

BLACK LENS 5TH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

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Spokane's Black Community News Source

THE BLACK LENS SPOKANE NEWS FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

Income Inequality and the Racial Wealth Gap

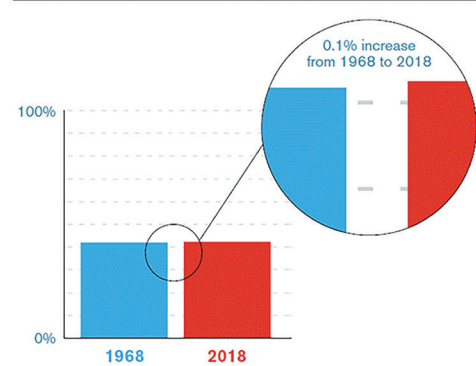
By Charlene Crowell

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - For more than 40 years, the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) has served as a mechanism for the federal government to hold banks and other depository institutions accountable for meeting the credit needs of low and moderate income (LMI) neighborhoods. Enacted in 1977, the CRA has the power to influence applications for bank mergers, charters, acquisitions, and branch openings.

On October 4, a bicameral group of Capitol Hill lawmakers wrote a letter to federal regulators, making clear the need for CRA to be strengthened – not weakened – under the guise of modernization. The letter also requests hearings on the issue in both the House Financial Services Committee and in the Senate Banking Committee.

Although the lawmakers acknowledged how banking, like so many other industries, has changed over several decades, the thrust of their letter was that any mod-

Homeownership rates among African Americans in 1968 and 2018

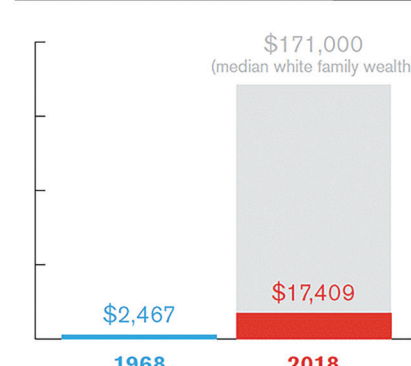


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ernization must also reflect CRA's original intent: to serve all communities with "the types of credit and investment those communities need."

"Regulators cannot determine how a bank is serving the needs of its local commu-

Median family wealth of African Americans in 1968 and 2018



nity by relying on a simple ratio or dollar volume metric", wrote 21 Members of Congress and 8 U.S. Senators. "Instead examiners should review whether banks are reaching the borrowers and neighborhoods that CRA was intended to serve."

"While it is important that, in the face of new technologies and products, we appropriately assess lenders' efforts to serve all communities with the types of credit and investment those communities need, it is even more essential that the original purpose of the law not be undermined," added the lawmakers.

The lawmakers' concerns are reinforced by worsening income inequality and the growing and persistent racial wealth gap. For example, a 2018 joint report by the Brookings Institution's Metropolitan Policy Program and Gallup, found that when it comes to race, the economic playing field is far from equal.

The Devaluation of Assets in Black Neighborhoods, published last November, zeroed in on homeownership, often the building block for financial stability, wealth accumulation, and how well the credit needs, i.e. mortgages, of a community are being met.

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The Spirit of the Emancipation Proclamation is Under Attack Again Today



By Jesse Jackson

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - Wednesday, Jan. 1, began the new year. It also marked the anniversary of a new America.

On Jan. 1, 1863, as the Civil War, the bloodiest of America's wars, approached the end of its second year, President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, declaring "that all persons held as slaves" within the rebellious states "are and henceforward shall be free." The Proclamation was limited to fit wartime necessities. It applied only to the states that had seceded from and were at war with the United States, leaving slavery untouched in loyal border states.

It also exempted the parts of the Confederacy that had already come under Northern control. And, of

course, the freedom it promised depended on the victory of the North. Yet, the Proclamation's effect was far more expansive than its terms.

It transformed the war into a war of freedom. As the U.S. Archives summarizes, "Every advance of federal troops expanded the domain of freedom." And of course, it dramatically aided the Union cause, with nearly 200,000 black soldiers and sailors fighting for the Union. The Proclamation was the beginning. Upon victory, Congress passed three amendments to the Constitution — the 13th, 14th and 15th Amendments — designed to finish the job of transforming the country that was, in the words of Abraham Lincoln, "half slave and half free" to one in which all were guaranteed — under the Constitution — the "blessings of liberty."

The 13th Amendment outlawed slavery and involuntary servitude; the 14th began to define the rights of citizens and guaranteed equal protection under the law; the 15th prohibited discrimination in the right to vote on the basis of "race, color, or previous condition of servitude." (Ironically, the Constitution still does not guarantee the right to vote to all).

The amendments, forced upon the defeated Southern states as a condition for re-entry into the Union, launched the reconstruction that sought for a few short years to bring the country together. Newly empowered blacks joined with progressive whites to build coalitions that transformed state constitutions, guaranteeing the right to education, launching programs to provide more equal justice under the law.

Sadly, Reconstruction met with fierce reaction across the South. Segregation masters succeeded the slave masters. The Ku Klux Klan, formed by the elites of Southern communities, terrorized newly freed blacks. The right to vote was sabotaged by various tricks and traps, from the poll tax to unequally administered tests on the Constitution, to simple threat and terror. In 1896, the Supreme Court to its shame ruled that apartheid — the mythic "separate but equal" standard — was legal in the United States.

By the turn of the century, segregation was the law of the land. It took 100 years and the historic civil rights movement to overturn that reaction, and to begin to reclaim the promise of equal justice under the law and the revive the right to vote. The

civil rights struggle, which united the movement of courageous citizens on the ground with the force of Lyndon Johnson in the White House, produced, among other legislation, the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act that brought America closer to its promise. Today, we once more see the stirrings of reaction against that reconstruction.

Racial division, stoked cynically from the highest offices in the land, once more is on the rise. African Americans, Latinos, Jews, Muslims, gays, women — all once more feel the rise of resentment and often of hate. The Supreme Court has gutted a critical part of the Voting Rights Act. States under reactionary governors are inventing new ways to restrict access to the vote. Will this reaction be as successful as that which undermined the promise of the Emancipation Proclamation? America, I believe, is better than that. Our democracy is stronger than it was then. We can mobilize and vote in large numbers to keep expanding the domain of freedom.

On this Jan. 1 and beyond, let us remember the Emancipation Proclamation, signed by the greatest of our presidents, a Republican, and devote ourselves to redeeming its promise.



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ON MY MIND

THOUGHTS FROM THE EDITOR

by Sandra Williams

Now What?

Probably nobody is more surprised than I am that January 2020 marks the fifth anniversary for the publication of the Black Lens. Who would have thunk?

I would love to be able to say that publishing a small African American newspaper in a city like Spokane had always been my dream, it makes this whole thing a little more romantic, but to be honest, when I set out on this adventure five years ago, it was primarily a distraction that I was looking for and busyness that I needed to find a way through the pain that I was feeling at what was becoming the imminent loss of my father.

I'm a Virgo and Virgos are doers at our core. So, the best way to deal with something that I could not control was to find something to do that I could control. That something turned out to be the Black Lens. Little did I know that within that need to do I would discover so much more.

I still remember sitting in my car the afternoon in 2015 that I picked up the first batch of newspapers. I was parked in front of Garland Printing with 500 copies of the Black Lens stacked in rows on my back seat. Staring at the papers.

I don't get scared very often, but in that moment, I was scared to death. Ideas are fun and exciting and glorious when they are in your head, because when they are in your head they are perfect. And you are a hero. A rock star. But when the ideas hit the light of day, there is always a chance, a big chance, that the image of that rock star that lives in your head will end up a little tainted.

As I sat alone in the car that January, I remembered an idea that I once had years before. I was going to put on a concert to raise money to fight against apartheid. It was a magnificent idea. But in reality, nobody came, and the fundraiser was a dismal failure. An embarrassment really. One that my brother had to bail me out of financially.



So, that's what I was thinking about five years ago. My failures and embarrassments. Not how the paper was going to celebrate the Black community or provide a much needed voice or challenge Spokane's lingering racial disparities. None of that. I was just worried, that I would fail again.

But fortunately I had enough sense to pick up the phone and call my daughter. "I don't know what to do." I sighed from my car, near tears. Rather simply she responded, with what I'm sure had an accompanying eye roll that I could almost see through my cell phone. "Go hand them out, mom!" She said. So I did.

This journey has been an amazing one, with the requisite ups and downs that life seems to save for you when you step out on faith. The downs have been pretty painful, we can be a pretty tough community to navigate, and the challenges (particularly the financial ones) have not been a lot of fun.

But on the flip side, I have laughed, learned and experienced more in the past five years than I ever expected. I have been embraced and supported in ways that I never imagined, and I have developed an understanding and love for my people that is so much deeper than I knew was possible.

I was asked not too long ago if I would do this all again, even if I knew everything that I know now. I didn't have to think about it very long, because even though every month during deadline I'm ready to throw in the towel, the answer was still a resounding "absolutely yes". I'm not sure where this paper is going next but I hope you'll stay along for the ride. Thank you Spokane!



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THE BLACK LENS NEWS

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

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Thank You Spokane for 5 Years in Print!

Black Lens Anniversary Party

Tuesday, February 11

6-8pm

The Gathering House

733 W Garland Ave, Spokane

YOU SHOULD KNOW

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

ART AND HISTORY by Bertoni Jones Bey

Noble Drew Ali

Noble Drew Ali was born January 8th, 1886 in North Carolina under the birth-name of Timothy Drew. His father was a former slave and his mother was of Cherokee and Moorish descent.

Ali's family later moved to Newark, New Jersey where he stayed with a very cruel and abusive aunt who left him with lifelong scars. He left his aunt and by age twelve joined a traveling band of circus gypsies before later boarding a freighter bound for Egypt at age sixteen in 1902. (This statement should dispel any claim that Noble Drew Ali was ever a freemason).

There for more than ten years Ali prepared to become a high holy adept in delivering a great message for his fallen people in the North American wilderness. Upon being ordained a true moslem he entered the Holy City of Mecca to begin his "Hajj" or spiritual pilgrimage. Upon completion of his spiritual trek, Ali's holy name became El Hajj Sharif Abdul Ali (The name "Ali" may only be bestowed by an adept, no one may name themselves Ali – a title representing the 36th of the 99 attributes of Allah).

Ali returned to Newark in 1912 to begin his divine ministry urging his followers to adopt the five principles of love, peace, truth, freedom, and justice, while showing them their free national name of Moor connects them to the ancient Moabite Nation of Northwest Africa aka Northwest Amex-em (KJV – Book of Ruth, Ruth the Moabitess).

