said, "There is a kind of strength that is almost frightening in black women. It's as if a steel rod runs right through the head down to the feet." This is the concept of Black power.

It was the bravery that enabled Harriet Tubman to free herself and emancipate over 300 slaves. It was the driving force that motivated Winnie-Madikizela Mandela to fight to end apartheid in South Africa. Black feminism was the power that gave Rosa Parks the bravery to stand up for herself by sitting down and inspiring the people around her to organize the Montgomery Bus Boycott, led by Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Black feminism was what gave Catherine Flon the vision to sew the first flag and symbol of an independent and free Haiti. Black feminism was the strength granted to Nanny of the Maroons, to train former enslaved Africans in Jamaica, on guerilla warfare and to successfully defeat the British, resulting in a treaty being signed on April 20, 1740 and 500 acres of land as well as the freedom of all her followers, the Windward Maroons.

Black feminism is what inspired Mary Prince to be the first Black woman to write an autobiography on her life as a

slave, as well as the first woman to petition the British Parliament to end slavery in the Caribbean, inspiring more people in Europe to campaign against slavery.

Black feminism was in the creativity of Josephine Baker, a famous singer, actress and dancer who lived in France and fought for racial equality, demanding a nondiscrimination clause in her contract as well as an integrated audience, and marched alongside the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in the March on Washington.

Black feminism was the intelligence bestowed upon Mary W. Jackson, the mathematician and aerospace engineer, who became the first African American female engineer to work for NASA in 1958, despite living in a segregated America. It is in the words of Maya Angelou, and the voice of Ella Fitzgerald. It's in the walk of Naomi Campbell and the arms of Serena Williams. It's in the legs of Simone Biles and the inspirational nature of Michelle Obama.

Black feminism inspires, protects, guides, comforts, loves, mourns and is free yet enslaved. The essence of Black feminism is something that cannot be fully described in words, only felt. It cannot be contained nor extinguished, and despite constant efforts to suppress it, it refuses to be tapered down. The powerful force of Black feminism is Black culture.

## ARE ANCIENT BLACK GODDESSES THE KEY TO BLACK EMPOWERMENT?

By Lea Molina  
THE BLACK LENS  
CONTRIBUTOR

Feminine deities and goddesses have long been central to the spiritual tapestry of the African Diaspora. Deities and goddesses offer pathways to love, wealth, health, and cultural exchange. Beyond their associations with love and prosperity, these entities represent the spiritual essence of Black ancestry. Many African societies recognize spiritual possession, wherein divine presences influence worshippers' consciousness and behavior, reflecting a profound connection to the divine.

Raising awareness of these goddesses can foster a reconnection with Black heritage and spiritual identity. Entities like Oshun, Yemaya and Mami Wata hold profound significance across diverse cultures and regions, symbolizing aspects of fertility, motherhood and the power of water.

**OSHUN** revered as the river Orisha, originates from the Yoruba tradition of Southwestern Nigeria. Associated with purity, sensuality, and fertility, she is sought after by women desiring to conceive.

**YEMAYA**, known as the goddess of the Sea, embodies motherhood, fertility, and female empowerment. Revered across various cultures, she serves as a protector of children and a symbol of feminine strength.

**MAMI WATA**, often depicted as a mermaid or snake charmer, is believed to influence sailors' journeys, ensuring safe passage through troubled waters. Her reverence extends across maritime communities, where offerings are made to seek her favor and protection.

Despite their historical cultural significance, the recognition and worship



African sailors recognized the iconography of the water deity Mami Wata in this 1880s chromolithograph poster of the performer Maladamatjautte by the Adolph Friedlander Company in Hamburg and carried it worldwide, giving rise to the common image of the deity in Africa and in the African diaspora.

of black feminine goddesses faces challenges in modern society. Patriarchal norms and capitalist influences often distort their significance, reducing them to objects of exploitation or commercialization. For instance, Mami Wata's historical association with prosperity led to her portrayal as

a "capitalistic" deity, as highlighted by the Smithsonian National Museum of African Art.

