

# THE BLACK LENS



By Mya Jefferson  
THE BLACK LENS  
CONTRIBUTOR



## What is Black patriotism?

America has a long history of claiming lay to certain rights and promises. Certain rights and promises that would be denied to millions because of the color of their skin.

As African Americans do we choose allegiance to our race or our nation?

That's the double consciousness we as a people have to face with the past and present racism in America. Many figures have fought to change and better the nation. Martin Luther King, Jr. fought for equality, and Fredrick Douglass challenged America to live by its principals and freedom. Black patriotism is a way to embrace a more inclusive vision of what it means to be American.

See **PATRIOTISM, 10**

Members of the U.S. Colored Troops and Buffalo Soldiers, living historians and re-enactors from Maryland, Georgia, Massachusetts and other states, prepare to march in the Juneteenth People's Parade on June 19 in Washington, D.C.

GETTY IMAGES



JULY 2024 - VOL. 9 - ISSUE NO. 6

## 509 SUMMERTIME SHINE: CELEBRATING BLACK INDEPENDENCE

### POWER OF PURPOSE



COURTESY

Stephy Nobles-Beans speaks at Whitworth University graduation.

### The retirement and relaunch of Stephy Nobles-Beans

By April Eberhardt  
THE BLACK LENS

Born and raised in Dallas, Texas, and the daughter of a minister, Stephy Nobles-Beans knew she had a calling when she was 17 years old. As a teen mom, she shares that she felt unworthy of that calling; with her hands up, she reflects, she refused to accept it until the age of 21 years. Following her path, she shares, has opened doors that she could have never imagined. From giving invocations at places like the Rotary Club International to being slated to speak after Bill Gates, Nobles-Beans has walked into rooms that, at 17 years old, she did not

believe she was good enough to be in. By the time she reached Spokane, she had been in ministry for 25 years.

Affectionately known in the Spokane community as "Mama Beans," she retired from Whitworth in May, after 28 years as the Associate Chaplain of Diversity Equity and Inclusion. In her tenure, she has served as adjunct professor as well as a campus pastor. A former military spouse and mother of four, Nobles-Beans traveled extensively and served on the home front, focusing on her family. This, in and of itself, is a yo-yo of moving, resettling and readjustment. After years of

See **RETIRES, 10**

### CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH

*A bulwark of faith, community and justice*

By Teresa Hemphill  
THE BLACK LENS

**Editor's Note:** As Expo 74 celebrates its 50th year anniversary, the influence of the Black community in Spokane dare not be overlooked. Black pioneers settled in the area in the mid- to late 1800s, creating an active civic and faith community. There was a mindset of cultural and spiritual uplift that propelled Black settlers to stimulate a sense of collectivism for the betterment of their families and neighbors. At the African Heritage Diversity Day that took place on June 22 at Riverfront Park, Teresa Hemphill, a longtime member of Calvary Baptist Church, shared the legacy of Spokane's oldest Black church. Part of her speech has been edited and is shared below.



COURTESY

The Rev. Dr. C. W. Andrews and his wife Dorris. Calvary Baptist Church has been under his leadership for the past 50 years.

I grew up in Memphis, Tennessee. In 1968, I graduated from Memphis State University, now University of Memphis and shortly thereafter arrived in Spokane to live (by way of Fairchild Air Force Base). This was the start of my teaching career for Spokane School District 81, now named School Public Schools. I taught at the elementary level for 30 years. I also worked for the district office as a trainer for teachers in diversity and multicultural education.

I have been very active in the Spokane community. Early on, I was a part of a community organization that focused on justice and social change. We gave workshops to groups in and around Spokane on the subject and even took the program to Seattle. I helped organize and start

The Links, Inc., Spokane Chapter, which is "one of the nation's oldest and largest volunteer service organizations of extraordinary women who are committed to enriching, sustaining and ensuring the culture and economic survival of African Americans and other persons of African ancestry." We give scholarships, recognize community leaders, help disadvantaged families, support student development and matriculation, and raise funds to help support community organiza-

See **CHURCH, 10**

### JUNETEENTH IN PHOTOS

June was full of events celebrating and honoring Juneteenth, the holiday that commemorates the ending of slavery in the U.S. Events included a King Carl game with the Spokane Indians (at left), the Pillar Awards (below), where Bernice Buchanan was awarded the Heartwood Award, and more.

PAGES 6-7



### INSIDE

#### JORDAN SMITH'S PASSION FOR FOOD AND COMMUNITY

Jordan Smith's journey over the years sparked a passion for food and community that led him to co-owning Cascadia Public House and coaching high school basketball.

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#### SUMMER READING FUN AND LITERACY FACTS

While summer reading is fun for all ages, data shows that improving reading levels improves outcomes, including income and job opportunities, and enriches our experiences and connections.

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#### WELCOME THE BLACK LENS' NEW INTERIM EDITOR

April Eberhardt is a public school college and career counselor, serves as the NAACP Education Committee Chair and is a chair for the Spokane chapter of The Links, Inc.

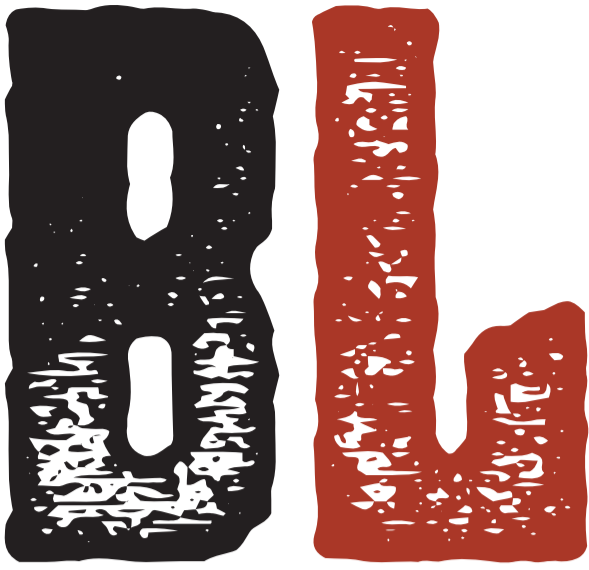
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#### HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION DIRECTOR VISITS SPOKANE

Washington state director Andreta Armstrong shared their work in enforcing WA State Laws Against Discrimination in the areas of employment, public accommodation, housing, credit and insurance.

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BLACK PATRIOTISM



NEWS

BLACKLENS.NEWS

SPS assesses Equity Resolution four years after inception

The Black Lens

In spring 2020, the Spokane Public Schools Board of Directors drew input from staff, students, and the community to create and adopt a board resolution to establish equity policies.

Four years later, the district released a 79-page assessment of the equity efforts that were launched in 2020.

"It is important that four years after the Equity Resolution we pause to assess both our intentions and impact," SPS Board President Nikki Lockwood wrote in the report.

The goals listed in the resolution were to:
• Address structural

systems with a focus on eliminating barriers and improving access for students.

• Raise the achievement of all students while decreasing gaps between the highest and lowest performing students.

• Decrease rates of disproportionality in programs, services, interventions and student discipline.

"While there is much work yet to be done," the updated assessment reads, the report, which can be found online at bit.ly/3Xye1cK, outlines the actions SPS has taken to fulfill commitments made in the 2020 School Board Equity Resolution.

"This report creates an intentional moment of reflection, a vital step in the cycle of working towards progress," Lockwood wrote. "This reflection must be done with community input and transparency, and I am so thankful for your time as you read through and provide feedback."



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NEWS

FROM THE BOARD

APRIL EBERHARDT NAMED NEW INTERIM EDITOR OF THE BLACK LENS

The Black Lens

April Rivers Eberhardt has been named the interim editor of The Black Lens, beginning July 1, taking the reins from Natasha Hill as she continues on her campaign for House representative of Washington state Legislative District 3.

Eberhardt has been a consistent reporter for The Black Lens, since its republication in February.

Eberhardt lives in the West Plains area of Spokane County with her family, but hails from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. A military spouse of 23 years, she is the wife of Ret. Master Sgt. Edward Eberhardt, who recently finished a 24-year Air Force career.

Eberhardt has a bachelor's of arts degree in English from Indiana University of Pennsylvania (1999), a master's of science degree in general administration



As of July 1, April Eberhardt is the new interim editor of The Black Lens.

from Central Michigan University (2006) and a master's of education degree (cross-cultural teaching) from National University (2013).

Eberhardt is a college and career counselor in the public school system, just completed a three-year term on the Leadership Spokane Board, serves as the NAACP Education Committee Chair and is the Services to Youth Chair and Recording Secretary for the Spokane chapter of The Links, Inc.

on the Spokane African American Graduation Committee for the past 3 years. She was a Culturally Responsive Trainer with the Washington Education Association from 2018-21 and is an unapologetic advocate for anti-racism. She has taught English and language arts to students from grades 5-12 since 2007 in the following places: California, Germany (Department of Defense) and Spokane.

In 2017, Eberhardt received the Commander's Leadership

Award at Spangdahlem Air Base, and in 2021 she was awarded the Washington Education Association Human and Civil Rights Award. She believes that perspective sharing is an important component in building bridges that foster community and understanding and she does not shy away from tough conversations.

Her own three children are the impetus for her first four self-published early childhood books, and they are featured to showcase real children having fun and interesting experiences.

Her goal as a writer is to cultivate cultural representation, and she uses her own life experiences as inspiration for her work. Prior to The Black Lens' relaunch, she wrote intermittently for the publication at the encouragement of Sandy Williams.

She feels honored to have been selected for this new role and hopes to continue Williams' legacy by sharing the nuances of the Black life, promoting voice and visibility, empowering our youth, and giving a space to express, learn, heal and grow as a community. We must keep telling our stories.

WHAT IS PAST IS PROLOGUE

Rogers High students seek funds for Freedom Fighters trip

By April Eberhardt THE BLACK LENS

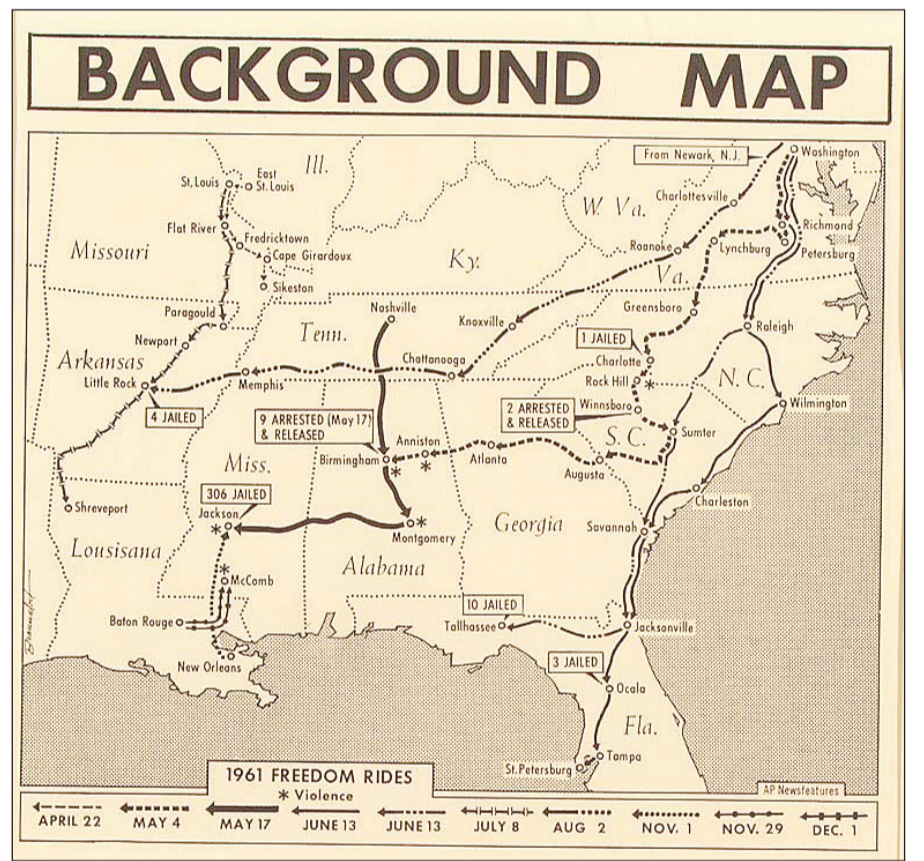
A Civil Rights learning tour is in the works for Rogers High School students in June 2025. This will give BIPOC students the opportunity to absorb the journey taken by the Freedom Fighters during the 1960s.

Currently, African American literature is offered in Spokane public high schools as an English college credit through Eastern Washington University.

This tour will provide a field experience that immerses students into the history of what they will learn in the course. An opportunity like this provides real world relevance and connection to vital aspects of the Black American experience, bridging the past to the present.

Students will have a chance to visit various Martin Luther King Jr. historical sites in Atlanta and Alabama and sites associated with the bus boycott, Freedom Riders and children's marches in Birmingham. Kendra Egly, who teaches African American literature at Rogers High School, had the opportunity to do this tour as an educator.

"While I was there,



NEW GEORGIA ENCYCLOPEDIA

This maps shows the routes of Freedom Rides that took place throughout the South from April through December 1961. Rogers High School students are raising funds to attend a Civil Rights learning tour that will show them some of the journey taken by the Freedom Fighters.

I met teachers from across the country and heard stories of teachers bringing student groups on trips like this, and my reaction was that Rogers students need these experiences too," Egly said.

"As soon as I got home, I started looking into options. It was hands-down the best learning experience of my life."

Egly plans to take a trip for current ninth- and 10th-graders who will take African American Lit/AP African American Studies as juniors or seniors. This trip is an outside of school opportunity, which means that it must be independently funded.

Community support will open the door to an enhanced learning experience that can foster positive identity development and awareness of the foundations of American social justice.

Exposure is paramount in raising the consciousness of our BIPOC youth as they move forward into the future.

Many students are interested in attending, Egly said, but cost can be a huge barrier. Through Hillyard Built,

a local nonprofit, there is an avenue to support student participation in this special experience. Support for this event is an investment into the future of our students who are here because of the path that was laid for them by those who came before. This opportunity can help that realization become manifest.

Please visit the following websites to support: hillyardbuilt.com/requests and www.hillyardbuilt.com. Additionally, to learn more, contact Kendra Egly at kendraegly@gmail.com.

THE BLACK LENS

Serving Spokane's Black community since 2015

IN MEMORY OF SANDRA WILLIAMS FOUNDED EDITOR AND PUBLISHER

THE BLACK LENS INTERIM EDITOR & BOARD MEMBERS April Eberhardt, Rick Williams, Renika Williams, Luc Jasmin III, Alethea Sharea Dumas, Robert J. Lloyd, Natasha Hill and Michael Bethely

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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 formed 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

# Human Rights Dinner brings leaders together

By Natasha Hill  
THE BLACK LENS

On June 4, the Washington State Human Rights Commission's office leadership visited Spokane and had a gathering with various individuals, including Spokane city officials, members of the Police Ombuds, members of the city's Human Rights Commission, Spokane NAACP and other distinguished guests.