After a year, Ali formed The Canaanite Temple later renamed the Moorish Science Temple of America (MSTA). He showed his lost Moorish Nation that American slavery brought on two schisms – the sanctioned physical slavery between 1779-1865 and the mental slavery from 1868 onward.

Moorish Science Temples began to pop up in major cities across the land at a time when "Blacks" were showing greater interest in understanding their true identities and heritage. Since Mecca is the spiritual sister city of Chicago, Drew Ali moved there and registered Temple No. 9 and Chicago as the center for Moorish affairs.

In 1928 Drew Ali was invited to the Pan American Conference for Indigenous Nations in Havana, Cuba. Though operating in a Non-Governmental Capacity (NGO) he was able to register and link his free nation (Moorish-Americans) to the other families of Earth.

Many folks have erroneously assumed religious and cultish intentions within Noble Drew Ali's work, but in fact the master key to his missionary work was to reconnect his lost nation to their divine and national family rights secured by the Supreme Law of the Land – "Money doesn't make the man, it is free national standards and power that makes a man and a nation."

Sources:
Exhuming Of A Nation – Sheik Elihu N. Pleasant-Bey; A Divine Warning By The Prophet For The Nations – Prophet Noble Drew Ali; 101 Questionnaire – Prophet Noble Drew Ali; King James Version of the Holy Bible – The Book of Ruth; northgate.network





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A large group photo of NAACP NextGen 2019 members and staff. Many are wearing black t-shirts with the NAACP logo. The text "NAACP NextGen 2019" is overlaid on the top right of the image.





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BLACK NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Local, State, National and Around the World

Miss USA, Miss America, Miss Teen USA, Miss Universe and Miss World are all Black Women

(Source: Holly Yan, Kendall Trammell, Reprinted from cnn.com)

(CNN)For the first time, top beauty pageants -- Miss USA, Miss Teen USA, Miss America, Miss Universe and now, Miss World -- have crowned black women as their winners at the same time.

And that's a big deal if you know pageant history.

Beauty pageants early in their histories, some dating back to the 1920s, barred women of color from participating. Even after organizations began changing their rules to accept women of all races, there was still a lingering frustration and opposition to join.

Only in the last 50 years have Black women become more



prevalent in these competitions. Janelle Commissiong was the first Black Miss Universe in 1977, Vanessa Williams was the first Black Miss America in 1983, and Carole

Anne-Marie Gist, the first Black Miss USA contestant, was crowned in 1990. The following year Janel Bishop became the first Black Miss Teen USA.

When Toni-Ann Singh of Jamaica was crowned as Miss World, she joined a historic group of Black women, along with 2019 Miss USA Cheslie Kryst, 2019 Miss Teen USA

Kaliegh Garris, 2019 Miss America Nia Franklin and 2019 Miss Universe Zozibini Tunzi.

"I think Black women need this," Miss America 2019 Nia Franklin told CNN's "New Day". She continued, "It's a symbol, and it shows that no matter where you're from, what country you're from ... you can be successful." Miss Universe Zozibini Tunzi told CNN it's important that young girls look at the history-making quintet to see that anything is possible.

"We can't be what we cannot see," Tunzi shared. "I think that's why this is so important, because then young girls can look at us and feel like they, too, are important."

John Lewis Prepares to Fight Pancreatic Cancer



(Source: Hazel Trice Edney, TriceEdneyWire.com)

Civil rights giant John Lewis, representing Georgia's 5th Congressional District in the U. S. House of Representatives for 32 years, has announced that he has been diagnosed with stage four pancreatic cancer and that he is up for the battle. "I have been in some kind of fight – for freedom, equality, basic human rights – for nearly my entire life. I have never faced a fight quite like the one I have now," stated the storied congressman.

According to a statement posted on his Congressional website Sunday, doctors gave him the diagnosis following a "routine medical visit, and subsequent tests". He sought and received reconfirmation.

Lewis is perhaps best known for his leadership on "Bloody Sunday", March 7, 1965, when Georgia state troopers brutally assaulted him and others as the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), which he chaired, crossed the Edmund Pettus Bridge, marching from Selma to Montgomery.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "pancreatic cancer is the fifth leading cause of death from cancer and the 11th most common cancer in the United States." However, the CDC also reports that "the five-year survival rate" from pancreatic cancer has slightly improved in recent years. Among Whites, the five-year survival rate is at 5.4 percent and among Blacks, the five-year survival rate is at 4.3 percent, according to the CDC.

Congressman Lewis, a man of faith who has faced many a battle on behalf of others, says he is prepared to fight for his life through medical science and prayer. "I am going to fight it and keep fighting for the Beloved Community. We still have many bridges to cross," Lewis stated

Earth, Wind & Fire Becomes First African-American Music Group Inducted Into Kennedy Center Honors



Source: Cathy Applefeld Olson, billboard.com; newsone.com)

Earth Wind & Fire were inducted into the 42nd Annual Kennedy Center Honors in a televised ceremony on December 8, making them the first Black group to be recognized in that way, according to Billboard magazine. Surviving Earth Wind & Fire members Verdine White, Philip Bailey, and Ralph Johnson accepted the honor during an awards ceremony at the Washington D.C.-based John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Band members accepted the award on behalf of the group's founder Maurice White who passed away three years ago.

"The Kennedy Center Honors celebrates icons who, through their artistry, have left an indelible stamp on our collective cultural consciousness," said Kennedy Center Chairman David M. Rubenstein in a statement. "Earth, Wind & Fire's hooks and grooves are the foundation of a seminal style that continues to shape our musical landscape." During the ceremony, artists John Legend, Ne-Yo, and Cynthia Erivo performed renditions of classic Earth Wind & Fire songs. The group, which will celebrate 50 years next summer, according to Billboard, is one of the best-selling musical groups in the music history has sold over 100 million albums worldwide.

Other honorees during the December 8 program included American conductor Michael Tilson Thomas, actress Sally Field, singer Linda Ronstadt, and the show Sesame Street.

Richard Sherman Pays Off Lunch debt for Tacoma Kids



(Source: Sammi Bushman, KING 5 Staff, king5.com; Associated Press, Kipp Robertson, Jennifer King; Photo Credit: Joe Nicholson-USA TODAY Sports)

TACOMA, Wash. — Former Seahawk Richard Sherman paid \$20,000 of lunch debt for students in the Tacoma School District, according to the NFL Players Association (NFLPA). He also helped cover debt for students in Santa Clara, California. "The last thing any child should have to worry about is being able to afford eating breakfast and lunch," Sherman said.

This comes just more than a week after Sherman helped re-stock the shelves of the Maple Valley Food Bank and two others in Washington state through his Blanket Coverage Foundation.

Sherman is known for his rapid response charity acts, like sharing and donating to a Compton Pop Warner football team's GoFundMe page in order to help them raise enough money to attend the National Youth Football Championship in Florida.

Sherman was recently honored for his volunteer work with a Week 11 NFLPA Community MVP award. Sherman's charity organization, Blanket Coverage, aims to help students achieve their full potential by donating school supplies across America.

Note: Marshawn Lynch is back in Seattle playing for the Seahawks. According to King 5 News, his agent Doug Hendrickson confirmed the news with a picture of Lynch's NFL Player Contract. After rumors started swirling Monday, Seahawks Coach Pete Carroll confirmed with 710 ESPN Seattle that running back Marshawn Lynch was meeting with the team to discuss a potential return. Lynch signed a deal for the rest of this season only, reports ESPN NFL insider Adam Schefter.

BLACK NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Local, State, National and Around the World

Black News Channel Network Launches in January 2020

By Stacy M. Brown

NNPA Newswire Senior Correspondent, @StacyBrown-Media; blackpressusa.com)

Washington, DC — On January 6, 2020, the Black News Channel (BNC) will become the nation's only 24-hour news and information television network focused primarily on African Americans. The historic launch of the BNC will fulfill the business dream and vision of J.C. Watts, Jr., a nationally known entrepreneur and former U.S. Congressman, Representing Oklahoma's Fourth District.

Programming will include special news features on topics that most affect the quality of life of communities of color – like Sickle Cell Disease and hypertension – that generally aren't given much attention to by other news outlets. The BNC has also established a news-content alliance with the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA), representing the Black Press of America, via 225 African American-owned newspapers and digital companies throughout the United States.

The Tallahassee, Florida-based BNC counts as the brainchild of J.C. Watts, Jr., who is described by Tommy Ross, the network's director of communications, as "a father, husband, grandfather, business owner, entrepreneur, author, elected official at the state and federal level, a pastor, and a rancher who grew up in a small town in Oklahoma."

In reality, Watts appears as much more, and those who know him, understand that he's a Republican conservative whose accomplishments cross party lines. Watts is also a former All-Star quarterback who played college football in Oklahoma and pro ball in Canada.

His congressional accomplishments and living legacy are noteworthy, including:

- Helped Black farmers get some justice on a discrimination suit against the United States Department of Agriculture.

- Helped push through legislation for the African American Museum of History and Culture.

- Sponsored HBCU summits to establish relationships and better understanding between students and Republican policymakers.

- Sponsored anti-poverty legislation (community renewal/new markets tax credits).

- Led Congress in highlighting minority health care disparities.

- Led on the Republican side against sentencing disparities between crack/powder cocaine.

- Led in getting funding to fight malaria in West Africa. Sponsored Africa growth and opportunity legislation.

"We've done a lot as African Americans," Watts stated before referencing a recent statue unveiling that took place in Richmond, Virginia, earlier this month. "Rumors of War," a statue by artist Kehinde Wiley, was unveiled on December 10 during a ceremony at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. The figure depicts an African American man dressed in contemporary clothing riding a horse, echoing the equestrian sculptures of Confederate soldiers.

"Rumors of War" was reportedly Wiley's response to the Confederate monuments that pepper the U.S. and the South in particular. The new memorial arrived amid an ongoing debate across the country about what to do with Confederate imagery. "This was history," Watts said of the statue. "Because, if we talk about the slave owner, how can we ignore the slave? African Americans contributed mightily to the United States, and you don't see enough statues of African Americans."

"Think about what Rosa Parks contributed, Harriet Tubman's sacrifice, Martin Luther King's sacrifice, and Frederick Douglass. Their contribution was to raise the conscious level of America to say that you know, we are all human and, and all created by the same God," Watts emphasized.

He said the BNC would highlight the contributions of African Americans. And, to successfully accomplish that mission, Watts said it was essential to partner with NNPA.

"NNPA already has people in the trenches that report on African American life, whether it's Chicago, Atlanta, Birmingham, Detroit or Oklahoma City, they report on African American life every day," Watts stated. "I don't know if I can put into words how important that partnership will be, and that's just in terms of content. When I was in politics, we used a strategy where you've got people knocking on doors and leaving literature, and that's your ground game," Watts continued.