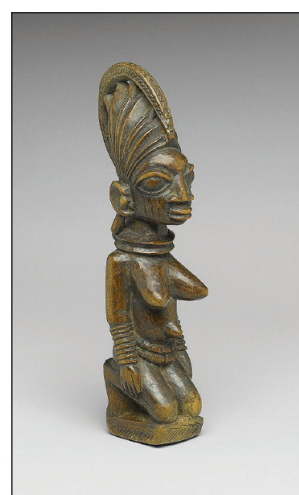
Reverence for feminine deities can offer not only a glimpse into our historical heritage but also a pathway to cultural enrichment and self-discovery today and forever. By acknowledg-

ing and celebrating black feminine entities, we honor our ancestral roots and affirm our spiritual connection to our higher selves. Increased public interest in modern society can stimulate further research and education, facilitating a deeper cultural exchange within the black commu-

nity and beyond. As we as individuals continue to explore and embrace these spiritual traditions across the African diaspora, we forge stronger bonds with our past and pave the way for a more enlightened future and deeper connections with our black communities across the world.

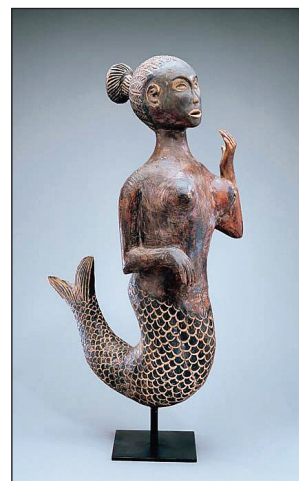
COURTESY OF WIKIPEDIA  
LOVES ART PROJECT

A kneeling female figure devotee of Oshun by Africa, Yoruba, people in the early 20th century is on display at the Honolulu Academy of Arts, shown here in 2009.



BROOKLYN MUSEUM

This sculpture of Yemaya has been attributed to Areogun of Osi, one of the most prominent Yoruba artists of the 20th century. Kneeling female figures, often nude, are common in Yoruba religious art. In this pose, the figure represents a supplicant before the orisha, or deity, on whose altar it is placed.



COURTESY OF DON COLE

A sculpture of Mami Wata by the Ovimbundu peoples of Angola is made of wood, pigment, metal and mixed media.



# BLACK BUSINESS DIRECTORY

**4AM Vintage** – Vintage clothing store owned by Christian Jones. Contact (832) 652-4580 or coojones4am@gmail.com. 1009 N. Washington St., Suite A, Spokane, 99201. Instagram: 4am.spokane.

**A Do Good Cleaning Service LLC** – Janitorial service by Daryl Givens Jr. Contact (509) 714-8113 or dgizzle21@gmail.com.

**A Man & A Truck** – Junk removal by Demetrius Bell. Contact (509) 319-8860, (509) 319-7126 or amanandruckspokane@gmail.com.

**A Truly Reliable Cleaning Services LLC** – Janitorial service by Tatiana Ross. Contact (678) 974-6907 or trulyreliablecleaning@gmail.com.

**A Woman's Worth** – Woman Empowerment Group by Gaye Hallman. Contact (509) 290-7687, (509) 385-7074 or ghallman@aww.community. 59 E. Queen Ave., Suite 210, Spokane, 99206.

**Allie & Austin Accounting Services** – Bookkeeping by Dorothy Hood. Contact (509) 242-3324 or dhood@allieaustin.com. P.O. Box 142207 Spokane Valley, 99214.

**Allowing Change, LLC.** – Pre- Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, Certified Life & Relationship Coach Britney Richards (she/her). Contact (509) 795-0376 or allowingchangelc@gmail.com. 9 S. Washington St., Suite 420, Spokane, 99201.

**Andrews Care** – Assisted Living Facility for Adults with Disabilities owned by Ashley Andrews. Contact (509) 939-7218 or ashandrews@comcast.net. P.O. Box 1629, Veradale, Wash., 99037.

**Spokane Beard Papa's** – Cream puff bakery owned by Marc Bryant. Contact (509) 290-5128 or spokanebeardpapas@gmail.com. 4808 E. Sprague Ave., Suite 204. Spokane Valley, 99212.

**Beauchamp and Chase** – Luxury Soaps and Comfort Wear by Genesis Veronon. Contact (509) 608-1511 or beauchampandchase@gmail.com.

**Bethely Entertainment Group** – Owned by Michael Bethely. Contact (509) 710-1338 or mbethely@be2become.com. P.O. Box 28931, Spokane, 99228.