The Washington state Human Rights Commission Executive Director Andreta Armstrong, emphasized the importance of building stronger connections with organizations and community members in Spokane and the East Side of the state. During the meeting, the guests shared personal stories and provided examples of the challenges faced by residents in Spokane.

Armstrong concluded the meeting by highlighting the Human Rights Commission's work in areas such as employment, housing, public accommodation, credit, and insurance processes, and discussed how local communities can access their services. The meeting took place at JasminHill Events and was hosted by Human Rights Commissioner, Pastor Luc Jasmin. For more information, please visit the Human Rights Commission at hum.wa.gov.



Guests to the Washington State Human Rights Commission's dinner pose for a photo on June 4.

COURTESY



Washington state Human Rights Commission Executive Director Andreta Armstrong

COURTESY OF HRC

### About the state Human Rights Commission

Established in 1949, the Washington state Human Rights Commission is responsible for administering and enforcing the Washington Law Against Discrimination, Chapter 49.60 of the Revised Code of Washington.

The Human Rights Commission is a neutral,

fact-finding law enforcement agency; it does not act as an advocate for any party during an investigation, but advocates for the law in the interest of preventing and eliminating discrimination. You may still consult with and have an attorney if you are fil-

ing a complaint with the WSHRC.

Discriminatory practices on the basis of protected class are illegal in the areas of:

- Employment
  - Housing & Real Estate
  - Places of Public Accommodation
  - Credit & Insurance
- Protected Classes include:
- Race/Color (including hairstyle)
  - National Origin
  - Citizenship/Immigration Status
  - Creed
  - Sex/Pregnancy
  - Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity
  - Veteran/Military Status

The presence of any sensory, mental, or physical actual Disability or perceived

- Disability
- Use of a Service Animal

- HIV or Hepatitis
- Marital Status (except in public accommodation)
- Breastfeeding (in public accommodation)
- Age (40-plus, employment only)
- Families with Children (housing only)
- State Employee Whistleblower

It is also illegal to retaliate against any individual who files or participates in a discrimination complaint.

The Spokane office is located at Rock Pointe Plaza III, 1330 N. Washington St., Suite 2460.

The headquarters in Olympia are located at 711 S. Capitol Way, Suite 402, or can be reached by mail at P.O. Box 42490 or by phone at (360) 753-6770.

For additional information or questions, or wish



### Online

The Washington state Human Rights Commission can be found online at [www.hum.wa.gov](http://www.hum.wa.gov) or by scanning this QR code.

### Other resources

- [my.spokanecccity.org/bcc/commissions/](http://my.spokanecccity.org/bcc/commissions/)
- [naacpspokane.com](http://naacpspokane.com)
- [my.spokanecccity.org](http://my.spokanecccity.org)

to have training for your organization, please contact the WSHRC at (360) 753-6770 or at (800) 233-3247.

## ACTION: Primary election Aug. 6

The Black Lens

The primary elections, Aug. 6, are voting processes by which voters can indicate their preference for their party's candidate in an upcoming local and general elections.

Here are some important dates and deadlines:

**JULY 19:** Start of 18-day voting period (through Election Day). Ballots are mailed out and Accessible Voting Units (AVUs) are available at voting centers.

**JULY 29:** Online and mail registrations must be received 8 days before Election Day.

**AUG. 6:** Primary day. Also, the deadline for Washington state voter registration or updates (in person only).

It's easy and secure to register to vote online at [votewa.gov](http://votewa.gov), by mail with a paper form, or at a county elections office. Check your registration at [VoteWA.gov](http://VoteWA.gov).

Effective Jan. 1, 2022, if you were convicted of a felony in Washington state, another state, or in federal court, your right to vote will be restored automatically, as long as you are not currently serving a sentence of total confinement in prison.

# CELEBRATING ICONS THROUGH ART

Carl Maxey Center, SCC, Adams Elementary student murals honor historical figures



COURTESY PHOTOS

A mural of Sandy Williams was painted May 29 at the Spokane Community College campus as part of a collaboration between the Carl Maxey Center, SCC and Adams Elementary.

By Teresa Brooks  
THE BLACK LENS

In a heartwarming collaboration between Spokane Community College, Adams Elementary School and the Carl Maxey Center, students recently undertook a project that blended art with diversity, equity and inclusion.

Led and inspired by Christina Momono, the initiative in late May paid homage to eight historical icons whose lives exemplified values of justice,

education, freedom, civil rights and human rights. The DEI Art Inclusive Project showcased artistic talents of young minds while fostering a deeper understanding of the contributions made by these transformative individuals.

The project's central theme, "Transcending Time and Love," provided a framework for students to explore and interpret the legacies of their chosen icons.

Among the luminaries

honored through the murals were some of history's most influential figures.

The roster included Sandy Williams, a cherished community leader, activist and The Black Lens founder, whose impact resonates deeply within the local area. Alongside Williams, the murals depicted the likenesses and stories of Martin Luther King Jr., Yoko Ono, Malala Yousafzai, Albert Einstein, Cesar Chavez, Margo Hill and Helen Keller.

Reflecting on the proj-



Murals were painted in late May at the Spokane Community College campus, honoring historical figures.



A Black Lives Matter mural was painted May 29 at the Spokane Community College campus.

ect, the staff at Carl Maxey Center expressed gratitude for the opportunity to engage with the students.

Williams, in particular, held a special significance as a role model and beacon of hope within the community. Her tireless dedication to social justice and empowerment has inspired countless individuals, making her inclusion in the mural project a poignant testament to her enduring legacy.

The process of creating Williams' mural was

more than a mere artistic endeavor; it was a celebration of her life and legacy. It taught us that with time and love, anything - be it a blank canvas or a fledgling idea - can evolve into something profound and meaningful. The mural project served as a poignant reminder to our children and community members alike that each stroke of paint represented not just artistic expression, but a tribute to a beloved leader whose impact continues to resonate.

The collaborative effort between SCC, Adams Elementary and the Carl Maxey Center represents a shining example of how communities can come together to celebrate diversity and inspire meaningful dialogue through art. By commemorating the lives and contributions of these eight icons, the DEI Art Inclusive Project has not only enriched the educational experience of students but also strengthened the bonds of solidarity within the broader community.

POLICY AND EDUCATION

# FINDING THE LINK BETWEEN ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL JUSTICE

LANDS COUNCIL LEGISLATIVE SUMMIT BRINGS TOGETHER ADVOCATES, LAWMAKERS

By April Eberhardt  
BLACK LENS NEWS

The Lands Council Legislative Summit took place at the Spokane Convention Center on June 21. Community stakeholders and politicians came together to discuss the impact of environmental injustice in the state of Washington.

Often thought of as an elite cause under the social justice umbrella, what cannot be escaped is that poor communities suffer from food deserts, chemically poisoned water and soil, emissions and toxic building structures, leading to health issues such as asthma and cancer. In Spokane, the significant decline of salmon has impacted the food supply of the indigenous community over centuries and high temperatures in the water remain a clear and present threat to the re-emergence salmon. Environmental stewardship is an important conversation that must be had as a collective, and the Summit provided this opportunity.

Several speakers opened the summit to share the priority of environmental justice in the Legislature. Speakers included Dr. Margo Hill, Craig Hill, Naghmana Sherazi, Amanda Parrish, Mayor Lisa Brown and Vanessa Waldref.

Waldref shared the following four guiding principles that support the work being done by the Department of Justice as it relates to environmental justice:

- Prioritizing cases that will reduce public health and environmental harms to overburdened and underserved communities.
- Making strategic use of all



COURTESY

From left, state Rep. Brandy Donaghy, Kerra Bower of RAZE, April Eberhardt of NAACP, Rep. Vandana Slatter, and Naomi Bender, director of Native American Health Science Programs at Washington State University at the Lands Council Legislative Summit on June 21.

available legal tools to address environmental justice concerns.

- Ensuring meaningful engagement with impacted communities.
- Promoting transparency in environmental justice enforcement.

Community facilitators led discussions in six breakout groups with various legislators around the topics of climate and the environment; Indig-

enous rights; immigrants and refugees; child care, education and youth; housing and homelessness; health disparities, reproductive rights, disability and 2SLGBTQAI+ rights.

After breakout sessions, the last remaining chief of the Upper Colombia tribes, Darnell Sam of the Colville Confederated Tribes, and a representative from the Coeur d'Alene Tribe, performed a symbolic salm-

on ceremony. During lunch, Gov. Jay Inslee shared remarks about the priority of environmental stewardship as an important focus to a healthier and more equitable quality of life for Washingtonians.

After lunch, a debrief was given by the facilitators of each breakout group, which included some of the committee chairs from the Spokane branch of the NAACP.

More info

To learn more about environmental and climate justice with the NAACP, follow this link: [naacp.org/know-issues/environmental-climate-justice](https://naacp.org/know-issues/environmental-climate-justice)

To see highlights and facilitator videos from the Lands Council Legislative Summit and to learn more about the organization, visit [landscouncil.org](https://landscouncil.org).

The evening events centered on recreation and fellowship with canoe races on the Spokane River, and prizes for the canoe races were presented during dinner.

During the breakout session focusing on child care, education and youth, state Rep. Brandy Donaghy, D-Snohomish County, said that when young people get not just the start that they need, but the start they deserve, they are successful.

Also in attendance was Megan Matthews, director of the Washington State Office of Equity, who shared insights on how inclusive spaces that appreciate authenticity can empower people to have personal agency and a sense of belonging.

Darian Spearman, assistant professor of philosophy at Gonzaga University, responding to a question about the importance of environmental justice, saying "The environment is important for our liberation, for our freedom. We can't be free if we are disconnected. That's what's going on in so many of our cities."

Spearman says that the relationship between the land and our humanity is that it's where our spirit and our soul is found.

"That's where the work begins."

## When ultra-wealthy pay their share in taxes, we all have a brighter future

IN HER WORDS

When I look around Spokane, I see that we care about each other. We're strong and resilient, and we're also interconnected. We believe in showing up for our loved ones and our community. Regardless of whether our families have been here for generations or have just arrived, we are leaving things better for those who come after us. We believe everyone should have a fair shot at reaching their goals and pursuing their dreams.

I grew up here and I see how far we have come and how the investments we've made to help some community members have actually made all of us stronger. I also see how far we have to go.

There are many unmet needs: from affordable housing to mental health care, drug and alcohol addiction treatment programs to air filtration systems that adequately keep school kids safe from smoky air caused by wildfires. We don't have to choose to fund one essential service at the expense of another. There are enough resources in our state that everyone in every community can have what they need. To do that, we have to keep asking our lawmakers to fix our upside-down tax code and ensure that everyone, especially the very wealthy, pay what they truly owe in taxes.

For too long, the wealthiest Washingtonians have not paid their share toward our public schools, roads, health care and other services. So many of us came together to pass a state capital gains tax as a step toward righting this wrong. Already it's providing an important down payment for our kids' future. Proceeds from the tax will be used to fund child care

and early learning, and school repair and construction. In its first year the capital gains tax is estimated to be bringing in more than \$800 million, almost three times the estimated revenue and a sign of the massive wealth that exists in our state.

I know firsthand how important before- and after-school child care are and what a difference they can make in the lives of working families. As a teen mom, I relied on local, affordable child care to continue my own education. This helped me to become the first generation of my family to earn a college degree.

But while this higher-than-expected capital gains tax funding for child care and education is such good news for kids and families, it doesn't mean all the needs of our schools are now covered. Schools in eastern Washington and throughout the state are still facing budget crises, as most parents who have been to a recent PTA meeting know all too well.

We can't continue to allow this to happen. All kids deserve the opportunity to attend schools with ample resources that allow them to learn, grow and thrive. They shouldn't have to attend schools where critical services like mental health care and after-school programs and basic resources like books and computers are constantly on the chopping block.

As someone who proudly grew up in and attended public school in the Hillyard neighborhood, I know that my education is the foundation of my success. Instead of cycling from one low-paying job to the next and accessing social safety nets throughout my life I have been able



By Lacreia "Lu" Hill  
THE BLACK LENS CONTRIBUTOR



to create a stable life for my sons – lives that are full of opportunities for them.

Investing in our schools today is an investment in a healthier future for all of us. All young people should have the chance to reach their full potential and to be socially and emotionally ready to face the world and its challenges. This future for our community isn't a dream. It can be a reality. We can provide supports for our school kids and for everyone who lives in

eastern Washington if we ensure lawmakers keep the needs of actual communities – and not the needs of special interests and some ultra-wealthy people who want to rig the tax code in their favor – top of mind.

Join me and other neighbors in Spokane to keep insisting that our elected leaders fund our futures with more policy changes like a wealth tax, a more progressive estate tax, and other bills under consideration that would make sure the wealthy pay more, just like the rest of us. It's one of the ways we can continue to demonstrate how much we care about each other and future generations.

*Lacreia "Lu" Hill is a fourth-generation Spokaneite who has long been involved in supporting the community in the nonprofit, philanthropic, and small business sectors. She currently is the community engagement and strategy director at Empire Health Foundation. These thoughts are her own.*

## Spokane mayor seeks input on next police chief

The Black Lens

Spokane Mayor Lisa Brown has narrowed her selection of the next Spokane police chief to four final candidates:

- Kevin Hall, Assistant Chief of Police of Tucson Police Department;
- Kathleen Lanier, Colonel of the Memphis Police Department;
- Matthew Murray, Chief of the Yakima Police Department;
- and Tom Worthy, Chief of the Dalles Police Department.

A candidate forum was held June 27 to introduce the finalists to the Spokane community. Police shootings and police accountability, or lack thereof, were a hot topic during the forum, given Spokane Police Department's record of being in the Top 3 deadliest police forces in the country.

Former police Chief Craig Meidl stood in solidarity with other officers in 2011 and saluted officer Karl Thompson who was convicted of manslaughter

for killing a man without lawful justification. Otto Zhem died from a lack of oxygen to the brain and heart failure caused by being restrained on his stomach, hog-tied and his mouth covered by police. Six officers were involved, but only Thompspon was convicted.

See The Black Lens' previous reporting in April on the Spokane Police Department's history of racial bias in arrests and sentencing of Black and Native community members, regardless of socioeconomic factors and search for a new chief.