"But you also need an air attack to augment that ground game, so with NNPA being on the ground and giving us information and data, and us being able to launch an air attack, it's critical," he stated.

Watts believes that a significant component of the BNC is providing knowledge to a community that's starved for information.

"Our viewers will be able to find out more about Sickle Cell and Black men and Black women's health," Watts stated. "They will also be reminded that Black history isn't just about Martin Luther King and the Civil Rights Movement, which was extremely important, but it isn't the only part of our history. We are going to take a deeper dive and have a deeper relationship with our community."

Watts's background as a Republican and a conservative has often been a topic of both his supporters and detractors. However, Watts refuses to allow stereotypes and presumptions to define him.

"Conservative means many things to different people. To me, it means living the way my grandmama taught me," Watts stated. "She taught me to treat people the way that I want to be treated. In a Black home, you rarely saw people leaving their lights on at night because grandmama taught that it was a waste of electricity. If the lights were on, you knew that something pretty serious was happening."

Watts continued: "The bottom line about being a conservative is that you treat people with respect, and you don't believe in wasting things. That's important. And, another primary place that I get my conservative values is the Bible. I was thought that I shouldn't just be concerned about



Oklahoma University, my alma mater, but I should also be concerned about Morehouse. That's why I sponsored anti-poverty legislation because sometimes you have to put extra resources into different communities to give them the infrastructure to attract industry and jobs."

"My biblical principles drove me much more than the Republican party. Look, the National Football League recognized that having successful teams in every market would benefit everyone, and that's why the team with the worst record gets the top pick in the draft. They know that if the Cincinnati Bengals perform better, everybody wins because you would have more advertising and a better television contract for everyone. So, I feel the same way about underserved communities. If we can help them to be stronger and create more opportunities within those communities, then that's good for all communities."

Conservative values also sparked Watts's desire for criminal justice reform, he stated.

"When I talk about conservative principles, you know you don't waste money," Watts stated. "So, why should we spend \$28,000 a year to incarcerate someone for a low-level, nonviolent drug offense?"

"You can spend significantly less on community service. And, when you look at the facts, the sentencing disparities were big. People on Wall Street were using powder cocaine just like people on Main Street, or people in poor communities, but the sentencing disparities were off the charts. I voted my conscience on this when I was in Congress," Watts stated.

With the launch of the BNC just only weeks away, Watts hopes that viewers will get a similar feeling to what he experienced after recently taking his daughter to dinner to celebrate her birthday.

"My daughter recommended the restaurant, I'd never been there before," Watts stated, "After dinner, she asked me what did I think of the restaurant? I said, 'I'd come back to tomorrow. And I think that's our mission with the BNC, not just to grab the imagination and the attention of the nation, but especially our demographic and to have them come back. I think it'll be a mission accomplished.'"

Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr, a progressive Democrat and President and CEO of the NNPA without any reservations asserted, "The launch of the Black News Channel (BNC) is very timely at the beginning of 2020. This is good news for all in Black America. The BNC transcends the current partisan divide in the United States. The interests of African Americans, as well as all other people of color and all of humanity who cry out for freedom, justice and equality will be more effectively addressed as direct result of the daily 24/7 diverse and news-packed broadcasts of BNC in the U.S. and throughout the world."

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Five U. S. Tech Giants Linked to 'Cruel and Brutal Use of Children' in Congo Mines

(TriceEdneyWire.com/GIN)

In 1910, an estimated 2 million American children under the age of 15 were working in factories and mines for low wages and long shifts. Photographs by Lewis Hine of New York revealed the depraved exploitation of children, some as young as 8 years of age, in fields and in mines. Child labor was finally outlawed in 1938.

A century later, 15 year olds are digging tunnels in unsafe cobalt mines. Not in the U.S. but out of sight, in the Democratic Republic of Congo, where protective gear is not provided and shifts may run 24 hours or more.

This month, five major companies were named in a federal class action suit filed by the Washington-based International Rights Advocates (IRA) for “knowingly benefiting from and aiding and abetting the cruel and brutal use of young children.”

The companies named are *Apple*, *Alphabet (Google)*, *Dell*, *Microsoft*, and *Tesla* - allegedly part of a chain starting with a UK mining company selling cobalt extracted by African youths to a Brussels-based trader who then sold battery-grade cobalt to the 5 major tech companies.

A major Chinese cobalt firm was also named in the suit.



The claim was filed on behalf of 14 anonymous plaintiffs who are either guardians of children killed in tunnel or wall collapses or children maimed in such accidents.

In court documents seen by The Guardian newspaper, the Congolese families describe how their children were driven by extreme poverty to seek work at large mining sites where they worked 12-hour days,

some for just \$2 a day, digging and hauling sacks of cobalt-rich rocks. The DRC has the world’s largest deposits of cobalt, an essential element of rechargeable lithium-ion batteries used to power smartphones, laptops and electric cars.

“Put simply, the hundreds of billions of dollars generated by the defendants each year would not be possible without cobalt

mined in the DRC,” the legal complaint says.

Lauren Lee, a spokeswoman for Dell, told Fortune magazine this week that the company was investigating the allegations in the lawsuit.

“We have never knowingly sourced operations using any form of involuntary labor, fraudulent recruiting practices, or child labor,” Lee said in an email. “We work with suppliers to manage their sourcing programs responsibly.”

But IRA took issue with tech company claims: “Rather than step up to help these children with a negligible portion of their vast wealth and power, these companies do nothing but continue to benefit from cheap cobalt mined by kids robbed of their childhoods, their health, and for far too many, their lives.”

Said Terry Collingsworth, lead counsel for the child victims, “We will do everything possible to get justice quickly for the children we represent.”

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

Climate Activists at Madrid Summit Denounce Inaction by World Leaders

(TriceEdneyWire.com/GIN) – As the 25th United Nations climate conference moved into its second week, environmental activists from around the world denounced the influence of corporate power plainly visible at the Madrid summit and took to the streets in a massive climate protest led by indigenous leaders and youth.

The summit — known as COP25, or conference of parties — has so far focused on meeting the 2015 Paris Agreement to limit global temperature rise to “well below 3.6 degrees Fahrenheit.” But climate scientists say the talks are failing to produce the drastic measures necessary to address the climate crisis.

Protesters from India, Africa, the U.S., the UK, Europe and Latin America linked arms to march through Madrid’s city center.

Nigerian environmental organizer, Godwin Ojo, explained the purpose of his participation. “We are here to stop corporate power. We are here to stop corporate capture of the state, corporate capture of the U.N., corporate capture of resources.

“We want to put an end to climate change. All over the south, there is flooding. A lot of people are dying from climate change. And now the farmers are unable to plant because there are rainfall problems in Nigeria.

“Multinationals have totally grabbed the reins of government,” he observed. “Economic concerns overrule all other interests. Industry continues to degrade the environment, overexploit crude oil resources, destroy people's livelihoods, pollute the waterways - they can't even be brought to acknowledge the damage they are doing, let alone clean it up.



“What is their driving force? Profit, profit and more profit. Human rights violations, climate change, none of it matters. Climate change even to the point of disaster is business.”

"Africa needs to receive means of implementation," added Tosi Mpanu Mpanu, a lead negotiator from the Africa Group. "We need to receive financial resources, technology transfer, and capacity building. And these are not outrageous asks."

Nakabuye Hilda Flavia of Uganda remarked: “This reminds me a bit of the rampant racism and apartheid my ancestors endured... We are suffering severe effects of climate change, as if coming from the global south is a mortal sin, with no or very little action from developing countries."

"Developed countries must be ashamed of themselves given the amount of carbon they emit compared to what Africa

is emitting. We almost emit nothing but we are suffering the most."

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Tongues of Fire

By Beverly Spears

For God’s Sake, What’s it Going to Take?!



Here we are again. It’s Black Season. We kick off with the Celebration of the Life of The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., one of the most prominent and important figures in African-American history, who at least one generation of Black children know almost nothing of substance about.

On January 19th, the remaining King children, and whichever extended family member seeks their moment in the limelight, will be trotted out at one or another MLK Day Prayer Breakfasts to recall the life, legend and legacy of their Father, Grandfather, Uncle or cousin on their Mother’s side, twice removed. The vast majority of stories will be about the past. “The Dream” will no doubt be invoked—the perennial Dream that remains forever nothing but a dream.

We’ll clap and Amen! our way through the speeches and presentations. We’ll take “We Shall Overcome” down off the shelf, where it’s been since last year. We’ll sing and sway and pray for what is always coming “someday” but never arrives. And why should it?

Most of the speeches will be about the legend of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. with very little being said about the personal challenges and struggles of this complex, multi-faceted human being, who somewhere along his journey came to the grave realization that if he continued in his actions, he would be killed. And yet, he persisted.

Most references to present-day issues and crisis will fall along the line of, what would Martin think or what would Martin do if he were alive today, which is not at all the right question. Even in Dr. King’s time the right question was, what will WE do, and as Dr. King himself posited, “... If not now, when?”

In February, we’ll celebrate our ourselves, and marvel at our accomplishments as we learn more and more about the many hidden figures of color who made enormous contributions to this Country but received little or no public recognition for them. We’ll grieve and curse the massacres, atrocities, terror, discrimination, and profiling perpetrated on Black people for the last six hundred years of American history. Of course, we’ll rail against the Trump administration, raise the issues of voter suppression, mass incarceration, poverty, healthcare, and police brutality. And per-

haps, just perhaps, the climate crisis too.

We’ll soberly acknowledge that even though racism, classism and xenophobia are woven into the fabric of this Country, its resurgence and scale are alarming. And then, way too many of us will go back to our daily lives and do little or nothing about any of it. To quote Marvin Gaye’s lyrics, from Inner City Blues, “It makes me wanna holler the way they do my life,” but I’m going to take poetic license and say: “It makes me wanna holler, the way [We] do [Our] lives.”

What’s it going to take, Black America/America, before we say NO MORE?! At some point we are culpable in our own victimhood. We reached that point quite a while ago. We don’t use the single most important right we are constitutionally guaranteed: the right to vote! Brave people marched, went to jail and even died so that future generations had that power-tool in their chest. Descendants of slaves and free people of color were lawfully afforded the right to vote with the Fifteenth Amendment in 1870, and it’s been a struggle to protect it ever since.

In 1963, Dr. King led hundreds of Black people to the courthouse in Selma, Alabama to register. When they were turned away, Dr. King organized and led protests for almost two years. In 1964, the Twenty-fourth Amendment was adopted, prohibiting the use of poll taxes, a voter suppression tactic. Finally, in 1965 the Voting Rights Act directed the U.S. Attorney General to enforce the right to vote for African Americans.