**Betty Jean's BBQ** – Restaurant owned by Omar Jones. Contact (509) 828-5931 or bettyjeansbbq@yahoo.com. 2926 E. 29th Ave., Spokane, 99223. Online at www.bettyjeansbbq.com, Instagram: Betty\_jeans\_bbq and Facebook: Bettyjeansbbq.

**Brendan Blocker Realty Services** – Real Estate Agent Brendan Blocker. Contact (509) 290-9645 or brendan.blocker@gmail.com. 4407 N. Division St., Suite 200, Spokane, 99207. Online at brendan.spokanearealestate.com or Facebook: Blocker Real Estate.

**Brittany Trambitas Hair Design** – Natural hair stylist Brittany Trambitas. Contact (509) 768-3925 or btrambitas1228@gmail.com. 802 E. 29th Ave., Suite 14, Spokane, 99203.

**B & B Pro Video** – Video Production by DeShawn Bedford and Michael Bethely. Contact (509) 818-0864 or admin@bbpvideo.com. 1011 W. Railroad Alley, Suite 100, Spokane, 99201. Online at bbpvideo.com.

**Cascadia Public House** – Restaurant owned by Jordan Smith. Contact (509) 321-7051 or info@cascadiapublichouse.com. 6314 N. Ash St., Spokane, 99208.

**Chicken-N-More** – Restaurant owned by Bob and Teresa Hemphill. Contact (509) 838-5071 or manysmiles@comcast.net. 414½ W. Sprague Ave., Spokane, 99201.

**Clear View** – Window cleaning by Limmie Smith. Contact (509) 319-7526 or fresh00274@icloud.com. 3011 E. Columbia Ave., Apt 3, Spokane, 99208.

**Dennis Mitchell Empowerment Seminars** – Education services by Dennis Mitchell. Contact (509) 981-0646 or dennispeaks@gmail.com. 9116 E. Sprague Ave., Suite 66, Spokane Valley, 99206.

**DM & Owl** – Vending service by Deandre Meighan. Contact (702) 954-2562 or dm.owl247@gmail.com.

**Discovery Counseling**

**Group LLC** – Mental/ Behavioral Health Counseling by Melissa Mace. Contact (509) 413-1193 or info@discovery-counseling.org. 1008 N. Washington St., Spokane, 99201.

**Ebony Hair Salon** – Salon owned by Pam Thornton. Contact (509) 325-4089 or ebhair3@yahoo.com. 3125 N. Division St., Spokane, 99207.

**Ethan Mendoza-Pena Insurance Agency, LLC** – Insurance Agency owned by Ethan Mendoza-Pena, M.A. Contact (509) 590-4726 or emendoza@farmersagent.com. 2010 N. Ruby St., Spokane, 99207.

**Exclusive Barber Shop** – Barber shop owned by Keno Branch. Contact (509) 862-4723 or branchingoutbiz@gmail.com. 1423 N. Argonne Road, Spokane Valley, 99212.

**Fantasy Kleaning LLC** – Commercial Janitorial Service by Nathaniel Harris. Contact (509) 890-0819 or fantasy.kleaning@gmail.com.

**Fresh Soul** – Restaurant owned by Michael Brown. Contact (509) 242-3377 or spokanereunion@gmail.com. 3029 E. Fifth Ave., Spokane, 99202. Online at freshsoulrestaurant.com.

**Gorilla Park Music** – Music production by Brandon Batts. Contact (256) 642-6463 or gorillapark2@gmail.com.

**I Hear You Sis LLC** – Nutrition/health coaching by Prosparetti Coleman. Contact (509) 995-7044 or ihearyousis1@gmail.com. Online at www.ihearyousis.com, TikTok: tiktok.com/@i.hear.you.sis.

**Inter-Tribal Beauty** – Master esthetician, Reiki practitioner and TV/film makeup artist Octavia Lewis. Contact (509) 201-8664 or octavia@intertribalbeauty.co. 59 E. Queen Ave., Spokane, 99207. Online at www.intertribalbeauty.com, Instagram: instagram.com/inter\_tribal\_beauty/.

**JSandoval Real Estate** – Real Estate Broker Jacquelynne Sandoval. Contact (509) 460-8197 or JSandoval@windermere.com. 1620 E. Indiana Ave., Suite 1250, Spokane Valley, 99216. Instagram: instagram.com/therealestateuntie/.