To participate in the Public Safety Survey and voice your opinion on who our mayor should consider visit: [surveymonkey.com/r/LJDBVWJ](https://surveymonkey.com/r/LJDBVWJ)



Join us for the 30<sup>th</sup> Annual

# UNITY

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## STUDENT SUBMISSIONS

# Student poets rising in Spokane



By Black Lens Staff



Jameson Tucker is a 2024 graduate of Shadle Park High School. This year he attended a college and career

presentation hosted by Stephen Pitters, a retired social worker and therapist, writer, and local program host for “Thin Air Radio” on KYRS. During this presentation, Pitters shared his personal and professional journey to becoming a writer. Tucker’s English class was one of several groups that attended this presentation, where Pitters did writing exercises and encouraged students to read aloud. This experience turned into an opportunity for Jameson to submit poetry to Pitters’ latest publication titled “Postings from The Spirit”. In May, at the Shadle Park Public Library, Tucker, along with several other students from various schools, had an opportunity to read their poetry for the Poetry Rising event. Tucker is an aspir-

ing writer and will be attending Eastern Washington University in September. Below is his reflection on this experience and his poem:

“It felt great to be a part of the poetry event. It started with Mr. Pitters reading a poem he wrote about his mom, followed by a few soulful songs performed by a local artist that set the mood. We all then read our very different poems. I wasn’t as nervous as I thought I would be. It felt good sharing my thoughts amongst my peers. Our poems will live on forever.”

## Hair

By Jameson Tucker

Hair is what you need to see  
to get to know me,

we cut, braid, shape our hair

whatever it takes to feel real.

# FIGHT



By Makenzie Lebnzack  
NORTH CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL

Racism, a disease that poisons our minds  
Divides us and blinds us, it’s about time we find  
The courage and strength to break these chains  
And rise above the hatred, the hurt, the pains

It’s a battle that’s been fought for centuries  
Yet still, its hold on us remains a mystery  
How can we claim to be so evolved  
When our hearts are still unresolved?

From the darkest shades to the slightest hue  
We are all humans, each one of us true  
But somehow we’ve been taught to see  
The color of skin, not what lies beneath

We judge each other based on appearance  
And deny ourselves true coexistence  
But let me remind you, my brothers and sisters  
That we are all made of the same star dust and particles

Why do we let a mere shade of skin  
Determine whether we lose or win  
The chances in life, the opportunities  
Shouldn’t they be based on our capabilities?

But instead, we hold on to stereotypes and fears  
Allowing racism to cause us all these tears  
Why can’t we see that diversity  
Is what makes this world a true beauty?

It’s time to open our hearts and minds  
And leave this hatred and ignorance behind  
For together we are stronger and united  
Let’s break the chains of racism, let love be ignited.

# Self-Love: A reflection

By Malia Taylor  
THE BLACK LENS  
CONTRIBUTOR



I believe self-love is important.

I believe it is important because self-love can show who you are as a person. Showing that you

love yourself does have Pros and Cons depending on the type of person you are, but always showing that you love yourself can increase your confidence. Self-love also teaches you to set boundaries. It lets you know your limits and allows you to be able to say no and communicate clearly to others.

There was a time in life that I had to show myself self-love because I would let people walk all over me. I would let people talk to me and tell me things any way they wanted to. I would not allow myself to defend myself because I was afraid of losing friends.

By the time I figured out what self-

love was, I was in the 8th grade. I used my “self-love” in a more negative way. I would bully people to make myself feel better about being me. I thought that since people treated me that way, I could treat others that way too. And on top of that I was tired of being the one people picked on.

When someone would do something that was not conducive for me or did something wrong, I would overreact by getting mad and extremely bratty. I thought I was doing something by being rude and disrespectful towards my friends and teachers.

I remember a time when I was in 8th grade and one of my friends, who was so sweet and genuine towards me, asked if I wanted to play volleyball with her and a couple of other friends. I would usually participate in any activity we did in gym class, but I was still mad about the morning before. Me and my mom had gotten into one of the worst arguments we have ever had. I had lashed out and told her to leave me alone and how she constantly

bothers me. She said she was sorry and walked away from me.

After that day was like hell on earth for me because I gradually started losing my friends and it eventually got worse when rumors about me started going around. Rumors got so bad I did not know what to do anymore and I just broke down one day in 4th period. Being in the situation I was in took me back to when I was in elementary school when people told me straight that they did not want to be my friend because I was ugly and black.

I remember not wanting to tell my mom what was going on because I was in the mix of trying to make myself believe I was mad at her, and I did not need her. As months and seasons passed by like trees through a car window it reached May. May was when everything stopped. I do not recall hearing anything bad about me after May. It is like everyone had agreed to stop picking on me at a specific time and date. After that day I took accountability for my actions and changed myself a lot. I started dressing more appropriately, cursed a lot less, and most importantly I stopped smoking because I never liked it in the first place. I only did it to look cooler in front of my friends. I even apologized to a couple friends and all three of my teachers that following

summer for the way I treated them.

I found out what self-love was when my mom sat me down after she found out what a year I had. She told me that it is okay to show people who you are and if they do not accept you for your silly real self, they never accepted you in the first place, remember who you are and that everybody is not your friend. She would say this to me and my siblings all the time, but I never really understood what she meant until this very moment. My mom showed me the way, and I took it.



# DOORWAY TO HEAVEN

A Poem by Anonymous

1, 2, 3, ...

My hiding spot had just enough room for my tiny body and yearning heart.  
Full of my skeletons and my secrets,  
I squeezed myself between the boxes of baggage.  
And sharing blankets with Dark,  
She helped keep me warm on the coldest of nights.

Rubbing elbows with Expectations,  
I borrowed her clothes off hangers and was swallowed by their size.  
Now draped in disgrace and embarrassment,  
I shrunk myself to make more room in  
This closet.

4, 5, 6...

I got lost in here.  
I was trapped in here.  
The door to freedom unlocked only from the outside  
And I wish I knew this before picking my hiding spot.  
I would've told my younger self not to play this game.  
I hate this fucking game.

Besides, How am I to be found when I still am not being seen?  
My reality has been suppressed by my last name, and I am only who I am connected to;  
I am a reflection of who birthed me.  
Name known because of siblings, and  
Life worthy because of accomplishments.  
I have been celebrated for my successes, and silenced for my identity.

7, 8, 9...

It can get lonely sometimes.  
My closest company is My Overactive Mind and frankly...  
she talks too much.

But, I also made friends with  
Shame and Embarrassment.  
They taught me how to play The Quiet Game, Simon Says,  
And hate myself.  
Together, we hummed tunes of our favorite childhood  
songs and read dust-covered books like,  
the Bible.  
It made me wonder if my closet would ever become  
a Doorway to Heaven.

Guided to my hiding spot as a child  
And isolated from the world,  
I never got the chance to grow up.  
I am still the same little girl playing Hide and Seek.

10, 11, 12...

I grew so accustomed to Dark,  
I didn't know Light was also in here.  
She said she has always existed in my closet, but I lost her  
amongst the mess.  
On dirty mirror she revealed my true reflection.

I was only four feet tall with pink barrettes hanging from  
my ponytails.  
My dimples had become incaved and my ribs imprinted my  
torso -  
Body starved from who I know I am, starved from who I  
know I am, starved from who I know I am.  
Bumps on tongue from lying and back bent from carrying the  
weight of these mistruths.  
My brown eyes drenched my skin,  
crying canals,  
and creating Oceans with my tears.  
My closet was being flooded and my small frame drowned  
by her waves.  
The boxes of baggage opened, and their contents floated  
around me.  
My skeletons gripped at my ankles and begged for

salvation.  
My secrets poisoned the water and burned my skin.

Gasping for air—now neck deep in this storm—  
My feet were anchored down by tubs labeled “Charity”  
Full of my self-confidence, self-respect, and self-love,  
ready for me to give them away.  
I closed my eyes and asked God to send someone to save  
me...

13, 14, 15...

I never imagined it would be myself.  
While drowning,  
What I didn't see was someone working tirelessly to break  
down  
The walls of my closet.  
Door now ripped off hinges and water rushing out of this  
hoarded room,  
I was met by Me.

She was older now but still four feet tall (unfortunately).  
She had the confidence I only dreamed of.  
Her hair cut short.  
Her style unique.  
Her sneakers clean.  
Her smile wide.  
Her spirit bright.  
Her mind strong.  
And her heart full.

She wrapped me in an embrace that healed all of my  
sorrows, and said this:  
“You are your own wildest dreams.  
You are not moved by outside opinions.  
You are the epitome of grace and authenticity.  
You are wonderfully and beautifully made.  
You fear nothing, and love everything.

And, this Closet is no longer yours.”

So, to the little girl who had crushes on other little girls,  
I am sorry for hiding you. I hope you can forgive me.

16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22  
Ready or not here I come...

# JUNETEENTH

# SPOKANE CELEBRATES BLACK LIBERATION: CAPTURING THE SPIRIT OF JUNETEENTH IN PHOTOS



The Pillar Awards honored many movers and shakers in the Black community, including Dr. Bernice Buchanan, who was honored with the Heartwood Award, which is presented to an elder of the African American community who has been a meaningful part of the community's foundation and identity. Her family and fans were present at the black carpet, semi-formal event that aims to acknowledge and celebrate those who help uplift the African American community in Spokane.

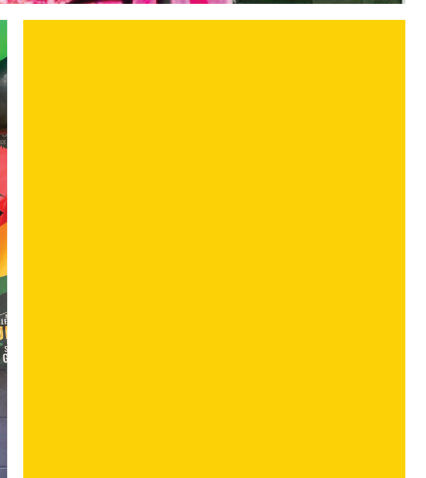
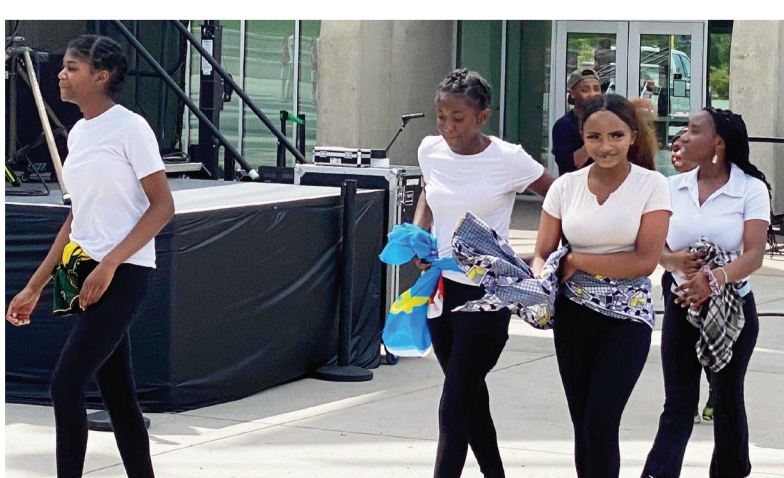


“When certain slaves gained knowledge of their freedom, they set out to find loved ones who they had been separated from, and we don't know how many were able to find and reunite with their loved ones. My hope is that as a community, we don't lose each other, and that we continue to come together to love on and build each other up.”

**Michael Bethely**  
On the Power of Community



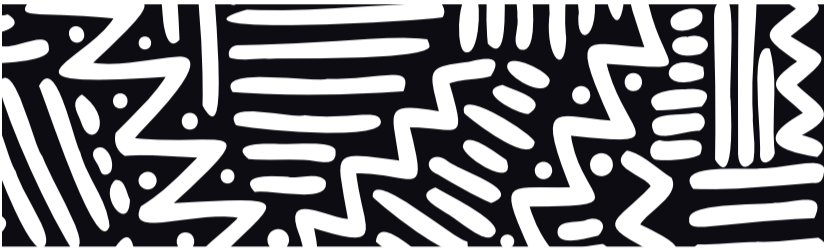
The African Diversity Heritage event was a great opportunity to celebrate how beautiful Black is through multiple cultures and communities. Dr. Itohan Idumwonyi's presentation on Ubuntu "I am, because we are" showcased a powerful ideology that African Americans are encouraged to adopt as a community. Her presentation highlights the importance of working and building together, a crucial part of paving a foundation for our children and their children. To learn more, visit [www.inwjc.org](http://www.inwjc.org).



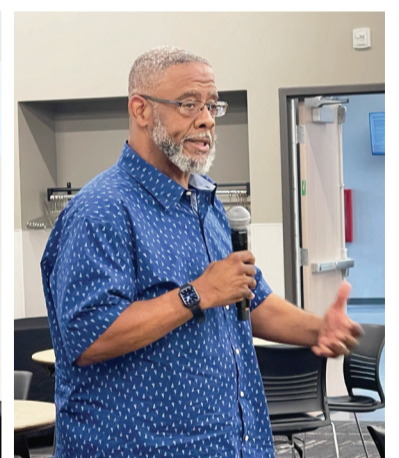
# JUNETEENTH

## Thank you to the Spokane community and the Spokane Indians baseball team

On June 19 the Spokane Indians baseball team celebrated the life and legacy of local civil rights activist and champion boxer, Carl Maxey. From each ticket sold, \$1 from the group ticket offer was be donated to the Sandy Williams Fund for the Carl Maxey Center. The Spokane Indians, in collaboration with the Carl Maxey Center, The Black Lens and the Spokane NAACP, launched the "King Carl Campaign" in early 2024. Originally co-conceived by the late Sandy Williams - founder of the Carl Maxey Center and The Black Lens - the campaign served as a vibrant celebration of our region's Black community and the team's ongoing commitment to supporting communities of color. Below, at left, is Natasha Hill with her daughter, and below at right is Renika Williams, daughter of Sandy Williams, throwing a first pitch before the June 19 game.



At left, "A Night Out with Acute Inflections" was a theatre-style concert with New York's jazzy R&B duo The jazz night took place June 18 at Spokane Community College in the Lair Student Center. At far left and below, a Juneteenth Community Celebration took place at the MLK Jr. Community Center as well as the Body and Soul Health Fair, which you can find more about on Page 13.



A Father's Day Brunch took place June 15 at Spokane Community College, honoring fathers, male mentors, and father figures.



COMMUNITY AND CULTURE

# WE WANT TO BE THE CITY OF LITERACY



By Dr. Jeanne Baynes  
THE BLACK LENS  
CONTRIBUTOR



Summer is here, and that means the Summer Reading Challenge is underway for parents and the local

libraries.

Summer is a time for outdoor fun, vacations, and a break from the daily school routine, but it's important to keep your children's minds active. There are many advantages to keeping your children engaged in reading during the summer months and avoiding the "summer slide," or a dip in their educational learning.

We believe summer reading is fun for all ages – but it is also vitally important. Data shows summer reading can help prevent "summer slide." The loss of knowledge and skills many students suffer over the long break between school years. Data also shows teens who read frequently report less anxiety and depression than infrequent readers.

We believe we can be part of the solution for our students – and so can you. We encourage the adults of our community to join in and model reading to our children. We want to be the "City of Literature," we want to be a "City of Literacy."

Literacy empowers and liberates people. Beyond its importance as part of the right to education, literacy improves lives by expanding capabilities which in turn reduces poverty, increases participation in the labor market and has positive effects on health and sustainable development.