In the November 2019 off-year election, voter turnout on the whole was low across the country, with few exceptions. The Black voter turnout was even lower. And yet we know the power of a coalesced Black vote. In 2017, now-Alabama Senator Doug Jones gave credit for his successful campaign and election to the Black people of Alabama who turned out in droves to elect him. More specifically, it was Black women who delivered the vote for Jones, prompting Democratic National Committee chairman Tom Perez to say, “Black women led us to victory. Black women are the backbone of the Democratic party.”

Those Black women who delivered to Doug Jones his victory, stood on the shoulders of powerful women who for centuries, against all odds, survived, thrived and just

plain got s--- (stuff) done! I want to lift up one of those women. She is someone few people know about. Her name was Ella Baker. Ella Baker didn’t have the high profile of Dr. King, or his lieutenants.

Ella Baker spent her life working behind the scenes to organize the Civil Rights Movement. Baker was one of the visionaries who created the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in 1957. She and many other women like her, were the backbone of the Civil Rights Movement. Without them Dr. King nor the Movement would have succeeded.

Dr. King was a Christian, an ordained minister and pastor. The Civil Rights Movement was organized and galvanized in Black Churches. Black Churches are not the power houses they used to be for a variety of reasons. But they still play an influential role for a large segment of the Black population. Every year, activists implore the leadership of Churches to pro-actively engage their congregants in social justice issues and encourage them to turnout the vote. In some years, and in some places, Churches respond reasonably well. But it’s become increasingly more difficult to engage Black Church leadership in social action and non-violent protest. Are we so caught up in saving our own souls that we refuse to see that there is a country that needs saving? In fact, there is a whole planet that needs saving!

Christians have a mandate. The Biblical Gospels of the New Testament are very clear: Jesus was a radical and a revolutionary! He turned the social, religious, and political order of his day upside down! He stood solidly on the side of oppressed and disinherited people. Christian leaders and Christian people, I implore you—be faithful to the social Gospel!

Organized voter suppression, the likes of which has not existed for 55 years, will be in full swing in the November 2020 elections. We know what they are doing and how they are doing it. Knowledge is power. All the more reason for us to coalesce and to turn out. We can’t just win elections by 3 million votes; we have to win them by 9 million votes and more; votes in strategic states and districts, counties, boroughs and parishes.

The Democratic House of Representatives has just impeached President Donald Trump. Like a wounded predatory animal, Trump is more dangerous than ever and

more driven to fight for his political life. If Trump wins another term in office, the country’s democratic systems will not easily or perhaps may not ever fully recover.

The stakes have never been higher. Without a Black vote mandate, Democrats cannot win in 2020. A major study from the Center for American Progress, projects that “natural demographic trends in the last four years plus a return to 2012 levels of African-American voting would flip four states — Michigan, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin — and give Democrats a 294-244 majority in the Electoral College.”

Whoever the Democratic Presidential nominee is, he/she will not be perfect. She/he may be your candidate of last resort, but at this moment in history, we must do everything in our power to elect whoever that person turns out to be. It is quite literally up to Black people to save America. Chew on that one for a while.

Democrats in the House of Representatives finally took the offense against Donald Trump. The ballot box is the people’s offensive line. If this amoral, democracy-destroying President, protected by henchmen and enabled by morally decrepit Republican members of the House and Senate is re-elected, the further damage he will inflict on the people of this Country, and the increasingly dangerous position in which we will find ourselves in the world, may call for much more radical action.

Right now, in Paris, Italy, Hong Kong and Venezuela, people are taking to the streets, day after day, week after week by the tens and even hundreds of thousands to save their eroding democracies from political leaders with extreme nationalist and even fascist agendas.

I leave you with a quote from Civil Rights Movement activist, Ella Baker: “Strong people don’t need strong leaders.” The most important message in all of African-American history is that we can survive and thrive against all odds. Giving all honor and due respect to Dr. King, in 2020 we don’t need another Martin Luther King Jr. We are strong people. It’s up to us to save this country from further tyranny.

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

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Because I Love You

By Kiantha Duncan

Because I Love You.

Because I love you, I want to start the new year off with truth, authenticity and a call for action. While many people enjoyed the Holiday season, toasted to the New Year with friends and family, shared gifts made or purchased with love, all did not.

Many have already started their annual tradition of making mental (and sometimes written) lists containing resolutions and promises you intend to keep in this new year. “As of January 1st, I will start doing this or stop doing that...” I know all too well how easy it is to get caught up in the fantasy that a new year is the impetus for change. Because I love you, I have to tell you It is not.

Because I love you, there are truths that are important for you to know that I must share with you. If your intention really is to have a happy and prosperous new year you will have to do some work. We must all do our work! This call for action requires that I continue to do my own work and show up in the fullness of who I was created to be, a philosopher, leader, community builder and lover of mankind.

Many of us believe that the changing of the calendar signifies an opportunity to course correct and move closer to our goals. The truth is what moves us closer to our goals really has nothing to do with the new year or changing of the decade. We cannot simply close the book on all things that didn’t serve us well. What moves us forward as humans is stopping to ac-

knowledge and take accountability for decisions we make and how we chose to show up in the world.

Accepting our imperfections, taking responsibility for the areas in our life for which we may have fallen short. Acknowledging that our reality is not the reality of all, therefore we must be conscious of the impact our way of living and thinking has on others.

Because I love you, I want you to see yourself. Really study who you are and what your existence adds to your local and global community alike. Look at how you take up space in the world. But you must be willing to look at these things through a lens of truthfulness and accountability and you must be willing to respond to what you see with action. Our sole purpose on this earth is to continuously evaluate and adjust how we show up.

There are so many people suffering and because I love you, I have to let you know that their suffering is directly connected to you. Your ability to be successful is tethered to how you align with the reality that how you show up in this world impacts more than just you.

What you believe, heals or harms others. How you show up helps or hurts others. Your actions give life or take breath from others in your sphere of influence and in our global community. The sooner you understand this the better your life will be, not because it’s



a new year but instead because you show up and exist in a new way.

Because I love you, I must share that there is no magic that happens at the start of a new year or the beginning of a new decade. The magic is within you and has resided there all along. Make a choice today to be your best self, consider others, and bring light to darkness.

Kiantha Duncan is a Principal Development Strategist with The Duncan Brown Group. She can be reached at 206-225-4736.

CONGRATULATIONS to The Black Lens on five years of vital community journalism!



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Spokane Links Give Back to Community

The Spokane Chapter of the Links, Inc. spent a Saturday morning and afternoon together on December 14 working to give back to the Spokane community. The women packed Christmas gifts for several Spokane families.

Links President, Shirlyn Hillson, shared that at this time of the year, when a lot of people are hurting, "we wanted to try and provide a happier Christmas for the families because most of their money is spent on utilities and bills and that type of thing."

The women also packed a box containing items collected from Bethel AME Church and Links members that will be mailed to the Bahamas Chapter of The Links, Inc. for the Hurricane Dorian project, which is an ongoing National Project.



The Links, which will be celebrating 41 years in Spokane this year, is an International organization made up of mostly African-American women who are interested in improving their community through civic affairs, educational legislation, and by doing things that will make the community better.

Teresa Hemphill, one of the original twenty-five members who founded the Spokane chapter, said she was drawn to the organization because of their focus on service and because of their hard work.

"We've had lots of people come and go, we've had a lot of people whose jobs have moved them away," Teresa said. "We've had some deaths, but we've always had a core group of people who are always hard workers."

While the Links have been known for their community events, like hosting the Ebony Fashion Show, in addition to their community service, they are currently focused on honoring people in the community who

have done service, celebrating individuals who may never have gotten any kind of recognition otherwise. The Links also have done projects for kids and to support students. "I think that's probably our most important thing," Teresa shared, "the donations and things we've done for children."

Chrissy Davis, who represents the next generation of Links, said the work that Links do with families is personal for her. "I grew up with a single mom, we didn't have very much and people helped us out. So for me, I'm very proud of what we do."

Chrissy suggests that everyone get involved with an organization like the Links. "I think our perspective is not just local it's regional, it's national and international. So it's a great opportunity to get in and get your hands dirty and give back to your community."

"We want people to know that we care about this community, and that we are trying to uplift the people within our community," said Shirlyn."

Congratulations to *Black Lens* for 5 Years of bringing important journalistic perspective to the Spokane region!

ON KSPS PBS IN JANUARY/FEBRUARY:



Dave Chappelle:
The Mark Twain Prize
Tuesday, Jan. 7 • 10 pm

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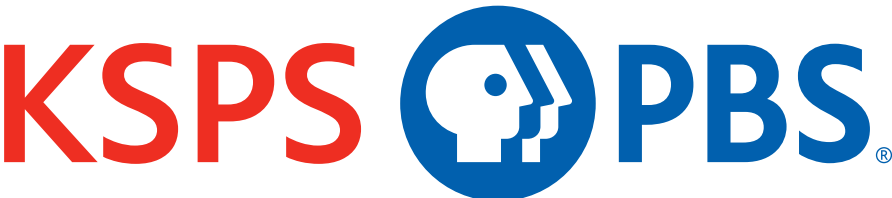


Finding Your Roots with Dr. Henry Louis Gates, Jr.
"Slave Trade"
Tuesday, Feb. 25 • 7 pm



Miles Davis: Birth of the Cool
American Masters
Tuesday, Feb. 25 • 8 pm

The man behind the legend. The film features never-before-seen footage, including studio outtakes from his recording sessions, rare photos and new interviews.



Vanessa Williams

African American Icon Spends Time with Spokane Students

Despite her hectic schedule, Grammy nominated and Academy Award winning singer, actress, fashion designer and the first Black Miss America took time out before her performances with the Spokane Symphony's Holiday Pops on December 21 & 22 to meet with high school and college students from across Spokane.

The fifteen students and community members were treated to a behind the scenes glimpse of a pre-concert sound check at the Martin Woldson Theater at The Fox, followed by a question and answer session with Vanessa Williams, who shared her strategies for success and overcoming adversity.

In addition to their special time with Ms. Williams, the Spokane Symphony also provided each student with a pair of tickets to the Holiday Pops concert.



Photos Courtesy Robert Lloyd

Imagine Jazz Kicks Off 2020 With New York Musicians

Spokane's Imagine Jazz has big plans for 2020, and right out of the gate will present two concerts by top-notch New York Quintets with educational workshops to serve all ages and levels. The Jeremy Pelt Quintet and Jonathan Barber's Vision Ahead represent some of the finest in modern jazz with two very different aesthetics and soundscapes, but undeniable talent and prowess.