**Koala Koi Massage** – Massage therapy by Joy Robinson. Contact (509) 900-8968 or koalakoimassage@gmail.com. 1008 N. Washington St., Spokane, 99201.

**Lacquered and Luxe** – Nail salon owned by Lisa-Mae Brown. Contact (509) 993-7938 or brownlisamae@yahoo.com. 33 E. Lincoln Road, Suite 205, Spokane, 99201.

**League of Women for Community Action, Nonprofit, dba Southeast Day Care Center** – Nonprofit Child Care Center owned by Day Care Director Sug Villella and the League of Women for Community Action. Contact (509) 535-4794 or lwca@gmail.com. 2227 E. Hartson Ave., Spokane, 99202. Online at www.southeastdaycare.org.

**Legacy Barbershop** – Barbershop owned by Dougie Fades. Contact (509) 315-8312. 28 E. Sharp Ave., Spokane, 99202.

**Lilac City Legends Inc.** – Professional sports team owned by Michael Bethely. Contact (509) 774-4704, info@lilaccitylegends.com or michael@lilaccitylegends.com. 631 S. Richard Allen Court, Suite 205, Spokane, 99202. Also at P.O. Box 28931, Spokane, 99228.

**Maranatha Evangelical Church** – Church owned by Luc Fils Jasmin. Contact (509) 389-4539 or eem.maranatha@gmail.com. 631 S. Richard Allen Court, Suite 211, Spokane, 99202.

**Mary Kay** – Beauty Consultant Nicole Mills. Contact (509) 666-4929, (252) 365-4971 or MKwithNicole@gmail.com. Online at mkwithnicole.wordpress.com, Facebook: facebook.com/MKwithNicoleM.

**Maxey Law Office** – Lawyer Bevan Maxey. Contact (509) 326-0338 or info@maxeylaw.com. 1835 W. Broadway Ave., Spokane, 99201.

**Mo-Nu Hair City** – Wig retailer Jackie Douglas. Contact (509) 443-3193 or jazzyjackie9@yahoo.com. 4750 N. Division St., Spokane, 99207.

**Moore's Boarding Home** – Residential care by Betsy Wilkerson. Contact

(509) 747-1745 or betsy@mooreassistedliving.com. 1803 W. Pacific Ave., Spokane, 99201.

**MoVin Properties** – Property management by Latrice Williams. Contact (509) 565-0325 or movinproperties@gmail.com. 5723 N. Division St., Spokane, 99201.

**Natasha L. Hill, P.S.** – Lawyer Natasha Hill. Contact (509) 350-2817, (509) 357-1757 or natasha@nlhlawoffices.com. Patsy Clark Mansion, 2208 W. Second Ave., Spokane 99201.

**New Developed Nations** – Level 1 & 2 Substance Use and Mental Health Outpatient Facility owned by Rickey "Deekon" Jones. Contact (509) 964-1747 or info@newdevelopednations.com. 3026 E. Fifth Ave. Spokane, 99202.

**Nina Cherie Couture** – Bridal boutique owned by Nina Nichols. Contact (509) 240-1782 or info@ninacherie.com. 827 W. First Ave., Suite 109, Spokane, 99201.

**Operation Healthy Family** – Dental and youth programs by Tommy Williams. Contact (509) 720-4645 or tommy@ohfspokane.org. Good News Dental is located at 3009 S. Mount Vernon St. at (509) 443-4409. Emmanuel Fitness is located at 631 S. Richard Allen Court at (509) 822-7058.

**Parkview Early Learning Center** – Early Learning Center owned by Luc Jasmin. Contact (509) 326-5610 or parkviewelc@gmail.com. 5122 N. Division St. Spokane, 99207.

**Pro Mobile Auto Detail LLC** – Auto detailer Antonio Holder. Contact (509) 995-9950 or antonio@spokanepromobile.com.

**Providential Solutions** – Counseling and coaching by Charina Carothers, LICSW. Contact (509) 795-0150 or info@psurnotalone.com. Richard Allen Court, Spokane, 99202.

**Quality Blacktop & Striping** – Residential and commercial blacktop by Barrington Young Jr. Contact (509) 251-6019 or young.barrington@gmail.com. 5759 E. Broadway Ave., Spokane, 99212.