Through written language, we convey beliefs, record knowledge and explore our common humanity. Alphabets may be different around the world, but literacy – that core ability to make sense of the



written word – is cherished across all cultures and traditions sense of the written word – is cherished across all cultures and traditions.

"Creating the concept and system of reading is one of humankind's greatest intellectual achievements. Reading and writing magnify our capacity to learn, which is the competitive advantage of our species and the very foundation of human civilization. When a child learns to read, she unlocks and accelerates an expanding process of re-forming her self-identity and of enacting her will within the world. What more can you give her? To read is to better understand, and to understand is the greatest gift of being human."

Teachers and parents should read books with characters of different cultures, races, religions, genders, and other identities. The discussions and activities will help teach students to better understand themselves, each other, and the people in our increasingly diverse society.

Teachers and parents should select books that reflect the diversity of people and expose students to cultures, perspectives, and experiences other than their own. With this in mind, we have curated a list of books by authors that we highly recommend, with a particular empha-

sis on the diversity that exists within the Black community.

Summer reading offers kids the chance to be in control of what they read, instead of reading as an assignment. Graphic novels, manga, magazines – they all count as reading. That freedom to choose makes reading fun – a huge motivator to keep kids wanting to read in the future.

Summer Reading Club is Spokane Public Library's free, annual program to keep kids learning over the summer from June 1-Aug. 31. There are lots of ways to participate! Pick up a copy of our Summer Reading magazines for kids and teens at the library. Attend a free event.

Creating fun and personally relevant reading experiences that lead children to read after school and during the summer is the key to improving literacy rates among black children. Educators and parents must spend more time asking themselves how to help children identify as readers instead of creating test prep regimens.

Schools must move away from a deficit model that blames black children toward an asset-based approach that acknowledges who children are and what's important to them. Creating nurturing learning environments will lead more Black children to say, "I'm a reader."

Identifying as a reader is the foundation of reading proficiency and lifelong reading.

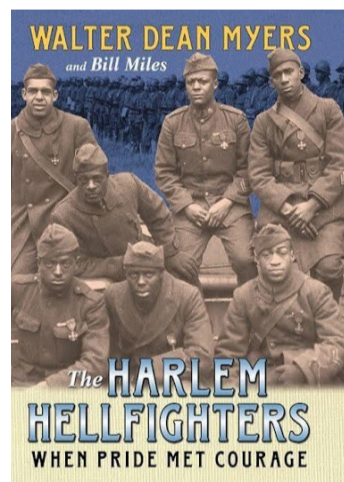
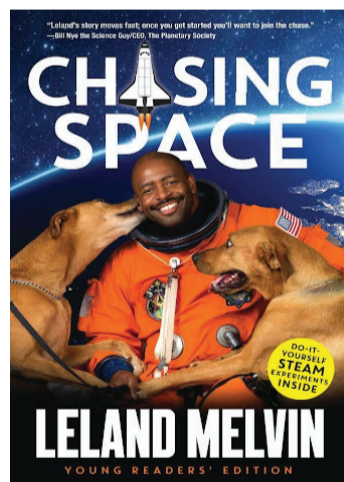
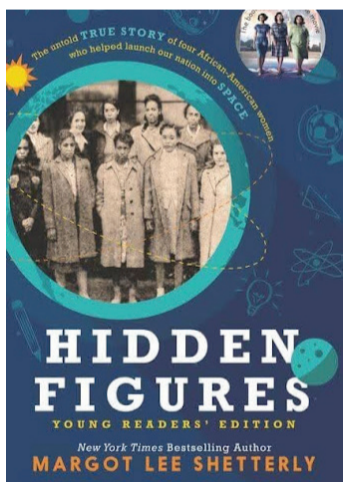


**ADDITIONAL SUMMER READING IDEAS:**

**Celebrate summer.** Read while on vacation or during road trips. Make a summer scrapbook and encourage your child to write down what they saw, what they liked, and favorite memories.

**Keep in touch.** Write your child a daily letter, or have others send them a letter, and have them read it to you. You can also help your child write letters back to friends and family members.

**Travel the world.** Encourage children to read about different travel destinations. Introduce maps and ask your local tourist bureau for information on travel destinations to read and discuss with your children.



## LITERACY FACTS

- 37% of fourth-graders in the United States read at a "below basic" level, according to the National Assessment of Educational Progress. According to NAEP, "below basic" means performance that falls below our lowest performance level. In simple terms, reading at "below basic" level means you cannot read.
- 56% of Black fourth-graders, 50% of Hispanic fourth-graders, and 57% of American Indian/Alaska Native fourth-graders are reading "below basic."
- 70% of fourth-graders, who are identified as students with disabilities, are reading at "below basic" levels.
- 67% of fourth-graders who are English learners are reading at "below basic" levels.
- 52% of fourth-graders eligible for free and reduced-price lunch are reading at "below basic" levels. This included children from families with incomes at or below 130% of the federal poverty line.
- 54% of Americans between the ages of 16 and 74 read at a level below that of the sixth grade (Gallup, 2020).
- Adults who struggle to read are more likely to be unemployed, underemployed, and incarcerated (World Literacy Foundation, 2018).
- A study by Gallup on behalf of the Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy estimates that low-literacy levels among U.S. adults could be costing the economy \$2.2 trillion a year (Gallup, 2020).

## TOUR THE NEW BLACK LENS OFFICES!

*Open House*

**July 11, 2024  
4:30 - 6:30pm**

**Schoenberg Center, 800  
N. Pearl St.**

LIGHT REFRESHMENTS.  
DOOR PRIZES. KID ACTIVITIES.

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE NEW  
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BLACK LENS.**





COMMUNITY AND CULTURE

# A PASSION FOR FOOD AND COMMUNITY



COURTESY PHOTOS  
 At left: Jordan Smith, right, stands in at his North Side restaurant Cascadia Public House  
 Above: Cascadia Public House is located at 6314 N. Ash St. in north Spokane.

## Cascadia Public House co-owner Jordan Smith devoted to industry, area

By Alethea Dumas  
 THE BLACK LENS

Jordan Smith is no stranger to Spokane, as he has been working in the restaurant industry since he was 16 years old. His journey over the years busing tables, dishwashing, delivery driving, and bartending sparked a passion for food and people that led him to creating and co-owning Cascadia Public House today.

"It's been a long process going from five owners down to a couple of owners including me now," Smith said. "We're extremely happy with where we are at and the success of Cascadia, and I feel like we're still growing and haven't hit our peak yet. We are crazy busy and I still meet people all the time that have never heard of Cascadia."

Smith has shared his path to Cascadia many times, expressing the importance of climbing the ladder, preparing for opportunities, and working hard in a society that seeks instant gratification and in Smith's words, "microwave success."

However, Smith's story goes deeper and beyond the success of Cascadia.

"At the end of the day I believe it's not what you do, it's who you are and your character that's most truly important," he said.

Smith gives credit to many of his role models that he looks up to, observes, and learns from that have made him who he is today. He refers to his wife, mother, and grandmother as his three most important Queens in his life.

Smith and his wife, Shannon Chan, have been together since high school, soon celebrating their 18-year anniversary. The couple has two little boys, Amari and Quincy.

"We have grown up together and she has been an amazing support system," he said, "always pushing me to be better, and still remains the greatest mother that I have ever witnessed."

Smith's mother had him when she was 18 years old, a single mother raising both him and his sister alone for many years.

"She was a kid when she had me and we were kind of growing up together sometimes," Smith said. "My sister and I never wanted for anything because my mom did everything in her power to make sure we were good and had everything we needed. We had a very good childhood."

His mother continues to be a great source of strength and support for him in everything he does. Smith describes his grandma as the sweetest woman in the world. "She has a special different type of love that is really close to my heart because she was like a second mom to me."

Additionally, Smith has had many male influences in his life that have shaped him into the man he has become. His father Randy Smith was born and raised in Oakland and known in Spokane for playing basketball at Whitworth University, and working as a bartender and security guard along with his teammates at Swaxx.

"After he left the Spokane area he was in and out of my life when I was young," Smith said, "but we continued to grow our relationship and get closer as I got older. It is crazy how much we are alike. He was competitive, a thinker, compassionate, and had a huge personality. A cool guy that everyone loved."

Smith was only 21 years old when his father passed away and he was determined and motivated to make his dad proud.

"My dad mentioned to me that he had dreamed of opening a bar, so it's cool to be able to come full circle and live out some of his old dreams now," he said.

Smith's stepdad MonRa Muse is one of the most influential men in his life. Muse is currently the regional director for the graduation success program at Treehouse for kids, which is a nonprofit that matches foster youth with men-

tors and provides assistance with helping them get set up with life once they age out of foster care.

"I actually have two adopted foster brothers and so the heart and compassion my stepdad has is endless," Smith said. "He took me under his wing at a young age, and challenged me to never quit. He made it cool to be a good person."

Smith's grandfather was the leader of the family, taking care of everyone while putting himself through college and owning his own chiropractic business for over 30 years.

"He was definitely an outlier in his family, being one of the only ones who achieved that type of success," he said. "He showed me how to take care of the family, be there for people, and be an entrepreneur. His dedication, consistency, and work ethic sticks with me. I am forever grateful to my grandpa for his continued support and guidance."

Growing up in Spokane, Smith was also influenced and encouraged by men in the community such as Larry Roseman from Larry's Barbershop and Bob Hemphill from Chicken N Mo.

"My dad and step dad both took me to Larry's Barbershop all the time," Smith said, "and I thought Larry and Q were the coolest men around. I loved going to the barbershop and seeing a Black man run his business, serve the community, and see people respect, love, and support him doing his own thing. Larry always called me little Randy and I don't think he ever knew how much he inspired me and influenced me growing up. I wanted to be a barber and open my own barbershop one day because of Larry."

Hemphill from Chicken N Mo not only provided Smith with good food to eat, but he also fed his mind and soul.

"In high school at Lewis and Clark I would go down to Chicken N Mo three to four times a week for lunch," Smith said. "Third period I would call in my order and it was ready for me when I got there so I had enough time to eat it and get back to class. Bob was always working but would still take the time to talk to me, and really pour into me."

"Seeing another Black man successful in his business that positively reaches and impacts the community was a game changer for Jordan and reminded him that anything is possible."

Lastly, five men that played an uncle role to Jordan and were best friends with his father really made a positive influence in his life.

"Those guys stayed around me even after my dad went back to California and after he passed," Smith said. "They checked on me and my family, supported my business, and really showed me what brotherhood looks like, what loyalty looks like, and the bonds you can build through basketball."

As for the influences in his life, Smith shared, "Those guys stayed around me even after my dad went back to California and after he passed. They checked on me and my family, supported my business, and really showed me what brotherhood looks like, what loyalty looks like, and the bonds you can build through basketball."

All these men have led Smith to understanding his influence and how he needs to pass down what he has been taught to his two sons and his community. Who Jordan Smith is has become his biggest strength today thanks to his three queens, his siblings who are his source of inspiration, his two sons and all his male role models and mentors.

Smith has spent four years coaching girls and boys AAU as well as training his two sisters who both went on to play college basketball. Jordan along with co-owner Robbie Hatch, opened Cascadia Public House in 2017 in Spokane's Five Mile Neighborhood. Since 2018 he's been coaching Lewis and Clark girls' basketball as a varsity assistant.

"I feel like the Lord has blessed me so incredibly much," he said, "and I feel like I have a duty to serve him and others in many ways from my team of over 30 people at Cascadia, to our guests



Jordan Smith poses with his wife, Shannon Chan, and two sons.

who are the livelihood of the restaurant, to coaching my high school girls basketball team at Lewis and Clark, to supporting friends, family, community and everyone in between. I am committed and determined to serve to the best of my ability and make all that paved the way for me as proud as possible."

"I am committed and determined to serve to the best of my ability and make all that paved the way for me as proud as possible."

# THE BLACK LENS

## Contributor Meeting

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**JULY 9 2024**

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JOIN EDITOR APRIL EBERHARDT AT THE THE SCHOENBERG CENTER TO GET ASSIGNED STORIES FOR UPCOMING ISSUES OF THE BLACK LENS.

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**JULY 9, 2024**    **SCHOENBERG CENTER**  
 800 N. PEARL ST.  
**4:30 - 6 P.M.**    **SPOKANE, WA**

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**RSVP: BIT.LY/493E9MW**

Manka Dhingra

Nick Brown

Pete Serrano

A CONVERSATION WITH WASHINGTON FOR BLACK LIVES

Join us for a moderated town hall for Washington State's Attorney General race.

16

JULY

Carl Maxey Center

3114 E. 5th Ave.

Spokane, WA 99202

6:00 pm

Start Time

Learn more about Washington for Black Lives  
[www.washingtonforblacklives.org](http://www.washingtonforblacklives.org)

## FROM THE FRONT PAGE

## AN EXCERPT: 'THE MEANING OF JULY FOURTH FOR THE NEGRO'

By Frederick Douglass

"What, to the American slave, is your 4th of July? I answer; a day that reveals to him, more than all other days in the year, the gross injustice and cruelty to which he is the constant victim. To him, your celebration is a sham; your boasted liberty, an unholy license; your national greatness, swelling vanity; your sound of rejoicing are empty and heartless; your denunciation of tyrants brass fronted impudence; your shout of liberty and equality, hollow mockery; your prayers and hymns, your sermons and thanks-givings, with all your religious parade and solemnity, are to him, mere bombast, fraud, deception, impiety, and hypocrisy - a

thin veil to cover up crimes which would disgrace a nation of savages. There is not a nation on the earth guilty of practices more shocking and bloody than are the people of the United States, at this very hour."

At the end of the speech, Douglass said, "In the fervent aspirations of William Lloyd Garrison, I say, and let every heart join in saying it'.

God speed the year of jubilee  
The wide world o'er!  
When from their galling chains set free,  
Th' oppress'd shall vilely bend the knee,  
And wear the yoke of tyranny  
Like brutes no more.

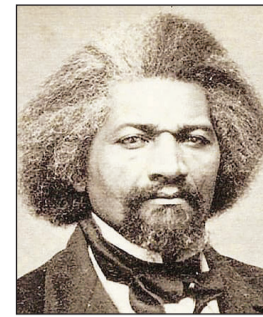
That year will come, and freedom's reign,  
To man his plundered rights again  
Restore.

God speed the day when human blood  
Shall cease to flow!  
In every clime be understood,  
The claims of human brotherhood,  
And each return for evil, good,  
Not blow for blow;  
That day will come all feuds to end,  
And change into a faithful friend  
Each foe.

God speed the hour, the glorious hour,  
When none on earth

Shall exercise a lordly power,  
Nor in a tyrant's presence cower;  
But to all manhood's stature tower,  
By equal birth!  
That hour will come, to each, to all,  
And from his Prison-house, to thrall  
Go forth.

Until that year, day, hour, arrive,  
With head, and heart, and hand I'll strive,  
To break the rod, and rend the gyve,  
The spoiler of his prey deprive -  
So witness Heaven!  
And never from my chosen post,  
Whate'er the peril or the cost,  
Be driven.