Jeremy Pelt and his Quintet will arrive for the workshop on January 14th and perform a concert on January 15th. The Legacy Jazz workshops are a chance for students and community members including professionals to work with and learn from the masters receiving group lessons, instrument specific workshops and coaching sessions.

While this is Pelts third visit to Spokane with Imagine Jazz in 2 years, audiences will not receive a repeat performance of the same selections. Each performance has been a different group of musicians

with a different band focus and compositional set.

The current tour features Chien Chien Lu on vibraphone, Victor Gould on piano, Richie Goods on bass and Allan Mednard on drums. They will be performing original music in the classic jazz, hard-bop and post-bop styles including the Rodin suite and other compositions from Pelt's latest CD release.

The Rodin suite is a five-part suite which was commissioned for the Festival of New Trumpet Music in honor of the artist August Rodin and the Musee Rodin in Paris, which is one of Pelt's favorite museums to visit. The album has received many good reviews and has been included on several "best of 2019" lists.

In March, the community can look forward to Jonathan Barber's Vision Ahead performing a unique blend of classic jazz, gospel, soul and fusion on Friday March 6th with workshops scheduled



March 5-7. Vision Ahead includes alto saxophonist Godwin Louis, pianist Taber Gable, guitaris Andrew Renfroe and bassist Matt Dwonszyk.

Both events will take place at McNally Recital Hall, at Holy Names Music Center on the Mukugawa Fort Wright Campus. This recital hall holds around 150 and will provide an intimate and impactful setting to experience these great bands. Concessions will be available to emulate a "club feel".

The concerts are open to the public and tickets can be found online at www.imaginejazz.org or through Eventbrite on the facebook event pages. Registration for the workshop is open online as well. Musicians can register as an individual or as a combo/band. Questions can be directed to rachel@imaginejazz.org



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and his Quintet

Chien Chien Lu
Victor Gould
Richie Goods
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The Spokane Links, Inc.
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*Congratulations
on 5 years!*

LOVE ELAINE TYRIE

Are African American Girls Being Criminalized in our Public Schools?

By Dr. Jeanne Baynes

In The Black Voices in 2017, the article stated it isn't unusual for Black female students to be routinely given harsher punishments than white students, even though no evidence shows Black students are more likely to misbehave, according to a report from the National Women's Law Center and the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund. The report outlines the discipline disparities for African American girls and notes that pervasive racial and gender biases in education often prevent students from succeeding.

While Black male students are the most frequently suspended students, African-American girls also disproportionately receive harsh punishments, the report says. The discipline disparities for Black girls are likely related to racial and gender stereotypes that portray African American females as "loud, confrontational, assertive, and provocative," the report says.

One by one, a group of Black girls looked into the camera and recounted a time when they didn't just hear about those negative stereotypes, they felt they were being marginalized in school because of them. A young Black female student talked about how she was sent home because she wore her hair in an afro hairstyle. A slightly older girl recalled the time a teacher cut her hair because she was playing with her braids, and another said she was thrown to the floor for simply sitting at her desk.

Those stories were illustrated by a video released in January by the National Women's Law Center as part of its "Let Her Learn" campaign, which aims to fight the unfair suspensions of Black girls for minor infractions.

In her 2016 book *Pushout: The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools*, Monique W. Morris addresses the question: Are African American females being criminalized? Morris wrote about the lives of girls who are often misunderstood, judged more harshly, and hurt by very schools that are supposed to help them. She addressed the issues they face, and the impact of the system's bias and disproportionate discipline.

Morris's new book, *Sing a Rhythm, Dance a Blues: Education for the Liberation of Black and Brown Girls* (The New Press, 2019), is the continuation of the conversation Pushout started. This time, Morris's book presents some solutions that are already working in schools and communities around the country.

"It tells us that obviously we can be innovative when we want, we can be intentional in our actions with girls,"



Monique W. Morris

Morris says. "When we are, we see some differences really play out. That is the whole purpose of Sing a Rhythm, Dance a Blues. When people say they want to do something but don't put a series of actions behind it, we get nothing. But when people say that they want to be a part of building out new communities for girls of color, and with girls of color, and they actually do the work, then we see some really promising outcomes, and we see a deeper interrogation of some of the critical issues."

Nationally, District suspension rates of Black girls increased by 5.3 percent compared to a 1.7 percent increase for Black boys. Among the nation's ten highest suspending school districts, Black girls with some disability experienced the highest suspension rate of all girls. According to an article in the September 2019 Spokesman Review, for the past two years, Spokane Public Schools has been overhauling how it handles student discipline. The goal is to suspend and expel fewer students, and focus on communication with students and better training for staff.

All Washington schools are moving in the same direction under a new state law that limits long-term suspension and expulsion to certain serious behaviors, including possession of weapons, gang activity, sexual offenses and the use of drugs or alcohol. School districts also may not suspend educational services as a form of discipline under the new law. A student who is suspended or expelled must continue to receive an education in an alternative setting.

Last year, OSPI (Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction) reported 31.4 percent nonwhite students in Spo-

kane Public Schools. That's more than double the percentage (14 percent) of nonwhite students reported 15 years ago — about the same as the general population of the city today. However, the staff in Spokane Public Schools is near or more than 85% Caucasian.

To reduce the high number of kids being thrown out of school and the disproportionate discipline of minorities and special-education students, Spokane Public School has worked to overhaul the system with restorative discipline, an approach that puts a premium on relationships. The school board voted unanimously last week to update its student discipline policy and guidelines for school conduct to conform with the new state law as well as updated information from the superintendent of public instruction. The changes also reflect national models such as Positive Behavior Intervention Strategies, which focuses on communicating expectations with students and setting behavior standards.

"Exclusionary consequences" is the district's terminology for suspensions and expulsions. Reversing a three-year decline, exclusionary consequences rose 8.5 percent during the 2017-18 school year. And despite the district's efforts to educate staff on implicit bias, the consequences fell disproportionately on the same groups as before.

African-Americans comprise 3.2 percent of the Spokane Public Schools student body, yet represent 5.6 percent of the disciplinary action. Students identifying as multiracial make up 13.8 percent of students, but faced 20.4 percent of the roughly 4,079 suspensions and expulsions. Students who qualified for free and reduced-price lunch accounted for 86.1 percent of all district discipline, yet make up only 57.4 of the student body. Special education students comprise 17.8 percent of the student body but received 32.8 percent of the suspensions and expulsions.

There's plenty of research that says students benefit when teachers look more like them. Black teachers tend to have higher expectations of their Black students' potential than white teachers do, a 2016 study published in Economics of Education Review found. At the same time, a Yale study found that preschool teachers hold Black students to a higher standard of behavior than white students, leading to harsher discipline. One key in dealing with these problems is to hire more diverse staff.

What schools can do in the meantime is encourage teachers to better understand their students. Schools in Washington, including Spokane Public Schools, do a range of cultural diversity training. Eastern Washington University's Africana Studies Program does a great job offering courses and a community series of lectures to assist our community.



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American Descendants of Slavery Hold First Conference to Discuss Reparations

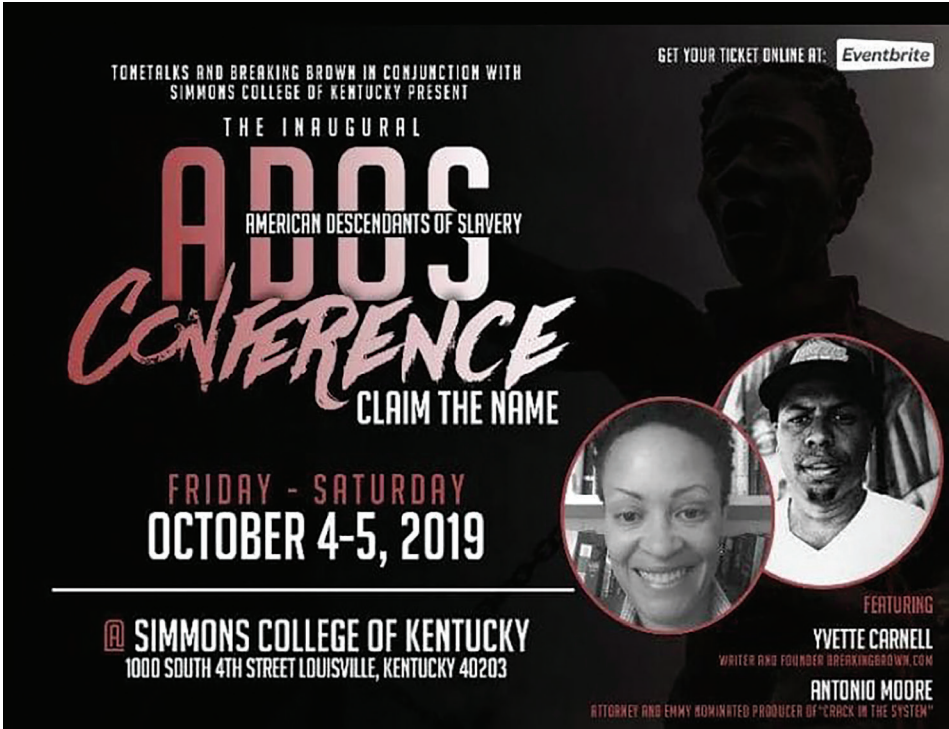
By Madelynn Wilson

(Spokane) My daughter Amara And I attended the 2019 ADOS (African Descendants of Slavery) Conference that was held in Louisville, Kentucky on October 4, 5, and 6 at Saint Stephens Baptist Church. Two thousand plus people attended. We were prepared to sit outside under the tent, but we got in free because people bought tickets and left them at the door. There were a few from Washington state and California was well represented. It was the first conference for ADOS reparations (Remember, after slavery ended, slaves were supposed to get 40 acres and a meal as reparations for being enslaved. But that was not the case. So ADOS was formed to get those reparations.)

There were some fabulous speakers at the conference. The following people spoke: Yvette Carnell is the founder of the Breaking Brown Political Show. She talked about why the name ADOS was being used and how it had to be ADOS specific when you present a bill to Congress. The bill is called HR40-116th Congress commissioned to study and develop reparation proposals. (ADOS feel that there is no need to study the bill. Congress needs to just get on with it!) Yvette also talked about how ADOOS are way behind white people when it comes to wealth. She talked about how politicians need to get on board with ADOS, the power of Black politics and Black institutions. She also talked about people who want reparations for all people of color not just ADOS.

Next was Antonio Moore is an attorney who knows the legal issues involved around getting reparations for ADOS and has a radio show called Tone Talks. He talked about ADOS being a group effort, no Jesse Jackson or Al Sharpton. There will be no one person running the show for their own personal gain. He talked about the unfair things done to ADOS people. Antonio also talked about Black economics and the Black vote. He wants every ADOS person to come together and support the reparations issue.