**Queen of Sheba** – Restaurant owned by Almaz Ainuu. Contact (509) 328-3958 or info@queenofsheba.com. 2621 W. Mallon Ave., Suite 426, Spokane, 99201.

**Quick and Classy Auto Customs** – Mechanic Jamar Dickerson. Contact (509) 315-5090, (509) 795-6065 or 2gn2tythoon@gmail.com. 3627 E. Broadway Ave., Spokane, 99201.

**Share Farm Inc.** – Online farmers market and supply chain logistics company owned by Vincent Peak. Contact (509) 995-8451 or vince@share.farm.

**Smoov Cutz Barber Shop** – Barber shop owned by Jason "Smoov" Watson. Contact (509) 703-7949 or jsmoov923@gmail.com. Two locations at 13817 E. Sprague Ave., Spokane Valley, 99216, and 14700 E. Indiana Ave., Spokane Valley, 99216.

**Spacehub Production** – Photography Studio owned by event photographer Eugene Muzinga. Contact (509) 216-1072 or spacehub@gmail.com. 1023 W. Sixth Ave., Building 1, Spokane, 99204.

**Vision Properties** – Real estate firm owned by Latrice Williams. Contact (509) 431-0773 or transactions.thevision@gmail.com. 5723 N. Division St., Spokane, 99201.

**3 Performance Institute** – Sports performance and physical therapy by Louis Hurd III. Contact (509) 869-2344 or Louis@spokane3pi.com. 211 W. Second Ave., Spokane, WA 99205. Online at spokane3pi.com.

*Are you a Black business owner and you don't see your name or business in this directory? Contact info@blacklensnews.com with your name, business, contact information, address or website, if available. Put "Black Business Directory entry" in the subject line. This listing was made with the help of the Black Business and Professional Alliance and the Carl Maxey Center. If you are part of the Maxey online directory but not seen here, The Black Lens needs your updated contact information in order to publish.*



COURTESY

**New Hope Baptist Church, at 9021 E. Boone Ave. in Spokane Valley, has Sunday Morning Bible Class at 9:45 a.m., Sunday Mornings Worship at 11 a.m. and Wednesday Evenings Bible Study via Zoom at 7 p.m.**

## AREA BLACK CHURCHES AND MINISTRIES

**Holy Temple Church of God in Christ** – Auxiliary Bishop Ezra Kinlow. 806 W. Indiana Ave, Spokane, 99205. Sunday School is 9:45 a.m. Worship Service is 11 a.m.

**Bethel African Methodist Episcopal** – The Rev. Benjamin D. Watson, Sr. 645 S. Richard Allen Court, Spokane, 99202. Sunday School is 9:30 a.m. Sunday Service is 11 a.m.

**Calvary Baptist** – The Rev. Dr. C. W. Andrews. 203 E. Third Ave., Spokane, WA, 99202. Sunday School is 9 a.m. Sunday Service is 10 a.m.

**Morning Star Baptist** – The Rev. Walter Kendricks. 3909 W. Rowan Ave., Spokane, 99205. Sunday School is 9:30 a.m. Sunday Service is 10:45 a.m.

**New Hope Baptist** – The Rev. James Watkins. 9021 E. Boone Ave., Spokane Valley, 99212. Sunday Service

is 10:45 a.m.

**Saving Grace Ministries** – The Rev. Earon Davis Jr. 3151 E. 27th Ave., Spokane, 99223. Sunday Service is 10 a.m.

**Word of Faith** – The Rev. Otis Manning. 9212 E. Montgomery Ave., Spokane Valley, 99206. Sunday Service is 10 a.m.

**Jesus is the Answer** – The Rev. Shon L. Davis. 1803 E. Desmet St. Spokane, 99202. Sunday Service is 10 a.m.

**Restoration Church** – The Rev. Andre A. Dove. 2815 W. Sunset Blvd., Spokane, 99224. Sunday Service is 10:45 a.m.

**Mt. Olive Baptist Church** – The Rev. Patrick Hamm. 2026 E. Fourth Ave., Spokane, 99202. Sunday Service is 11 a.m. Wednesday Bible Study is 6 p.m.