On July 5, 1852, Frederick Douglass gave a keynote address at an Independence Day celebration.

## PATRIOTISM

Continued from 1

Black patriotism also finds expression in cultural contributions that enrich the American tapestry. From literature to music, from art to sports, African Americans have shaped and influenced the nation's cultural landscape. These contributions are not just artistic expressions but also assertions of belonging and a demand for recognition of Black excellence.

African American patriotism is a complex topic to cover due to all of the factors that go into it. It really is a resilient and multifaceted expression of love for our country although it's also intertwined with a quest for justice, equality, and culture. We've continuously challenged and reshaped the nation, in a multitude of ways, such as the nations understanding of democracy and freedom, as well as fashion, food and slang.

All throughout history, African Americans have enriched the tapestry of American patriotism, to create a path that gets longer and thicker, toward a more inclusive future for citizens of all colors. African Americans have consistently demonstrated unwavering loyalty and pure dedication to the ideals of freedom, justice and equality.

From the heroism of black soldiers and veterans in the Civil War fighting for emancipation, to the groundbreaking African American figures like Bayard Rustin and Shirley Chisholm, alongside others during the Civil Rights movement, their contributions have been pivotal in shaping the nation's conscience and progress.

Through cultural



Second Lt. James Hayes Jr. of the 54th Regiment of the U.S. Colored Troops, Company K from Atlanta, Georgia, leads a group of fellow historic re-enactors during the Juneteenth People's Parade on June 19 in Washington, D.C.

## More online



See the video by scanning the [com/watch?v=NB5qbnkqoM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NB5qbnkqoM).

In the summer of 2020, the U.S. commemorated Independence Day amid nationwide protests for racial justice and systemic reforms in the wake of George Floyd's death. That June, NPR asked five young descendants of Frederick Douglass to read and respond to excerpts of his famous speech, "What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?" QR code or visiting youtube.

achievements in expressive art, music, literature, sports, fashion and food, African Americans have not only celebrated our heritage, but also changes to America, and the challenges we force upon this nation too live up to its promise toward liberty and justice for all.

Our patriotism is shown and more so vividly expressed through a rich tapestry and huge variety of traditions, forms of unique art and movements that support and celebrate our culture as well as our heritage. For

example, music has and will continue to play a very important role in such, with genres like gospel, jazz, blues and hip-hop, all of which expresses a powerful, vibrant flower of hope. Artists similar to Kendrick Lamar, Tupac Shakur, Nina Simone, and Marvin Gaye have used their influence, platform and music as one big place to spread hope, and a sense if patriotism rooted in desire to see American live up to its ideals.

Due to the upcoming events for the Fourth of

July, I think it's time to reflect on the contributions of the countless Black soldiers who fought in America's wars, dating from the Revolutionary all the way towards the Civil War, even toward the conflict of present day, despite facing heavy discrimination and racism. They fought for something that in fact, was not theirs. As this day is also an opportunity to acknowledge the bravery and courage that Civil Rights leaders like Fredrick Douglass. In this present day, celebrating Black patriotism on the Forth of July can and should involve showcasing Black cultural contributions through our expressions through art.

This day is about recognizing the ongoing journey moving toward a more conclusive society while not only promising love and commitment, but loyalty as well.

*Mya Jefferson is a student at West Valley High School and a founder of the communitywide Black Student Union.*

a good leader is, she emphasizes that it is "one who invests, one who pours, one who cares for the people they have been assigned to."

"I pour myself into other people," she added. "I want people to soar to greater heights than what I have done."

Reflecting on her favorite memory at Whitworth, Nobles-Beans unequivocally states, "My kids! My students!" She is on assignment, she says. With students coming from different geographical areas, socio-economic backgrounds, etc., Nobles-Beans made them her objective. She committed herself to being the best that she could be for them.

"I hope that I made my life count with these students," she said.

At the celebration of her retirement, over 200 people showed up to the chapel with hundreds of notes, letters, and cards.

"I had more blessings and learning experiences than I ever thought I would have had a predominantly white institution," Nobles-Beans said.

Where does Mama Beans go from here? She says that reinvention is good.

"The journey is changing for me. I'm not retiring; I am relaunching into a different journey, going to another destiny. I looked up the word 'launch,' and launch means to rejuvenate, to recreate and revitalize."

She aims to become a leadership coach, support the endeavors of her adult children, who are all successful in their own right, and continue to build her own business, SHE-BREWS To Lead Too.

## CHURCH

Continued from 1

I was asked to share the history of Calvary Baptist Church today because I am one of the members who has been there the longest. Shortly after arriving in Spokane, I was interviewed for my career start at Spokane School District 81. The interviewer told me about Calvary. I went there the very next Sunday and never left. This church reminded me of my home church in Tennessee. The friendliness, spirituality, education and community action were what I was accustomed to. I joined Calvary and made it my home.

As a member of Calvary Baptist Church for 56 years, I have served in many capacities including women's ministry, youth director, choir member, and trustee board. It is my honor and privilege to share in the history of Calvary for special events such as anniversaries and programs. My daughters Tameka and Heather grew up in this church. It was and still is a village. Calvary Baptist Church has continued its mission to give service to the Lord, the community, and its members for an amazing 134 years.

## Overview

The railroads brought many people to Spokane in search of a better life. Among them were Black people searching for a niche to call their own. They came in search of homes, work, and places of worship. They found no shortage of churches in Spokane, but none that could be truly called their church home.

In 1890, one year after Washington became a state, the state's first African American church was established in the city of Spokane by a small group of African Americans. A handful of Black settlers who had been attending the First Baptist Church at Lincoln and West Second decided that it was time to organize a church of their own.

On Sunday, Feb. 9, 1890, a service was held. The sermon was titled "The Gifts and Calling of God." Immediately following the worship Service, a meeting ensued and all present agreed that there was a need for a Black church; they committed themselves to making it happen. During the evening of Feb. 16, 1890, the small group voted to establish Calvary Baptist Church. The meeting concluded with a sermon titled, "Awake the One Sleeping and Arise from the Dead." There was a great deal of joy and anticipation about the future. Feb. 16, 1890, began a legacy that has grown stronger over the generations.

Calvary Baptist Church was not just a place of worship; it was a community gathering place for African Americans. It was the meeting place for the following civic organizations: the Colored Men's Business League, the Masonic Lodge, the local NAACP and served as a home to strangers, and military service members' families. It forged a strong supporting partnership with sister churches across the region, participated in cultural exchanges with area colleges, and established its voice as an advocate for freedom by hosting mass meetings for human rights and justice. The faith community

was integral in fostering the ideals of justice in the Black community of Spokane since the turn of the century.

Some of the historic achievements of Calvary include: Lifelong membership in the NAACP, being co-founders of the Pacific Northwest Baptist Convention, participation in the Expo '74 ceremonies, and opening its doors in the 1970s as the first Black church in Spokane to facilitate the Head Start early childhood learning program. Calvary is recognized for its historical significance by Eastern Washington University, Whitworth University and the Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture; it is featured in the Seattle African American History Museum. We are proud that the Senior Choir of 1977 recorded a long playing record and toured the Northwest, and that an ongoing college scholarship was established. In 1968, Calvary hosted the memorial service for the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The church also participated in the Bicentennial Celebration for Spokane. A community garden was established and members of the church grew and distributed food to members of the community. A food and clothing pantry was also established and run by our members. Calvary continues its outreach mission to the community through the soup kitchen that provides food and clothing for those in need. Reeds Hall was also renamed Andrews Hall. Recently the parsonage, home of the soup kitchen, was renamed the Andrews Annex and a television ministry was added. The history of the church has been featured on the Channel 2 Local Access Channel during Black History Month.

Calvary has the honor of having 14 outstanding pastors who have each contributed to the growth, development, and spiritual strengthening of its members over the decades. Each pastor embraces that idea that the service rendered unto others is the rent paid for one's room on earth. The Rev. Emmett Reed was the longest acting pastor before the Rev. Dr. C. W. Andrews. Rev. Reed came to Calvary from Butte, Montana. He brought with him several people who also became members of Calvary. During his tenure, the spirit of the church was so heightened that the membership increased 700%. During his time, the present church and the parsonage was purchased. The church was also renovated and a cathedral glass window was installed in the front of the building.

Under the leadership of the Rev. Dr. C. W. Andrews, for the past 50 years, the church has continued to grow and prosper. Through his sound fiscal management and organizational skills, the church building has been updated, new ministries added, and the membership continues to grow. Rev. Andrews has led Calvary and the community during our struggles for equality and has uplifted our culture. Winning souls for Christ is foremost in his life.

Calvary is still growing from the seeds of faith that were planted by the pioneers. The roots are alive and strong today. This church is a gift for those who worship here and for those who live in our community; it is 134 years strong.

## RETIRES

Continued from 1

marriage, she embarked on a journey of single motherhood and when her oldest daughter enlisted into the United States Air Force, she and her youngest two children relocated to Spokane in 1991, via Fairchild Air Force Base.

In re-establishing herself, this time around, Nobles-Beans went through a few different jobs. She landed a position at Whitworth as the administrative assistant to the vice president of student life in 1996. This was her launching pad for the leg of her journey that manifested into two college degrees and a platform that has influenced and inspired many for nearly three decades. She knew at some point she would complete her college education and in 2003, she and her son graduated together from Whitworth. As many people are gearing up for retirement, Nobles-Beans went for another milestone.

"The opportunity availed itself that I would go back to get my master's degree, at the age of 60, at the challenge of my son who said 'I double-dog dare you' to go back to school," she said. "So, I started at 60, in the master's program of leadership, graduating at 62. And the position I had at the time was what they called the multicultural coordinator, working with students of color."

Her boss saw something deeper in her; she had also been ministering at the campus chapel. He offered her the opportunity to teach as a professor.

"I wrote my first curricu-

lum with him; we taught Diverse Christian Leadership for seven years, and it was a beautiful journey doing that," she said. "Then I became the associate chaplain for Diversity Equity and Inclusion as well during that seven-year journey."

"I tell people that I've learned a lot working in DEI. I have seen the good, the bad, and the ugly."

In the human resources department, she also worked as a DEI trainer for faculty and staff. Witnessing transformation in people has been one of the most rewarding parts of her journey.

Diversity barriers tend to occur in spaces where different people must co-exist. Nobles-Beans says that in order for those barriers to be broken, people must want change.

"There are people who want change, there are people who don't want change, and there are people who don't care," she said.

She focuses on the individuals who want change.

"I'm a transformational leader and I only want to be in the room with people who want transformation for the betterment of humankind," she said. "We have so many people who want to change but they don't know how, but they are willing to have a changed mindset."

She recognizes that there can be a resistance to change that is rooted in fear. Her observation through the years is that when people are willing to take the journey even while afraid, they are better off for it. Not coming from a place of badgering or accusation, it is important, says Nobles-Beans,

to be transparent about the uncomfortable parts of history, otherwise we are bound to repeat it. She contends that we must stretch ourselves to learn, to have the hard talks, even if we do it afraid.

"It won't just affect us as adults, but it affects the next generation," she said. "So, we have to be willing to come to the table of compromise. I've learned not to wear my feelings on my shoulders, and my emotions, because when I step into the realm of emotions, I lose focus."

Struggling through disagreement in doing the work is par for the course. It is no easy feat to challenge peoples' perspectives, internal biases, and/or approach. To reconcile this, Nobles-Beans says, when wrangling through the process, it is important not to become overwhelmed. To hold your peace. And to guard our mouths.

"If people really want to wrangle and have courageous conversations," she said, "let's do it over a good meal."

In doing this, while there are differences that are inevitable, the similarities are where we can find strength. Maybe, says Nobles-Beans, this doesn't happen right away.

"When we get to the wrangling of things, how do we work through that? And sometimes that is hard," she said.

Knowing that collaboration is not always a straight line, Nobles-Beans emphasizes learning to listen, taking notes, clarifying, and understanding the difference between an asset mindset versus a threat mindset. When asked what

## TRAVEL

# A JOURNEY OF DISCOVERY: FROM SPOKANE TO AFRICA AND ISRAEL



By Teresa Brooks  
THE BLACK LENS  
CONTRIBUTOR



Growing up in Spokane, one of the whitest cities in America, was an experience that shaped my perspective

in unique ways. It taught me resilience, adaptability, and the importance of forging my own path. As a first-generation college graduate, I always sought to explore the world beyond the familiar confines of my hometown. This quest for knowledge and growth led me to incredible opportunities in Africa and Israel, where I lived, volunteered, and studied, immersing myself in diverse cultures and communities.

Living and working in Israel was a transformative chapter in my life. Volunteering with the OR Movement in Beer-sheva introduced me to the concept of self-sustainable community development. The OR Movement, a nonprofit organization, focuses on developing and strengthening communities in Israel's Negev and Galilee regions. My role involved hands-on work in community engagement, creating community gardens, and even working on pomegranate farms.

Studying Hebrew was another significant aspect of my time in Israel. The language not only helped me communicate but also deepened my understanding of the culture and history of the region. Living in a Bedouin community provided a unique insight into their way of life, traditions, and challenges, further enriching my experience.

My journey continued in Africa, where I faced an unexpected and enlightening reality. Despite being identified as African American all my life, my arrival in Africa revealed a different perspective. Many Africans perceived me as an outsider, highlighting the complexity of identity and the disconnect between African Americans and their ancestral roots.

In Sierra Leone and Cape Town, I delved into the history of the slave trade and its profound impact on the continent. Understanding how the slave trade led to apartheid and its eventual end in the late 1970s was both heartbreaking and enlightening. These experiences underscored the importance of education and awareness in bridging gaps and fostering mutual understanding.

Reflecting on my journey from Spokane to various parts of the world, I realize how my upbringing in a predominantly white city prepared me for these experiences. Spokane taught me to navigate different cultural landscapes without succumbing to a victimhood mentality. It instilled in me the drive to achieve and excel, regardless of my background or the obstacles I faced.

Living in one of the whitest cities in America also helped me appreciate the value of diversity and the importance of inclusion. It reinforced the idea that one's identity is multifaceted and shaped by a multitude of experiences and influences.

Traveling the globe, living in different communities, and embracing diverse cultures have been among the most powerful and transformative experiences of my life. From volunteering in Israel to understand-

ing the historical complexities of Africa, each step of my journey has broadened my horizons and deepened my understanding of the world. Being a first-generation college graduate from Spokane, I am proud of the paths I've taken and the doors I've opened. These experiences have not only shaped who I am but also empowered me to contribute meaningfully to the communities I am part of.

Connecting to Africa, particularly to regions like Freetown, Sierra Leone, holds profound significance for individuals of African descent worldwide. Understanding this connection requires delving into the historical context of the transatlantic slave trade, which tragically shaped the destinies of millions of Africans and their descendants.