Congressman John Yarmouth came to the stage and talked about how much reparations for ADOS would cost. He came up with a solution to have all the Ivy League colleges that discriminated against ADOS



should be made to pay. For example, John said that Yale had billions of dollars that they would not be able to spend in this lifetime. (Please note: it was discovered that it would take trillions of dollars to pay for reparations.)

Doctor Cornell West, a Cum Laude graduate from Harvard was next. He talked about the 1960s civil rights protests and Dr. Martin Luther King's assassination. He talked about the continuation of the fight for freedom by aiding ADOS in the fight for reparations. Dr West said that the 60s movement needed to be continued because ADOS are still being persecuted. A video of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was shown where he talked about reparations just before he was assassinated.

Marianne Williamson, former presidential candidate for the 2020 presidential election, talked about supporting the reparations cause. She is in favor of reparations. Marianne may be the candidate that ADOS will vote for in the 2020 presidential election. She encouraged ADOS to be powerful beyond measure.

Reverend Doctor Kevin Cosby came up and spoke about Black institutions and ADOS. He is the pastor of Saint Stephens Baptist Church, the largest African American church in the state of Kentucky. Rev-

erend Doctor Crosby was gracious enough to let ADOS host their first conference at his church. He is also the 13th president of Simmons college, the 107th Historically Black College. Reverend Doctor Cosby talked about how the classes were removed from Simmons college except for the seminary classes he was able to get the classes back.

Czerina Harris was next, telling ADOS that it is extremely important to own property. She gave ADOS some housing 101 information about wealth extraction and gentrification She said white people extract wealth from the land that the US has by gentrification of that land. White people go into a poor Black area and buy up all the land. They spruce up the area and then they move in.

Paul Sowers was up next talking about the role and responsibility of having white allies. He stated that it was very important to have white allies to help with ADOS reparations. Paul has been writing about the ADOS movement since 2016. He said that ADOS need white allies in helping ADOS get their reparations.

Next in the timeline, speaker Marguerite Hindrich talked about getting to know your community and how to get involved. She talked about she got to know her Coun-

cilman in her community by personally visiting him and personally calling him to let him know about the issues in her neighborhood. Marguerite told ADOS to get involved in their communities.

A video about Byron Allen's fight with Comcast was shown. Byron wants to make sure that Blacks have Black owned media to hear their issues and information. White media is somewhat biased and the real issues are not reported. In some cases information is glossed over or passed over. Byron Allen wants to change that!

At the end of the conference, there was a discussion that wrapped up all that was presented at the conference. Carnell, Cosby, Moore, along with Doctor Lewis Brogdon, a Professor at Baptist Seminary of Kentucky, and Joshua Poe from Appalachia, who knows about homelessness and poverty first hand, talked about the HR- 40 bill and how Congress wanted to study instead of going ahead with the proposal that was submitted. They talked about politicians trying to redo and/or do away with the 13th amendment. (You need to read it! ADOS are supposed to be protected! We are not! Everything they have done to ADOS is against the law! Not only do we need our reparations, we need to do a class action suit.)

There was a call to action for all of the ADOS conference attendees to go back to their communities and get the people there up to speed about ADOS. We were told to take back organizations like the Urban League and get our local NAACP on board for ADOS, and to form and/or join an ADOS committee for our state or community.

ADOS deserve their reparations! After all we built this USA with our backs, blood, sweat, and tears! The Jewish people got their reparations for the holocaust. The Japanese people got their reparations for the internment camps they were put into. Native Americans got their reparations for the mistreatment and land that was taken from them. ADOS demand their reparations.

All in all, it was a very enlightening conference.

For more information about ADOS and reparations visit: <https://ados101.com>.

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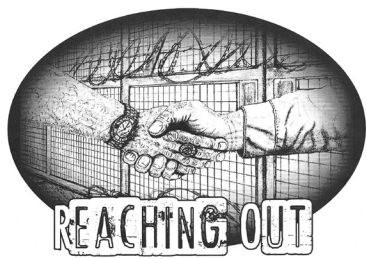
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THE BLACK PRISONERS CAUCUS

Coyote Ridge

By: Rashaun "A'God The Poet" Williams
#742604 - Coyote Ridge Correctional Center

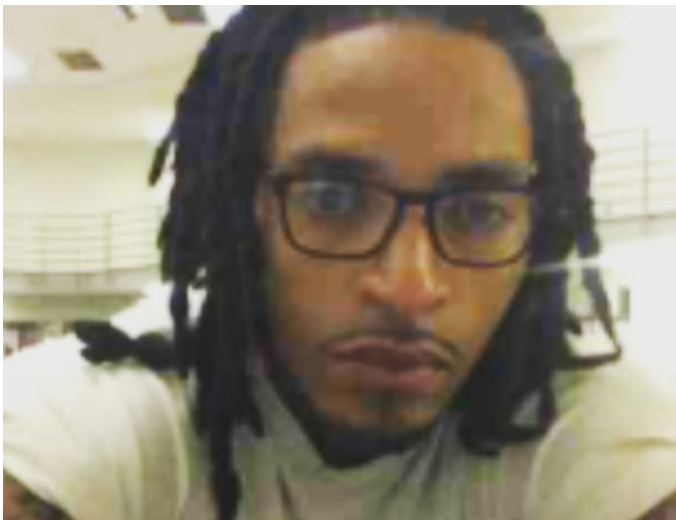
Answer me this.

How will our seeds grow if the sun refuses to shine?,
And how good do you suppose our odds of survival are
when there's seven women to every one guide?
The scripture says that a man who disturbs his own house
shall inherit the wind,
I guess it's because when chaos and confusion
are driving us out of our minds,
it's damn near impossible for divine guidance to seep in.

I dove off the deep end in an attempt to swim 9,000 miles
with the hopes of getting back on holy land,
but when you lack knowledge of self,
plus you've allowed others to define yourself,
it's hard to live up to the title of being
the true and living Son of Man.

To understand comes after knowledge
because knowledge is the foundation of everything
in existence,
and the womb of mother earth
produces the best part of God
but only when the soil is tilled
and her consciousness is allowed to be shifted,
you get it?

We come from an original nation of peace
where I and my Creator were always one,
because if he is the original father,
then that shows and proves
that I've always been his original son,
stories have been spun to make me believe



that I was something lessor than the perfect image of greatness,
some containing an illusionary spirit named satan
to explain unfortunate situations brought on by self,
but where the laws of cause and effect
were always clearly blatant.

At first you hang my ancestors for trying to learn how to read
and then discriminate against their descendants
for not knowing how to,
then you scribble your name on a piece of paper
saying that it was OK to love ourselves,
but then gun us down on live t.v. when we try to.

I guess all that was lies too?

But if we decide to, we can become the people
that we were placed on this planet to be,
but answer me this,
how will we be able to wake up our sons and daughters,
if most of the mothers and fathers are still sleep?

Income Inequality

Continued From Page 1

This report's key finding was that owner-occupied homes in Black neighborhoods are undervalued by \$48,000 per home on average, a cumulative loss of \$156 billion.

"Laws have changed, but the value of assets – buildings, schools, leadership, and land itself – are inextricably linked to the perceptions of Black people, states the Brookings report. "And those negative perceptions persist."

More recently and this spring, the Roosevelt Institute, the nonprofit partner to the Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum and the University of California at Berkeley's Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society collaborated with the Ford Foundation in a multi-phased project on the nation's nagging racial wealth gap (RWG). Their report states in part, "The research illustrated how solutions that were long assumed to lessen economic inequality—such as equalizing wages and educational opportunities and outcomes—will not actually close the RWG."

One of the key conclusions reached in the Ford-sponsored research was "[t]he problem is structural and historical, not individual".

In other words, systemic, long-term approaches – not quick fixes – are essential to achieving racial economic parity. Just as the full faith and credit of the United States backs deposits of these institutions, it seems fair to hold them accountable to serve the entire public – especially consumers and communities that include low-to-moderate income households.

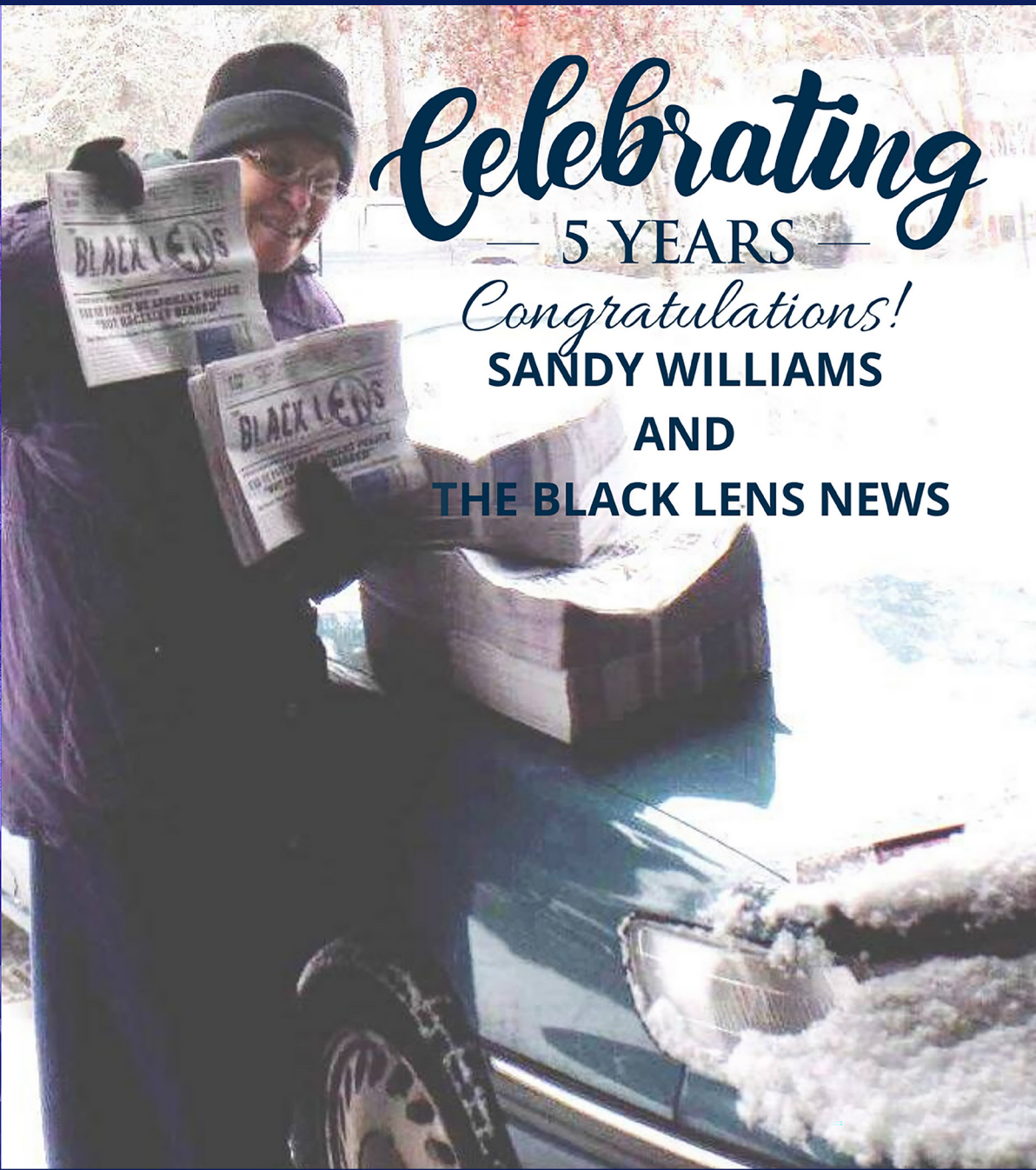
At the same time, it is equally important that federal financial regulators speak and act with a united voice, dedicated to equity and fairness. The Federal Reserve, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, more commonly known as FDIC, and the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC) must speak and act in unison with financial equity as their ultimate goal. If financial policies can lay the groundwork for broad and sustained economic progress, they will well serve the nation, and begin to address the persistent racial wealth gap.