## EVENTS TO WATCH FOR

**MARCH 8: 2024 Fig Tree Benefit** – Luncheon celebrating 40 years. No charge to attend; guests are asked to donate. 11 a.m. March 8 at Cataldo Hall at Gonzaga University. RSVP to the Fig Tree, 1323 S. Perry St., Spokane, WA 99202 OR online at secure.givelively.org/donate/the-fig-tree/2024-spring-benefits.

**MARCH 15: YWCA Women of Achievement Awards 2024** – YWCA honors Spokane's outstanding women leaders and changemakers. Margaret Mitchell, CEO of the YWCA USA, is the keynote speaker. 11 a.m.-1 p.m. March 15. Spokane Convention Center. Register online at ywcaspokane.org/how-to-help/events/women-of-achievement/.

## NAACP MEETINGS

To join, visit [naacpspokane.com/contact](http://naacpspokane.com/contact).

**GENERAL COMMITTEE MEETINGS:** Third Wednesday at 6:30 p.m.

**HEALTHCARE COMMITTEE:** Second Monday of each month at 5:15 p.m.

**CRIMINAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE:** Second Wednesday via zoom at 7 p.m.

**EDUCATION COMMITTEE:** Fourth Tuesday at 6:30 p.m.

**CIVIC ENGAGEMENT:** First Tuesday at 5 p.m.

## THE BLACK LENS

### Contributor Training

MARCH

7

2024

JOIN EDITOR NATASHA HILL AT THE SPOKESMAN-REVIEW BUILDING AND LEARN HOW TO BECOME A CONTRIBUTOR FOR THE BLACK LENS.

**MARCH 7, 2024** THE REVIEW BUILDING  
4:30 - 6 P.M. 999 W. RIVERSIDE AVE.  
SPOKANE, WA, 99201

RSVP: [BIT.LY/493E9MW](https://bit.ly/493E9MW)



## WE ARE HIRING!

### RACIAL/SOCIAL EQUITY REPORTER

- Cover race-related topics for The Black Lens and The Spokesman-Review.
- Develop stories that discuss race and culture on a personal, community and national level.
- Educate readers about racial equity and how it affects the Inland Northwest.

For more information, visit [spokesman.com/careers](http://spokesman.com/careers)

**APPLY NOW!**



COMMUNITY



Members of the Step Team Alliance perform at The Black Lens relaunch party Feb. 2 at the Steam Plant event center. ULYSSES CURRY/INNATAI FOUNDATION

MEET THE COACHES



Executive Director Stephaine Courtney



Coach and Lead Nicole McDanials

# STEP TEAM ALLIANCE EMPOWERS YOUTH, CREATES CONNECTIONS

The Black Lens staff

The Step Team Alliance is a project-based community program encouraging Black cultural expansion and storytelling through movement. Started by Executive Director Stephaine Courtney and Coach and Lead Nicole McDanials, the Step Team Alliance works to empower and support youth to create connections and gain pride for who they are.

Their slogan, "Moving into leadership begins with healing your inner child," reflects an acknowledgment of the whole person and focuses on building self worth and trust by working through our pasts so we can focus on our futures.



Members of the Step Team Alliance, left to right, Ashlyn Rinde, Paige Casey, Willow McCullum, Lily Word and Aubrey Brown, pose for a photo on Feb. 2, after their jaw-dropping performance at the Black Lens relaunch party. BOB LLOYD/THE BLACK LENS

Culture shaped by community are creating with programs like The Step Team Alliance that

bring together tradition and culture to create space for personal growth and health.

The program has 52 members as of last year and has established teams at Rogers High School (2000), North Central High School (2022), Shadle High School (2022), Cheney High School (2023) and now has a Community Step Team that brings together steppers from all area high schools.

Some Step Team members were part of The Black Lens relaunch party at the Steam Plant, including Paige Casey, Lily Word, Ashlyn Rinde, Aubrey Brown and Willow McCullum. "Extra, extra, read all about it," was part of their chant in celebration of the paper's relaunch.

What began with No-Li donating \$10,000 to The Black Lens, became a challenge for people and organizations to match their efforts. Here are the major donors that followed in No-Li's footsteps.