The transatlantic slave trade, spanning centuries, forcibly displaced millions of Africans from their homeland, with many enduring unimaginable suffering and loss. Sierra Leone, situated on the West African coast, became a significant hub for the trade, serving as a departure point for countless enslaved individuals bound for the Americas. The scars of this dark chapter in history run deep, leaving an enduring legacy of trauma and injustice.

Despite the horrors of the past, Sierra Leone today is a resilient nation striving to overcome the challenges wrought by centuries of exploitation and oppression. Poverty remains a pervasive issue, exacerbated by factors such as political instability, corruption, and economic inequality. However, amid adversity, there are signs of hope and progress, with initiatives aimed at promoting education, healthcare, and

economic development gaining momentum.

Education stands as a beacon of hope for the future of Sierra Leone, empowering individuals to break free from the cycle of poverty and build brighter futures for themselves and their communities. While access to quality education remains a challenge, concerted efforts are being made to expand educational opportunities and improve literacy rates across the country.

For Black Americans, reconnecting with Africa holds immense significance, offering an opportunity to reclaim lost heritage and forge meaningful connections with ancestral homelands. Visiting an African country, such as Sierra Leone, provides a powerful means of bridging the gap between past and present, enriching cultural understanding and fostering a sense of belonging.

Moreover, experiencing firsthand the beauty, resilience, and vibrancy of African nations can be a transformative and enriching experience for individuals of all backgrounds. It offers a chance to confront historical injustices, celebrate cultural heritage, and engage in meaningful dialogue and exchange with local communities.

Every Black American should consider visiting an African country at least once in their lifetime, not only to pay homage to their ancestors but also to gain a deeper understanding of their own identity and place in the world. By embracing this connection, we honor the resilience and strength of those who came before us and pave the way for a future built on unity, solidarity, and mutual respect.

## TRAVEL DIARIES: BEING BLACK IN BALI



By Renika Williams  
THE BLACK LENS  
CONTRIBUTOR



I traveled to Bali, Indonesia for my honeymoon in May 2023, and it was an unforgettable experience.

The island is known for its stunning beaches and friendly people, but what really stood out the most was the lack of racism. As someone who considers themselves relatively well-traveled, having visited several countries in Europe and Asia including France, Italy, and South Korea, I've encountered a lot of subtle and not-so-subtle racism. In France, for instance, I was constantly followed around and watched in shops and dismissed socially as a "foreigner." In Bali, however, I felt genuinely welcomed and integrated into

the culture. I then found out that there is a growing population of Black expats and Black travelers that are making Bali their top travel destination.

Bali, part of the Indonesian archipelago, is home to over 17,000 islands and a rich tapestry of ethnic groups, languages, and cultures. Historical trade routes brought various ethnicities to the region, creating an open and diverse society. The Balinese, in particular, are known for their hospitality and openness to foreigners, deeply rooted in their Hindu-Buddhist traditions that emphasize tolerance and respect for all living beings. The concept of "Tri Hita Karana," which means three causes of well-being (harmony with God, among people, and with nature), is a central philosophy in Balinese culture.

During my stay, I discovered the thriving Black community in Bali, an



unexpected phenomenon considering the island's distance from the U.S. (The flights were 20 hours total!) I came across "Black in Bali," a community that started as a WhatsApp group for Black expats that has grown into a vital resource. On Facebook, the Black in Bali group has over 13,900 members. This group organizes events, provides support, and fosters a sense of community, helping Black travelers integrate smoothly into local society with initiatives like social gatherings, networking sessions, community service and even Juneteenth celebrations, ensuring that Black visitors and residents feel at home.

Personal accounts and travel blogs from other Black travelers often highlight the positive interactions they have had with the local population. I could say the same. On my trip, our local guide took me and my husband to a private temple

for a special water ceremony to honor my mother and her passing. I was prayed over and blessed by my guides and other locals, who showed me the type of respect and caring that I had been missing at home in New York.

Never before have I felt so seen and valued as a person, irrespective of my race. In Bali, I was able to move freely and be myself without the constant awareness of my skin color. It was a refreshing and liberating experience, and I look forward to returning to this welcoming island paradise. I hope other countries take note.

For more information about the Black community in Bali and resources for Black travelers, you can explore the "Black in Bali" website and community groups. They offer a wealth of information and support for those considering a visit or a move to Bali.

## HEALTH AND SPIRITUALITY

## WELLNESS: FROM THE WATER'S EDGE



Dr. Robert L. "Bob" Bartlett  
THE BLACK LENS  
CONTRIBUTOR



You might be wondering why I have been wasting your precious time writing about everything but Wellness—choosing instead to call out environmental racism and writing about the black “parents” of the environmental justice movement. Well, environmental issues connect deeply with race, class and gender wellness.

I am a sociologist by training, and we begin with the big picture. My goal was to introduce you to the metaphorical chicken, in this instance, our natural world, before the metaphorical egg, that's us. I prefer to take a holistic approach when trying to understand a human condition or when problem solving is called for. Assessing individual and community Wellness begins with understanding a people's natural environment. Specifically, what is the health or history of the land they occupy? What do we know about the water they drink, and the air they breathe? Are certain illnesses more common than others where they live? Understanding human wellness begins with understanding the environments we occupy—the two are inseparable. Simply, if the spaces we occupy, if the air we breathe, and the water we drink, are unhealthy, we are very likely, not well.

According to the Global Wellness Institute, wellness is associated with an active process of being aware and making choices that lead toward an outcome of optimal holistic health and wellbeing. According to them, wellness includes at least six variables: Physical, Mental, Emotional, Spiritual, Social, and Environmental. A solid wellness foundation includes the condition of the natural environmental es we occupy.

ies repeatedly health benefits in or near safe es with access Those who do,

live healthier, happier and longer lives. Young people who do, perform better in school and experience overall better health and well-being. Communing with nature is really good for us.

I'm fortunate to know the history of the ground I occupy and the neighborhood I live in. It was once an apple orchard that predated organic farming. The land was sold, the trees were cut down, their stumps dug up and the top two-three feet of top soil hauled off. Any toxic agricultural waste was likely hauled away with everything else. My neighbors typically own their homes and take pride in their appearance. The water is tested regularly and the air is, although sometimes smelly, breathable.

Too few black folks have the luxury to choose where they live based on the best wellness decisions. Besides crime statistics, we don't typically know the environmental history of our neighborhoods. We live where we can afford to live. And, it isn't always easy to learn of environmental threats we should be aware of. Being curious can bring much needed attention to hazardous environmental concerns. Mrs. Hazel M. Johnson, the “mother” of our environmental justice movement started the People for Community Recovery (PCR). What inspired her was the high number of premature deaths, birth defects and illnesses experienced by her and her black neighbors. Is it time to create our own PCR efforts?

There are environmental reasons why we, black folks, die young. We know the things that kill us. Here's a short list: exposure to toxic urban waste, hypertension, diabetes, obesity and heart related ailments. Movements begin when a few individuals take ownership of a cause. There are things we can single-handedly do in order to live healthier lives. We can educate ourselves on the environments we occupy. We can find people in political office who can push for positive changes in our neighborhoods. We can lobby for well-lit streets and sidewalks, more shade trees and more safe green spaces in our neighborhoods. We can push for vacant lots to be turned into urban gardens where we can grow our own food. We can seek others who can introduce us to publicly accessible nature areas like nearby

lakes and rivers. We can learn new hobbies that will increase our ability to enjoy those areas. Wellness and our exposure to our natural environments are inseparable. No chicken or egg dilemma here. Toxic environments predate us.



Dr. Bartlett is a retired educator. He retired from Gonzaga University in 2007 and Eastern Washington University in 2020.

## BLACK TENNIS: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE



COURTESY

Coco Gauff plays at the 2022 U.S. Open.



NEW YORK WORLD TELEGRAM & SUN

Althea Neale Gibson in 1956.

By Anyla McDonald  
THE BLACK LENS  
CONTRIBUTOR



As I sat at my black desktop within my living room floor, with my notepad on my right side, my pen within my right hand, with my sticky notes scattered against the wall, and Teddy Pendergrass playing on my bluetooth speaker in the background. My brain cells start to scan through all the black tennis players in our generation. At this moment, I felt as though I was scanning a QR code, the back of my debit card, or the barcode to my grocery items. Through this process of skimming, browsing, and searching, I squinted at phenomenal individuals like Serena Williams, Venus Williams, Coco Gauff, Taylor Townsend, Sachia Vickery, Naomi Osaka, Bryan Shelton, Frances Tiaofe, and Madison Keys.

About 10 minutes later, my brain peaks and blinks through a historical figure within African American tennis history. That amalgamated and consolidated the impending propagations probability to set the tone for the new African Americans children's children. So that they could have the aptitude and potency to break new records within tennis history. This African American woman contained strands that curled like ribbons, nostrils as wide as the top of a spoon, eyes that were shaped like a peanut, eyebrows that were thick as dough but as slim as a stick, full lips that were shaped like a rainbow and as pulp as a peach, eyelashes as tiny as a bead, with a mole placed under her bottom lip that reminded me of a tiny roly polly, with teeth as white as a cotton flower or a daisy, with ears as pointed as the tip of a pencil or the spikes that rest upon a cactus, and with legs that extend like a giraffe or a flamingo. Her name was Althea Neale Gibson!

Althea was one of the first black athletes to intersect the pigment line of worldwide tennis. While also becoming the first African American to win a Grand Slam occurrence. She was even the African American on the LPGA tour and she was inaugurated into the Tennis Hall of Fame in 1971 as well. Then

soon interpolated and intercalated into the Women's Sports Hall of Fame in 1980. She was ceaselessly remunerated and acclaimed for her ascendancy in winning five grand slam tournaments as she progressed. All because she decided to push through, even when lighter individuals repudiated her from putting her black hands on their tennis racks, tennis balls, and black feet on their tennis courts. Praying that she would never have the feasibility to contend against a race that was pale. Because of them not viewing her as laudable enough, light enough, felicitous enough, or meritorious. Just because she didn't have fair skin, straight hair, blonde hair, flat lips, and a narrow nose.

That is and will be the chocolate wax museum, caramel silhouette, and mocha mannequin of tennis. That will become the brown statues of liberties, holding on to the fire that electrifies within them. As they begin swinging their tennis rackets, running across tennis courts, throwing tiny tennis balls in the air, and wiping the sweat that flows through their scalps onto the flesh upon their foreheads. Wearing the fabric that hangs and yells out with power. Clinging on to the tablet that upholds the map to glory. As their torch reboots the energy within their right and left arm muscles. Wearing the hat that protects them from the sun's gaze and the rain drops that drip from the heavens up above. Completely withholding the declaration of independence in Roman numerals: July 4, 1776. Representing life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

This experience has taken me on an adventure of planting a spotlight on the black tennis players that elate little black boys and girls in today's world. Which helps me to better treasure and honor the adherence that these individuals put in. Even while enduring racial tautness and ignominious backlash. That happened over 30 years ago and has continued to happen now in 2024. That happens just to be worded differently, covered up with giggles, covered up with fake smiles, and stored within hidden news. With the intent of stripping them of their perseverance, willpower, and notoriety. But still they rise and walk the walk. In the most blackity black form, that will forever be remembered as blacknificent!

## This is what happens when you listen to your audience



COURTESY

Miss Darcei on TikTok talks about TIRTIR cushion foundation.

By Briana Fields  
THE BLACK LENS  
CONTRIBUTOR



Youthforia decided to use black paint and call it foundation.

While they took the feedback and did nothing with it, a Korean makeup brand has their customers' feedback to heart. TIRTIR was founded by a Korean beauty influencer in 2016. It's “curated with carefully chosen ingredients to prioritize product safety.”

TIRTIR (pronounced tear-tear) is “dedicated to delivering a coveted glass skin effect through skin brightening and hydration, making it an essential choice for anyone seeking clear, radiant, glowing skin (via skincupid.us).” Beauty influencers from TikTok have been sharing their experience with TIRTIR's newest cushion foundation. Darcei (@missdarcei on TikTok and YouTube) posted a video on March 27th of this year on the foundation. She noted how it initially started with three shades, gained popularity, and made six more shades, putting it at nine shades total at the time of the video. The darkest shade that

Darcei tried was 29, and she says her complexion is usually in the thirties shade range. She then goes on to challenge TIRTIR to grow their shade ranges and will fully support them. About a month later, Darcei posts another TikTok where she holds up a giant red-tiered box from TIRTIR with eleven new shades, bringing the shade range up to 20 and making TIRTIR one of the only Korean make-up brands to have the biggest shade range of foundation.

While Darcei was able to find her perfect shade range of foundation in this run, TIRTIR is still on its way to producing more shades to accommodate everyone. Darcei ends the video by saying TIRTIR will be releasing 10 more shades in the upcoming month. As of June 6, TIRTIR officially has 30 shades of the cushion foundation!

If you remember @Golloria from the Youthforia article in the June paper, she reviewed TIRTIR's cushion foundation with more shade ranges and gave them the “dark skin girl” approval. The formula of the foundation is lightweight and has full coverage. TIRTIR is currently working on having a website to sell in the USA, but you can find the red compact foundation on Amazon, skincupid.us, and yessrstyle.com.

## HEALTH AND SPIRITUALITY

# HOW TO TAKE OWNERSHIP OF YOUR HEALTH IN YOUR YOUTH

By Mya Jefferson  
THE BLACK LENS

## FREE WORKOUT IDEAS

- **RIVERFRONT PARK:** Great for walking, running, and biking with scenic views along the Spokane River.
- **CENTENNIAL TRAIL:** A 37-mile trail for walking, running, and cycling that stretches from Spokane to Coeur d'Alene, Idaho.
- **MANITO PARK:** Offers walking and jogging paths, as well as beautiful gardens to explore.
- **DOWNTOWN SPOKANE SKYBRIDGES:** These are great for stair workouts and offer indoor walking routes during colder months.
- **LOCAL COMMUNITY CENTERS:** Some centers offer free access to fitness facilities and classes. Check with specific centers to see what options are available.

Taking ownership towards your physical and mental health is vital for a magnitude of reasons. It not only provides a better view of yourself but lengthens your life span. Taking your mental and physical health seriously is crucial to giving yourself a better quality of life. Although at times maintaining good health, physically and mentally, can prove challenging, investing in yourself is an investment in your long term happiness and overall well being. Being in complete ownership of your own health in your youth can begin with changing and transforming the mindset of holistic wellness within our families, friend groups, and even with our parents and guardians. Making plans to do a fun, physical activity can help shift our mindset.

Exercising regularly heightens and strengthens physical fitness, but has lasting effects on mental wellness, including emotional balance. As a generation, it's good to work on minimizing the obesity count among all Black youth because of comorbidities such as type 2 diabetes and hypertension.

In America, obesity is a lingering problem tied to so many other health issues. According to resources, surveys indicate that 31.7 percent of American kids throughout the ages of two through nineteen are overweight, or just simply obese, including the 35.9 percent of all African American children of the same age.