"Now is the time for consumers, communities, small businesses and others to remind our leaders that CRA is a vital part of our collective economic futures," said Nikitra Bailey, an EVP with the Center for Responsible Lending. "Access to mortgages, small business loans, and community development capital are just as much a part of CRA as preserving full-service bank branches."



Dennis Cronin
Attorney at Law P.S.

509-328-5600



Black History Month Flag to Fly Over Spokane City Hall



The NAACP will be flying a flag over Spokane's City Hall during the month of February 2020 to celebrate Black History Month.

The flag contains the Pan-African colors (also known as RBG), which are red, black, and green, or red, gold and green.

Red represents the blood of the martyrs. **Black** represents the color of the people and fertile soil. **Green** represents the fertile fields of Africa. **Gold** represents the wealth of Africa, peace, harmony and/or hope.

A proclamation in honor of Black History Month will be read on Monday, Feb 3, 6pm during the Spokane City Council meeting. The community is invited to attend.

Revitalizing East Central's Fifth Avenue

The East Central neighborhood of Spokane, always one of the city's most diverse areas, was a thriving working class neighborhood until the construction of the I-90 freeway, which literally split the neighborhood in half. The split devastated the neighborhood in many ways and East Central has struggled to recover in the years since then. Portions, however, have begun seeing a rebound.

Sizable investments in the Perry District, the Sprague-Union District, along the East Sprague corridor, and the University District, all three a part of the East Central neighborhood, have sparked development that is resulting in much needed revitalization.

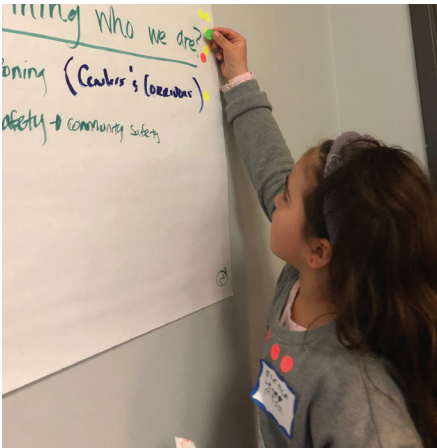
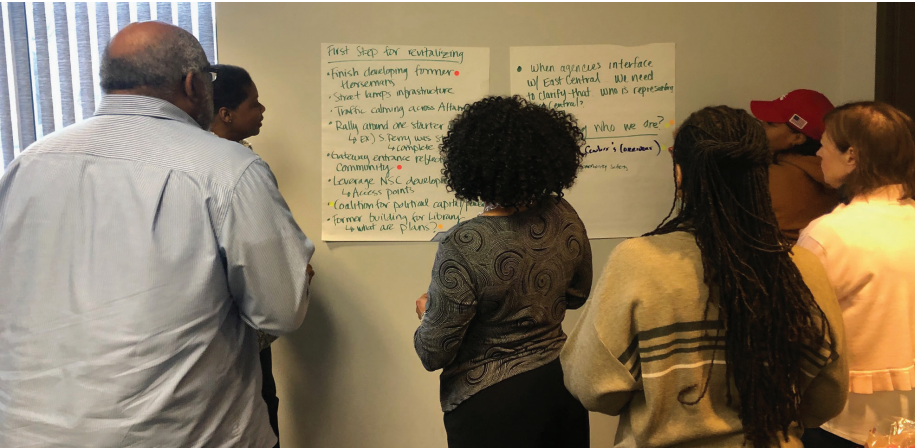
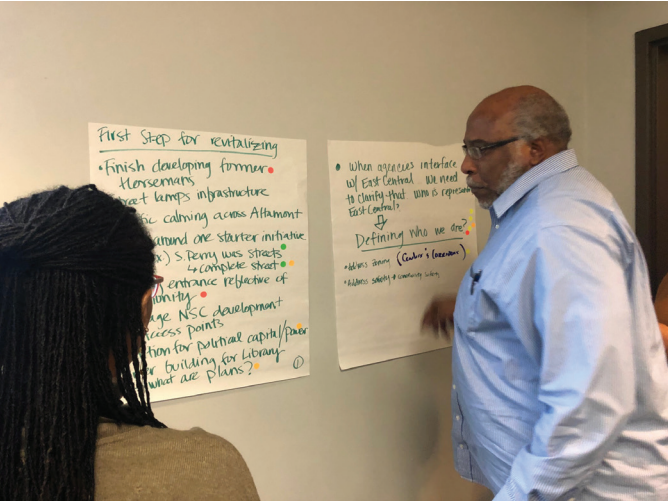
Unfortunately, the section of East Central, South of the I-90 Freeway, which falls along Fifth Avenue and is home to Larry's Barbershop, Fresh Soul Restaurant, New Beginnings Hair Salon, The Carl Max-

ey Center and the MLK/East Center Community Center has received very little of the attention and financial support that has been heaped onto the other areas of the neighborhood.

A group of community members, however, have come together to address what they see as a discrepancy and to give the 5th Avenue section of East Central the attention that they feel it deserves.

The group met a couple of times at the Carl Maxey Center and on December 14 held a forum at the East Central Community Center to discuss what the community would like to see happen along the 5th Avenue corridor and priorities for revitalization.

Rev. Rodney McCauley and Maren Murphy, with the City of Spokane, who have been facilitating the meetings, will be producing a report with recommendations for the new city administration.



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Rick, Barb, Rachel and Adrian



Fifty and Older-Looking Good and Still Going Strong

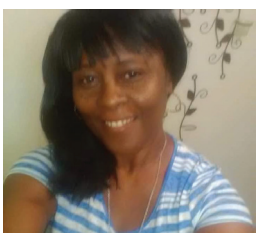
By Donna Thomas

I started this Facebook group, *Fifty and Older Looking Good*, six years ago. I wanted to meet people from every state and from different countries. The group now has over 49,000 members.

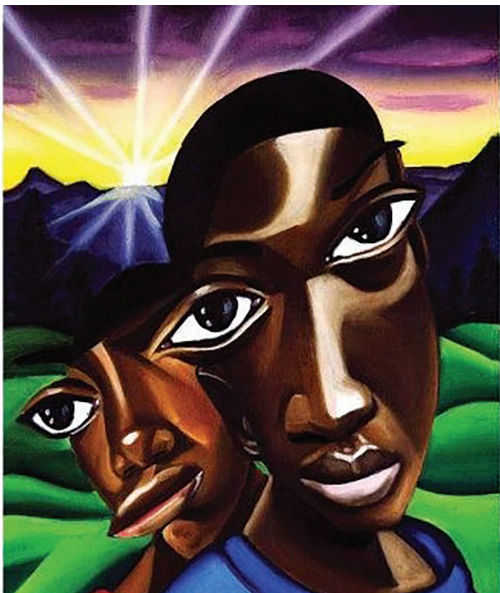
You must be 50 years and older to be in the group, but we will allow 49 year olds in our group. The purpose of the group is for people who are 50 years old and older to share photos, laugh and meet new friends. You can be married, single, gay or lesbian, all I ask is for respect, positives posts and for you to enjoy the group.

The staff of the Fifty and Older Looking Good Facebook Group consists of CEO/Administrator Donna Thomas; Ad-ministrator Katrina Crawford; Administrator Sarah Allen; Moderator Sojourna Jacobs and Moderator Bob Solderholm.

For more information please look for the group on Facebook and if you are interested in joining, contact Donna Thomas on messenger.



REVIVING BLACK THEATER IN SPOKANE



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A play by Antoinette Nwandu, partially inspired by the killing of Trayvon Martin, that features two Black men, sitting on a sidewalk on a corner in an unnamed city where they live in fear of being shot dead by the police. The play tackles issues of police brutality and institutionalized racism.
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Learn more at innovia.org/nonprofits.

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DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

Beyond Viet Nam: The Speech We Never Hear

Editors Note: I originally printed this article in the very first issue of The Black Lens. January 2015. I first heard this speech by accident when I was in my mid-twenties, long after I had graduated from college with my Masters Degree. I was angry that in all the years that I had been in school learning about Dr. King, in all the MLK Birthdays that I had celebrated, in all the I Have a Dream speeches that had been played, I had never heard these words. Words that feel even more appropriate now than ever before. So in January 2020 I will share them again.