# THE BLACK LENS

## GIVES THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS!

DON AND HAIDEH LIGHTFOOT

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**HOW TO DONATE:**  
VISIT [WWW.BLACKLENSNEWS.COM/DONATE](http://WWW.BLACKLENSNEWS.COM/DONATE)  
OR CALL INNOVIA DIRECTLY AT (509) 624-2606

SPECIAL THANKS

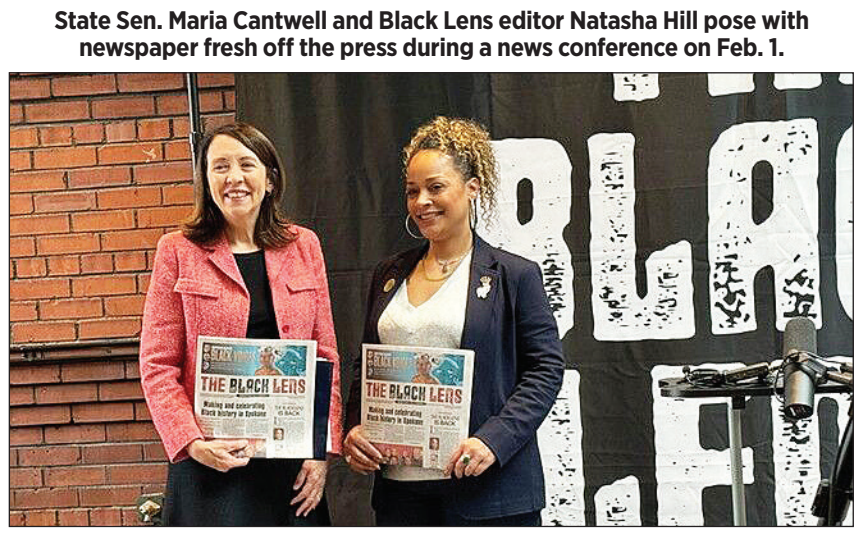
We'd also like to thank our community leaders NAACP President Lisa Gardner, Spokane City Council President Betsy Wilkerson, Spokane Mayor Lisa Brown, state Sen. Maria Cantwell and the Williams family for their presence during The Black Lens relaunch week.



# COMMUNITY



Renika Williams and Natasha Hill pose with news anchors at KREM-TV on Feb. 2.



State Sen. Maria Cantwell and Black Lens editor Natasha Hill pose with newspaper fresh off the press during a news conference on Feb. 1.

Betsy Wilkerson speaks Feb. 2 at the Black Lens launch event.



BOB LLOYD/THE BLACK LENS



A large crowd gathers Feb. 2 for the relaunch of The Black Lens at the Steam Plant rooftop event center.

# Looking back at The Black Lens launch week

### Black Lens staff reports

Feb. 2 was the official launch day of The Black Lens. The day began with a news conference hosted by state Sen. Maria Cantwell and City Council President Betsy Wilkerson. Members of The Black Lens team also appears on KREM-TV as part of a special for Black History Month.

That evening was the official launch party for The Black Lens, which took place at the Steam Plant rooftop event center. The Williams family blessed the evening with their presence, in honor of our founder Sandy Williams. The event was emceed by Michael Bethely, and the event kicked off with editor Natasha Hill. Guest speakers include NAACP president Lisa Gardner, Wilkerson, mayor Lisa Brown and Cantwell. The

Community Step Team, coached by Stephaune Courtney, made an appearance and brought the heat. The new Black Lens board of directors, in attendance, includes Rick Williams, Renika Williams, Luc Jasmin III, Alethea Duman, Robert Lloyd and Michael Bethely. The week was capped off with a Sound of (Black) Music performance Feb. 6 at Gonzaga's Myrtle Woldson Performing Arts Center.

Sherry Merritt applauds during The Black Lens launch event Feb. 2 at the Steam Plant rooftop event center.



ULYSSES CURRY/INNATAI FOUNDATION



The Williams family, Black Lens board members and community member pose before The Black Lens launch party.

COURTESY



Members of the Step Team Alliance perform at The Black Lens relaunch party Feb. 2 at the Steam Plant event center.



The Sound of (Black) Music takes the Myrtle Woldson Performing Arts Center stage Feb. 6 at Gonzaga University.

COURTESY

Jillisa Winkler, of the Carl Maxey Center, applauds during the Black Lens launch event.



ULYSSES CURRY/INNATAI FOUNDATION



Community members pose with a Sound of (Black) Music singer after a Feb. 6 performance at Gonzaga's Myrtle Woldson Performing Arts Center.

COURTESY

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