By embracing activities that promote flexibility, strength, and overall health, younger individuals lay the foundation for a balanced, and healthy lifestyle for not only yourself, but others around you. When

you and your family prioritize physical health as well as mental health, and activities surrounding them, you're actively planting a metaphorical seed for a near future where your wellbeing is approached in a better way, prioritizing nutrition, mental wellness, and social connection into your own daily routines, as if they were always there. We as a whole need to prioritize these things in the same way we have with brushing our teeth and washing our face every day.

In the near future for physical health the fitness industry is hoping for and predicting a greater emphasis on workouts that not only improve physical strength but also consider emotional and mental health. Things like yoga, pilates, and mindful movement practices like blending physical fitness with stress reduction and emotional balance. As a society we'll have more technology and medicines, it should be a strict priority to use these advantages to the level they should be used at.

Planet fitness has taken a form of initiative to help the ongoing health issues and obesity rate among the youth by providing a completely free of charge summer pass for youth of ages 14-19. From now to August 31st if you want to take ownership of your health you can register.

Taking ownership of your health can also just be as simple as an easy walk or watching what you eat. It's surprising how much your health can impact you short and long term. When you do take initiative on your health it helps with body imaging, a clear mind and better head space, rise in activity levels, and more energy. By taking proactive steps to prioritize our health and well being, we empower ourselves to lead fuller, happier lives while setting a positive example for others to follow.

## Body and Soul health fair promotes access, education and action



By April Eberhardt  
THE BLACK LENS  
CONTRIBUTOR



the Divine Nine, sponsored a Body and Soul Health Fair at the Dr. Martin Luther King Community Center.

The event took place from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. with the purpose of promoting and understanding the connection between mind, body, and soul within the Black community. The planning committee for this event was Dr. Jeanne Baynes (Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.), Dr. Charina Carothers (Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc.), Dr. Shari Clarke (Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.), and Dr. Danni Oluwoye (Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc.). Participants received information on healthy eating, wellness resources, healthy snacks, and goody bags were provided. Wrist blood pressure monitors and first aid kits were distributed. Dr. Claudine Richardson (of Washington state Department of Health) conducted an environmental health disparities session, with a gift card incentive for attendees who were interested in participating.

Several other organizations were present to provide resources and awareness. Free health screenings were done by WSU medical students; Black medical and counseling professionals as well as community resource information tables were present.

Faith Washington understands the importance of representation in the medical professions.

A nurse herself, she provided information about various nursing program options in Spokane.

"I am promoting nursing in the community because most of the baby boomers who are nurses are retiring and there is a shortage in Spokane," she said.

At her table, anyone interested in nursing programs in Spokane could learn more. Among the schools represented were Washington State University, Eastern Washington University, the Community Colleges of Spokane, and Gonzaga University.

"I have applications for anyone who wants to have a career in nursing," she said. "That's my focus today."

When asked why it is so important to have Black people in the field of nursing, Washington shared the importance of advocacy for all patients: "There is an unconscious bias towards our black and brown patients, especially if they speak a different language or have a disability."

She continued to explain that when there are patients, for instance, with a hearing impairment or a speech impediment, or other disabilities, there is a duty to provide support to mitigate confusion. Nurses are foundational in this.

On Saturday, June 22, the National Panhellenic Council, comprised of nine historically Black Greek letter organizations, also known within the culture to many as

"I think it's important for us all, especially nurses, to be patient advocates for those who may be misunderstood, misrepresented, or have a hard time understanding the medical jargon that comes from the medical profession," she said.

Dr. Jeanne Baynes shared the Body and Soul Health Fair is an educational and interactive experience.

"There is healing power in community and building relationships," Baynes said. "June-teenth has commissioned us to build a strong and healthy community for generations to come. A community empowers us to be seen, heard, valued and respected. A healthy community impacts the quality of life for its members."

Other organizations and professionals represented at the event were Anna Franklin, Chief Diversity Officer of Providence, member of the Links, Inc., Spokane Chapter and founder of Maji Rising, Dr. Tanisha Morton, pediatrician and member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated. The Navigator: Services for Family Mental Health Crisis, and Aging and Long-Term Services (AL TSA) were also present to offer information and resources.

Dr. Clarke said that health care, and body/soul support are matters of priority because we need to not only take care of ourselves physically, but we also need to consider how we take care of ourselves emotionally and mentally. She mentions socioeconomic and psychological awareness as correlating factors to our overall health.

"It's so important that we come together," Clarke said. "We have always been a community that came together, that's rallied together to support one another. From pre-slavery, to slavery, to times on, we've always come together to support one another, to be there for one another."

As she reflected at the close of the fair, Clarke shared that it was a good event.

"A lot of learning, a lot of opportunities for fellowship, to network with one another, and of course, to get good information ... and to learn how to take care of ourselves," she said. "If you don't take care of yourself, you don't really have anything else. It's most important that you take care of yourself first, which enables you to take care of your family and friends."

The Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Center has been a home base of support in the Black community in Spokane for decades. Executive Director Freda Gandy shared, "I think today is so important because, first of all, a lot of fraternities and sororities came together to put on this health fair. The MLK Center served, as it does every day, as a resource hub. Hosting it here just made perfect sense, and I think it's important to do events like this so that we can educate our community, our Black community, and the community as a whole, about access to healthcare, how to take care of us and our bodies, and how we can live long, sustainable lives as well."

## WHAT'S THE DIVINE 9?

BY DR. JEANNE BAYNES

The **DIVINE 9** are historically Black Greek letter organizations that were founded between 1906 to 1963 by African Americans enrolled as undergraduates in various universities. Together they operate as the National Pan Hellenic Council. These organizations comprise 4 million members across the world. The founders of each organization created these sororities and fraternities because they could not join the predominantly white organizations in the 1900s. These organizations are committed to public service, scholarship, brotherhood and sisterhood and social action. They have made an impact on African American history and culture, and exist because of a desire to elevate themselves and their communities.

These organizations evolved during a period when African Americans were being denied essential rights and privileges afforded others. Members of the Divine 9 were heavily involved in several social justice movements such as: the Women's Suffrage march, Civil Rights Movement, and Black Lives Matter. They all promote excellence in education, especially higher education. Each organization has a programmatic arm that includes advocating for closing wealth and healthcare disparities, civil and voting rights, affordable housing, criminal justice reform, and creating jobs with livable wages. They all ascribe to robust community service and mentoring. These organizations have made significant strides to help unite Black communities across the United States and internationally and continue to be a catalyst for change on college campus-

es and beyond. To learn more about the history of these organizations, you can read "The Divine Nine: The History of African-American Fraternities and Sororities." by Historian Lawrence C. Ross.

### THE FOLLOWING FRATERNITIES AND SORORITIES MAKE UP THE NINE HISTORICALLY BLACK GREEK LETTER ORGANIZATIONS, KNOWN AS THE DIVINE 9:

Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. was founded on Dec. 4, 1906, at Cornell University.

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. was founded on Jan. 15, 1908, at Howard University.

Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. was founded on Jan. 5, 1911, at Indiana University

Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. was founded on Nov. 17, 1911, at Howard University.

Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., was founded on Jan. 13, 1913, at Howard University.

Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc. was founded on Jan. 9, 1914, at Howard University.

Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. is the sister organization to Phi beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc. and was founded on Jan. 16, 1920.

Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. was founded at Butler university in Indiana on Nov. 12, 1922.

Iota Phi Theta Fraternity, Inc. was founded on Sept. 19, 1963, at Morgan State University.

# 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 amanandatruckspokane@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** – Women 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 Brittney 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.spokanearearealestate.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 manysmile@comcast.net. 414 1/2 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 freshsoul-restaurant.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 Jacquelynn Sandoval. Contact (509) 460-8197 or JSandoval@windermere.com. 1620 E. Indiana Ave., Suite 1250, Spokane Valley, 99216. Instagram: instagram.com/thealestateauntie/.

**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 brownlismae@yahoo.com. 33 E. Lincoln Road, Suite 205, Spokane.

**Larry's Barber & Styling** – Barbershop owned by Larry Roseman Sr. and operated with Master Barber QC. Contact (509) 869-3773 or ljrbarberman@aol.com. 3017 E. Fifth Ave., Spokane, 99202.

**League of Women for Community Action, Non-profit, dba Southeast Day Care Center** – Nonprofit Child Care Center owned by League of Women for Community Action, Non-profit and Sug Villella, Day Care Director. Contact (509) 535-4794 or lwca.spokane@hotmail.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.

**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@mooreassistiveliving.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.

**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 Beginnings Hair & Beauty Salon** – Hair styling and braiding salon owned by Stephanie Tullos-Brady. Contact (509) 475-3556 or tullos\_stephanie@yahoo.com. 3019 E. Fifth Ave., Spokane, 99202.

**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@spokane-promobile.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 2gn-2tythoon@gmail.com. 3627 E. Broadway Ave., Spokane.

**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.

**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, 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, led by the Rev. James Watkins, has Sunday Services beginning at 10:45 a.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, 99202. Sunday School is 9 a.m. Sunday Service is 10 a.m.

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

**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.

**CORRECTION**  
Jasmin Ministries was incorrectly listed in the Business Directory in the June issue of the Black Lens. Jasmin Ministries is a church and is now properly listed in the Church Directory.

## NAACP MEETINGS

To join, visit naacpspokane.com/contact.

**GENERAL COMMITTEE MEETINGS:** Third Thursday 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 COMMITTEE:** First Tuesday at 5 p.m.

## EVENTS TO WATCH FOR

**JULY 11: COMMUNITY ACTION NETWORK COMMUNITY RESOURCE EVENT** – Free event teaches about area community organizations, programs, services and resources. 10 a.m.-11:30 a.m. The Hive. 2904 E. Sprague Ave. A/B/C rooms, plus booths in parking lot.

**JULY 16: ATTORNEY GENERAL TOWN HALL** – Washington for Black Lives hosts a moderated town hall for Washington state's attorney general race, including Manka Dhingra, Nick Brown and Pete Serrano. 6 p.m. July 16. Carl Maxey Center, 3114 E. Fifth Ave., Spokane. More info: www.washingtonforblacklives.org.

**JULY 17: EASTERN REGION CONNECTS** – "People, Place and Possibilities" events invites people to share thoughts, ideas, concerns with

the Washington state Department of Transportation about projects in their neighborhood. 5-7 p.m. Liberty Park Library, 402 S. Pittsburgh St.

**AUG. 3: SNAP RESOURCE CARNIVAL** – Free back-to-school resource carnival for families to obtain a variety of SNAP resources, like tax preparation and assistance in applying for the Working Families Tax Credit. Appointments with energy assistance team available, including Energy Conservation supply bags. Transportation, home repair, homeownership and business development staff available to talk. Fun games for all ages and free food available, including crafts, games, music, meals, popcorn and cotton candy. 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 3. Mission Park. 1208 E. Mission Ave.

## Black Lens pickup and distribution: Get on our list!

For newspaper pickup and distribution, please contact info@blacklensnews.org. Pickup is at Carl Maxey or Schoenberg at Gonzaga on Fridays before Sunday publication. The Black Lens is published the first Sunday each month.

Have you lost a dear loved one, who was part of Spokane's Black community?

THE BLACK LENS

*In remembrance*

We are offering free obituary services. Email info@blacklensnews.com with "Obituary" and your loved one's name in the subject line. Please limit obituaries to 400 words or less. A photo of the loved one is encouraged, but not required. We may lightly edit the obituary for brevity and clarity, but will otherwise leave it in its entirety.

# COMICS

## CURTIS • BY RAY BILLINGSLEY

**JULY 8**

HI, DAD, COULD YOU TOSS A COUPLA BUCKS MY WAY?

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE MONEY I GAVE YOU JUST YESTERDAY?

AH YES, IT CONTRIBUTED TO A MEMORABLE FUN-FILLED AFTERNOON! BELIEVE ME, I WISH I DIDN'T HAF TA ASK, BUT QUE SERA SERA!

IT'S NOT LIKE I HAVE A SUMMER JOB OR NUTTIN'!

FUNNY HOW YOU'D BRING THAT UP..

I PULLED SOME STRINGS AND GOT YOU A SUMMER JOB!

FOR R-REAL?

YEP, A FOR-REAL GET-YOUR-BUTT-OUT-OF-BED-IN-THE-MORNING-LEAVE-THE-HOUSE-AND-GO-TO-WORK JOB!

YOU'LL THANK ME AFTER YOUR FIRST PAYCHECK

**NOT LIKELY!**

**JULY 11**

DAD STUCK ME WITH A DOGGONE SUMMER JOB!

HE IS DETERMINED TO MAKE LIFE FOR ME MISERABLE! DOESN'T LOVE ME, PROBABLY... ... NEVER DID...

YOU DON'T MEAN THAT. YOU KNOW HE CARES. TAKE THE JOB. DO IT FOR HIM. DO IT FOR YOURSELF!

LITTLE BROTHER GUILT TRIP

OKAY, CURTIS, THIS IS THE ADDRESS FOR YOUR SUMMER JOB

DON'T LOOK SOUR. HAVING A JOB ISN'T A PUNISHMENT. YOU MIGHT ENJOY IT

YOU'RE RIGHT! IT'LL PROBABLY BE COOL COOL COOL!

OR NOT NOT NOT

**JULY 12**

HI, I'M CURTIS WILKINS, HERE FOR MY FIRST DAY OF WORK!

WE'VE BEEN EXPECTING YOU, YES?

I'M ISABEL HOBKNOCKER

AND THIS IS MY HUSBAND, RUPERT HOBKNOCKER

HI!

'E CAN'T SEE VERY WELL

YES I CAN! YOU TWO STOP HIDING!

I'M SURE YOU'LL FIND WORKING HERE IN THE FLORIST SHOP VERY REWARDING!

WELL, THANKS, MR. HOBKNOCKER, BUT ... I'M OVER HERE

COR!

JUMP

I'M SURE YOU'LL FIND WORKING HERE IN THE FLORIST SHOP VERY REWARDING!

**JULY 13**

## CRABGRASS • BY TAUHID BONDIA

**JUNE 28**

OKAY, SO, AT THE START OF THE SCHOOL YEAR, THERE WAS THIS NEW KID IN MY CLASS NAMED HAROLD, RIGHT?

HE WAS THE WORST!

HE WAS ALWAYS SAYING HOW SMART HE WAS. HE EVEN SAID HE WAS THE FASTEST KID IN SCHOOL WHEN EVERYONE KNOWS THAT'S TONY KEMP!

HE EVEN SAID HIS DAD OWNED THE TOY BOX™ TOY STORE. NO ONE COULD STAND HIM. THEN ONE DAY HE JUST DIDN'T COME BACK.

HIS LAST NAME WAS ACKERMAN.

H. ACKERMAN!

IT ALL FITS! HIS NAME MATCHES UP, AND HE EVEN HAS ACCESS TO VIDEO GAMES AT THE TOY BOX™!

HAROLD ACKERMAN HAS TO BE OUR GUY. BUT DIDN'T YOU SAY HE NEVER CAME BACK TO SCHOOL?

YEAH, THAT'S RIGHT.

WAIT A MINUTE! THERE'S AN ACKERMAN FAMILY ON THIS BLOCK! AND I THINK THEY HOME-SCHOOL THEIR KIDS!

MAN, WE'RE PRETTY GOOD AT THIS MYSTERY STUFF.

I'VE BEEN SAYING WE SHOULD GET A VAN!

**JULY 1**

AND IT'S LIKE, WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM ME? I WAS RAISED WITH THREE BROTHERS, YA KNOW?

BUT LISTEN TO ME RAMBLING ON. HOW ARE YOU THESE DAYS?

WHAT'S GOING ON IN MILES LAND?

LOOK, IF I CAN PRETEND TO CARE, THEN THE LEAST YOU CAN DO IS PLAY ALONG.

WELL, IT'S BEEN REAL, BUT THERE'S A NEW EPISODE OF PONY PATROL™ ON SEE YA.

OH, AND IT'S NOT LIKE ANYBODY WOULD BELIEVE YOU, BUT IF YOU TELL ANYONE I WAS NICE TO YOU, I'LL DENY IT.

FINE, YOU CAN COME WATCH PONY PATROL™ WITH ME, BUT NO TALKING.

**JULY 3**

Crabgrass story recap for those just joining us.

HEY, I GOT A NEW VIDEO GAME. OH NO! I'M ADDICTED TO IT!

WEAK!

UH-OH! THAT VIDEO GAME IS TURNING KIDS INTO ZOMBIES!

ALSO, REMEMBER US FROM THE ICE CREAM TRUCK?

YUP.

WE'VE FIGURED OUT WHO STARTED ALL THIS! LET'S GO GET 'EM!

MY MOM MIGHT BE A HOARDER!

I'M A ZOMBIE NOW, TOO!

WHO CARES?

HELLO, YOURSELF. WHERE'S HAROLD?

OH, YOU MUST BE HERE ABOUT THE ZOMBIES. MY BROTHER'S IN HIS "SECRET LAB."

FOLLOW ME.

WELL, THAT WAS EASY.

MAYBE TOO EASY.

THAT DOESN'T MAKE ANY SENSE.

MAYBE TOO MUCH SENSE.

**JULY 4**

## FOURTH OF JULY

# WORD SEARCH

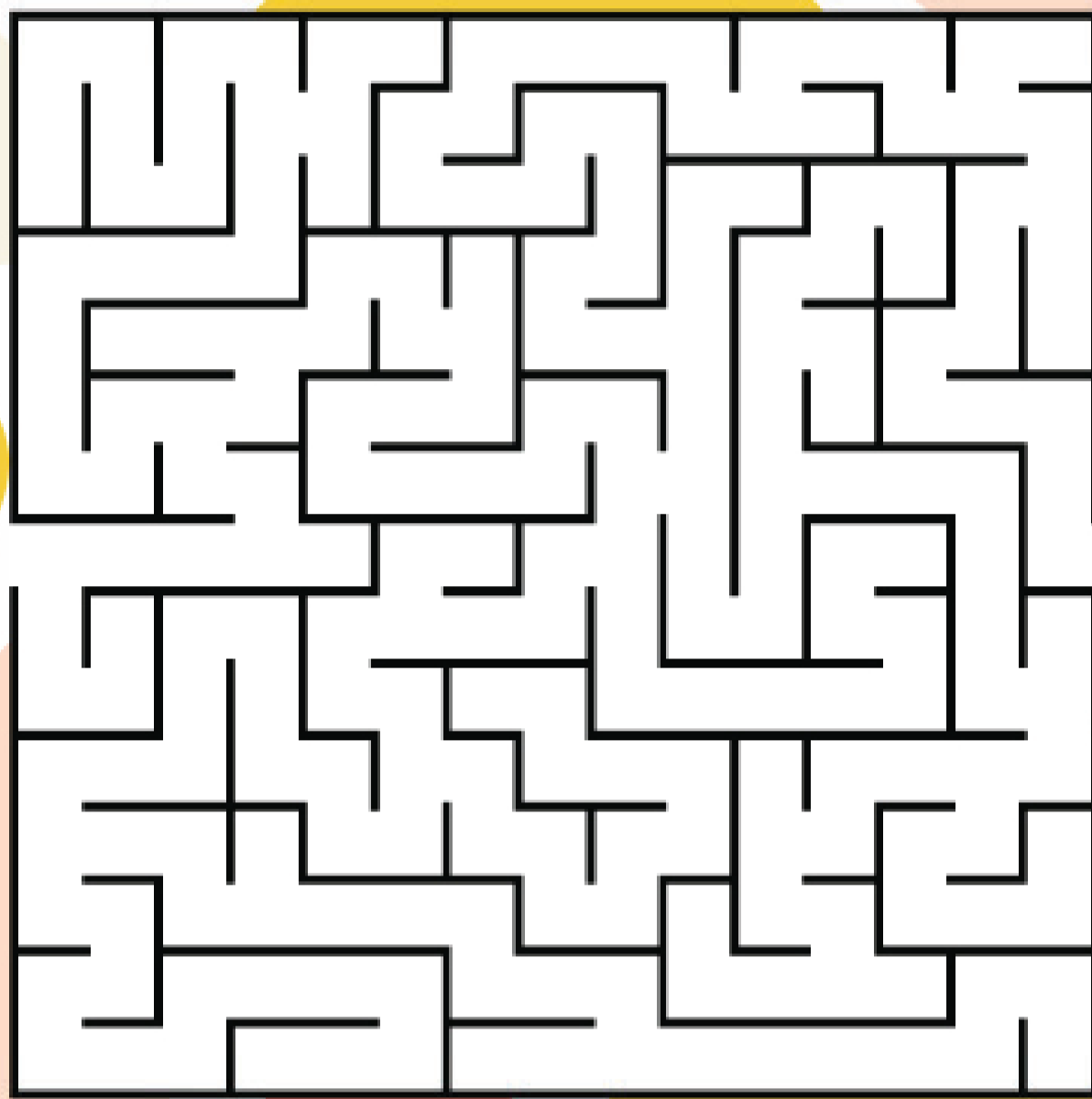
Fourth of July celebrations are always a blast! What's your favorite part of Independence Day? Search for it in the mix of letters below!

A F M R X F A Z B M F O Q O O  
 S I N D E P E N D E N C E F O  
 I C G Q D S K R O W E R I F E  
 Y E B E L S Y D C Z X D D E Y  
 I L O P I T E L B Z K N F P T  
 O E Q M B P C X R R F L I H U  
 M B M E E R O Q L P A C Q F O  
 O R Z Z R H M Y J G N C F C K  
 D A N S T P M H G I S Y F X O  
 E T T I Y S U S C D Y A F K O  
 E I E D S G N C H B O O Y W C  
 R O P U M P I P C W V L H P L  
 F N L W M I T L M V W V T M Q  
 P F I T S F Y F Z T C I M Z N  
 E S B U P S R Y R O T S I H H

- FIREWORKS
- LIBERTY
- FLAG
- COMMUNITY
- PICNIC
- CELEBRATION
- COOKOUT
- HISTORY
- FREEDOM
- INDEPENDENCE

# KIDS CORNER

## KIDS CORNER: MAZE TIME!



### POETRY CORNER

## Mirror of Delusions

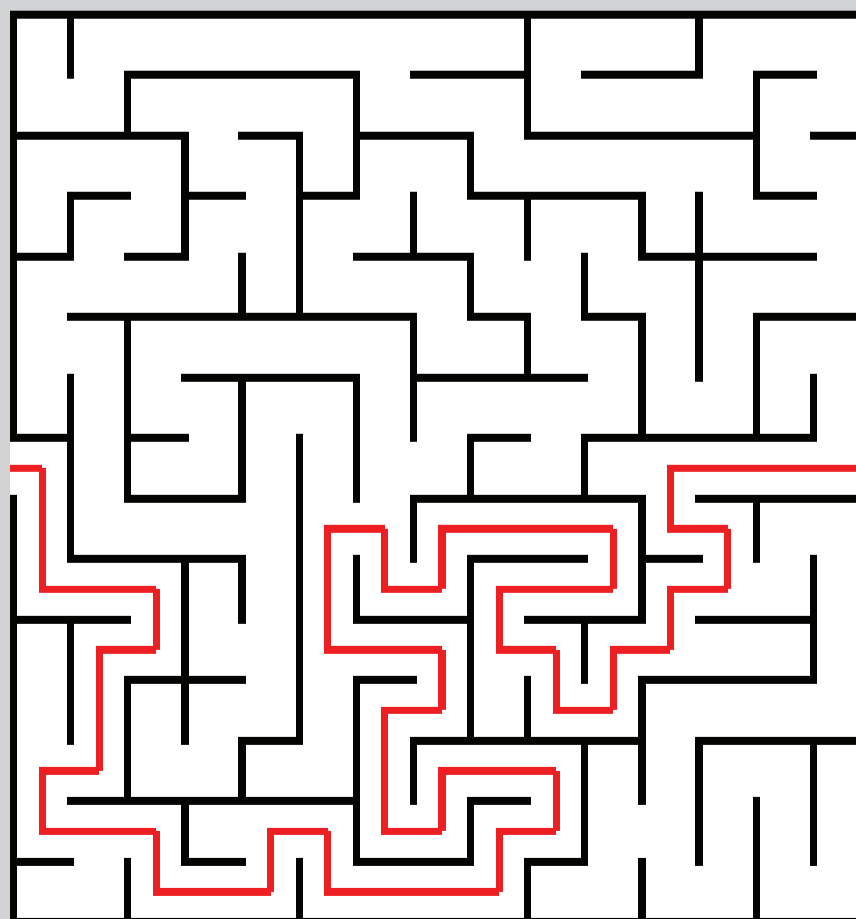
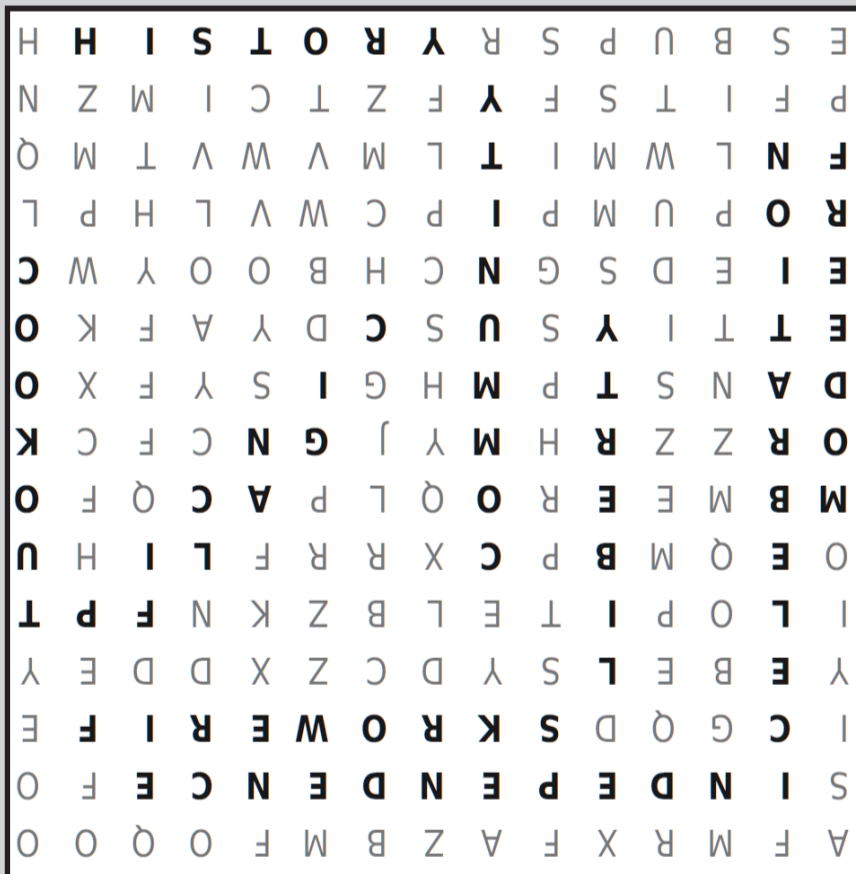
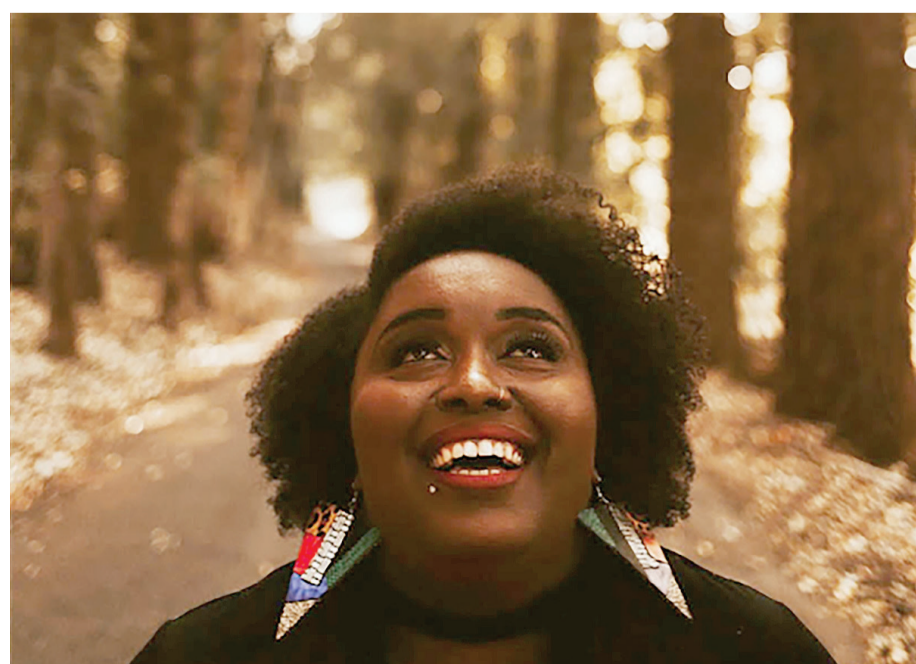
By Alethea Dumas

Staring at my reflection in the mirror, I wonder will I ever be able to stare long enough before the voices in my head shatter the crystalline mirror into a thousand pieces, peppering my face with half baked perceptions of who I should be. Constructed delusions become my reality.

Only being able to stomach my own gaze while putting on a new face. Painting on a false grin stretching from ear to ear, hiding the never ending frown tattooed to my face. Hoping this long lasting lip stain, stains the very truth of my pain.

Penciling my eyes to a perfect shape to mask the laser scars of my failing ways. Stroking my face with powered fleeting happiness, covering the very pores of my own brokenness. Staring at my reflection in the mirror, I wonder will I ever be able to see me.

Me not defined by the voices in my head and the brokenness inside. Melting the shattered pieces of false deceptions and crafting these once fake perceptions into a window of clarity. A clarity so pristine I can finally see me, a human being, a beautiful black queen!



PUZZLE SOLUTIONS