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

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

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

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

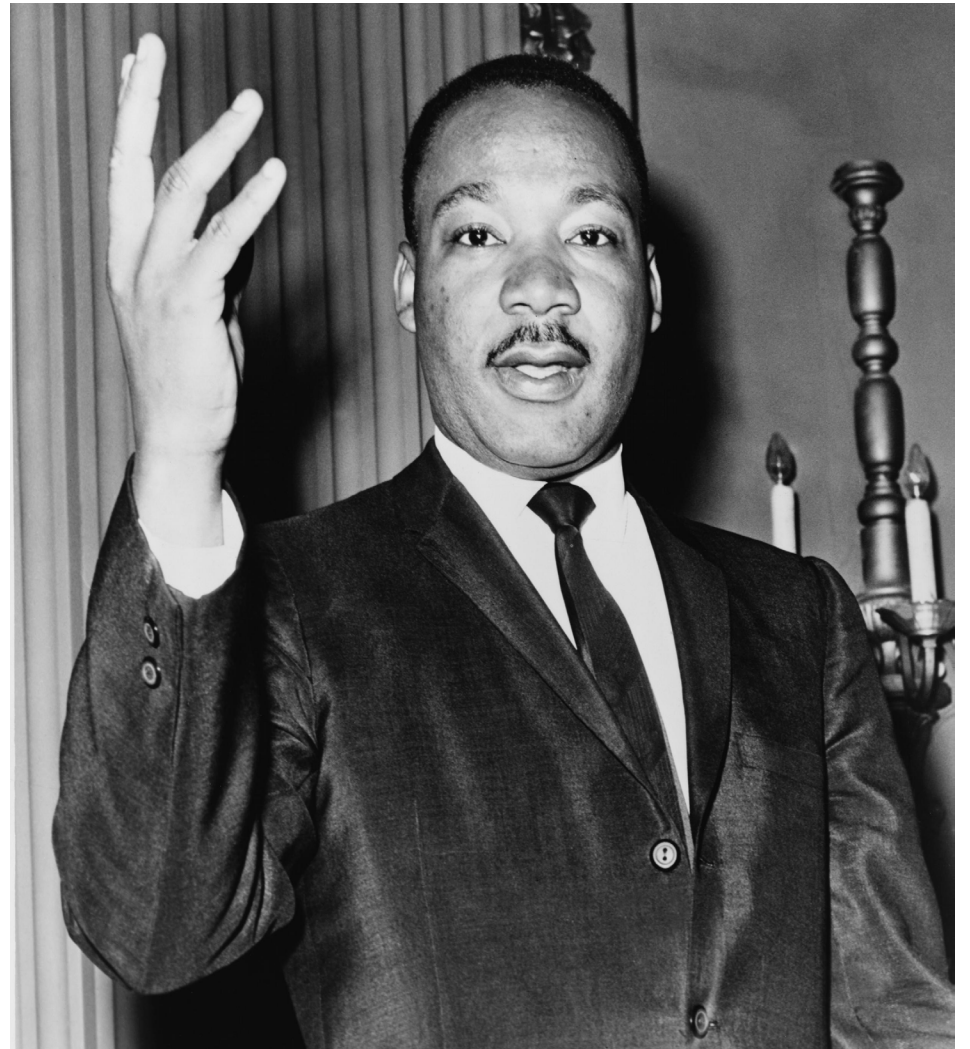
The speech angered many in the United States government, making King a target of FBI investigations. According to the Tavis Smiley documentary “MLK: A Call to Conscience”, 168 major newspapers denounced King the day after the speech, and an angry President Lyndon Johnson dis-invited him from the White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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

OUR VOICES

The Danger of the “Ethno-Nationalist” State

By Bill Fletcher, Jr.

NNPA Newswire Contributor

(NNPA blackpressusa.com) One of the most common features of right-wing populist and fascist movements is the demand for ethnic and/or racial purity. During the course of the 20th century we saw it in its most egregious forms in colonial and white minority regimes in the global South, and in the Nazi-led persecution and, later, Holocaust against the Jews.

Ethnic regimes were largely ignored in the mainstream media of the global North until the early 1990s, even when troubling events, such as genocide in Burundi, were unfolding. It was only with the disintegration of the former Yugoslavia in the early 1990s and the Rwanda genocide (1994) that it became more than apparent that another wave of ethnic cleansing and ethno-nationalist regimes were unfolding.

What are ethno-nationalist regimes? They are political systems that quite openly privilege the alleged rights of a given ethnic or so-called racial group. Apartheid South Africa was certainly an example of a long-running such regime. But the Rwanda genocide, when right-wing Hutus went to war to openly eliminate Tutsis (and those Hutus who allied with Tutsis) using the pretext of a civil war, was yet another example.

Right-wing populist leaders such as Donald Trump in the USA, Benjamin Netanyahu in Israel and Narendra Modi in India are quintessential examples of leaders who promote



ethno-nationalist regimes. Contrary to early 20th century fascists and 19th century “scientific racists,” they do not rely on the rhetoric of racial superiority or inferiority in justifying their politics. Rather they argue either the incompatibility of different racial/ethnic groups and/or that the specific racial/ethnic group which they claim to represent has been, allegedly, aggrieved over the years.

The situation in India at this very moment is illustrating the evolving and serious dangers of ethno-nationalist re-

gimes. The political forces around Modi and his political party—the BJP—have been promoting anti-Muslim rhetoric and practices for years. Their objective is nothing short of eliminating the secular basis of India and replacing it with a Hindu ethno-nationalist state. The recent legislation advanced by Modi and passed in Parliament that offers citizenship to refugees from neighboring countries UNLESS they happen to be Muslim demonstrates the depths of depravity of such regimes. It is, therefore, not surprising that India is exploding.

Netanyahu is a close cousin—politically speaking—of Modi’s. He and his party—the Likud—have always aimed to eliminate the Palestinian presence from not only the occupied Palestinian territories, but from Israel itself. But it is not only the Palestinians that Netanyahu, et.al. wish to eliminate. The language of the regime when it comes to other alleged outsiders is particularly provocative and echoes that of Hindu fascists in India in describing undocumented immigrants, in the case of Israel, as “infiltrators.”

Right-wing populism and ethno-nationalism have become major parts of the global political landscape. It is not only the appearance of Donald Trump; nor is it just Britain’s Boris Johnson. It has emerged, like chicken pox, in numerous places. And, if one is not careful, it can emerge even within the ranks of the oppressed when, in desperation, we sometimes seek to distinguish ourselves from some “Other.”

Bill Fletcher, Jr. is the executive editor of globalafricanworker.com and the former president of TransAfrica Forum.

The Thriving System of Convict Labor

By Julianne Malveaux

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - As 2019 ticked to a close, the screamingly outrageous headlines have not slowed. Every day there is something, whether it is a flurry of presidential tweets or yet another Republican spouting off about something or other. Who would have thought, though, that amid the Christmas holiday we would learn that billionaire candidate Michael Bloomberg is using convicted prisoners to make calls for his campaign?

He will say he did not know. Or, that “anybody” might have made a similar mistake. After all, subcontracting is the name of the predatory capitalist game. That’s how a convict labor exploiter can bid to pay \$7.25 an hour for a job that might pay \$11 or \$12 an hour on the open market. However, the prisoners will see nothing like \$7.25 an hour. Try paying these folks just a dollar an hour or so. The subcontractor, who pays the incarcerated just a dollar for a fair wage, would have to pay ten times that in the regular job sector. Someone who was not exploiting convict labor couldn’t compete with the low pay prisoners are earning.

Those who own stock in these prison labor companies are getting their profits, too. The companies who subcontract with prisons are making three or four times what they might earn if they used general labor. The use of convict labor is one of the cruelest illustrations of the evils of predatory capitalism. Predatory capitalists extract surplus resources by tilting the rules of the game to favor capital instead of labor. People who are working full time are getting pennies to the dollar in the name of “crime and punishment.”

So, here’s the Bloomberg story. The three-term mayor of New York contracted with a firm to make phone calls for his fledgling campaign. The women, incarcerated at a facility in Oklahoma, are obliged to say they are calling for the Bloomberg campaign. They don’t have to disclose that they are incarcerated. Anyone receiving a call is given the impression that they are being called by a campaign volunteer, not an exploited worker.



Oklahoma limits the amount of money an inmate can make to \$27 a month. This money may go for things like phone calls, snacks, or other “prison comfort.” If Pro Com, the company that runs the prison work, says it pays \$7.25 an hour for prison labor, but inmates can’t earn more than \$27 a month, who wants to bet that these prisoners are working just four hours to reach their maximum monthly pay? Or is Oklahoma paying them a dollar or so an hour, and profiting from their work by keeping the rest of the money?

In this twenty-first century, we are mired in a 19th century predatory convict labor system. Inmates aren’t only making phone calls for Bloomberg’s campaign. They are also making furniture for state office buildings, processing motor vehicle requests, and being used as low-cost substitutes for workers who might be fairly paid. The worst of it is that the work inmates are doing does not guarantee them a job post-incarceration. Instead, their “experience” opens no doors for any future opportunities.

Mike Bloomberg should have known better than to subcontract with an exploitative company, but he is probably not the only one doing it. Subcontracting is the norm these days, but few ask who is doing the subcontracting. Top label designers have low-paid women stitching their garments. Call centers can contract with low paid workers in their communities, or they can save 70 percent by contracting with convict labor. This practice is not only a wake-up call for Mayor Bloomberg, it is also a wake-up call for anyone who is playing in the subcontracting space.

Lots of people like to play “woke” and economically progressive. But if your “woke” and cost-cutting ways sideline the people who work for you, then you aren’t actually “woke”, you are just a predatory capitalist, placing profits over people. Economic justice and profit maximization may be incompatible.

After he was outed, Mayor Bloomberg said he and his campaign did not know that Pro Com, had contracted with the convict labor providers, and he moved to sever the relationship quickly. Good for him, but Bloomberg is smart enough to ask questions before contracting - not a great move for a candidate who seems to have more money than sense.

African Americans are nearly half of those incarcerated in this country, despite being just about 13 percent of the population. This incarceration is a throwback to enslavement when Black folks got major penalties for minor offenses. The convict labor system, especially, oppresses Black people, and the Bloomberg case makes it all too apparent.

Convict labor is exploitation and an abomination. It makes black bodies a profit center for capitalistic exploitation. Companies like Pro Com must be held accountable, but so should the many others who thrive on contract labor. It is time to put an end to this exploitation. Instead of throwing billions into his long-shot campaign, why can’t Michael Bloomberg spend a billion or two stopping convict labor?

Dr. Julianne Malveaux is an economist, author, media contributor and educator. Her latest project MALVEAUX! On UDCTV is available on youtube.com. For booking, wholesale inquiries or for more info visit www.juliannealveaux.com

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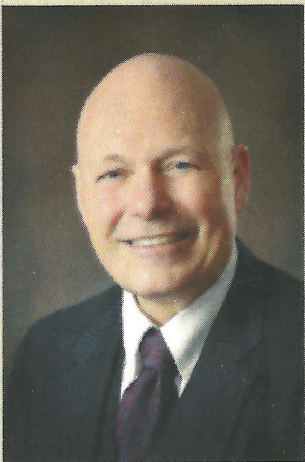
rgilles@gillesrealty.com

1608 N. Monroe

Spokane, WA 99205

Put our experienced team to the test!

Are You Interested In A Career in Real Estate? Call Me.



Career Opportunities

SPOKANE

Long established manufacturing company is seeking energetic and hard-working individuals for management, sales, office, machine operators and laborer positions. To view all of our current openings, please visit our website www.SCAFCO.com and/or CWaIA, our authorized distributor of SCAFCO products www.CWaIA.com to fill out an application.

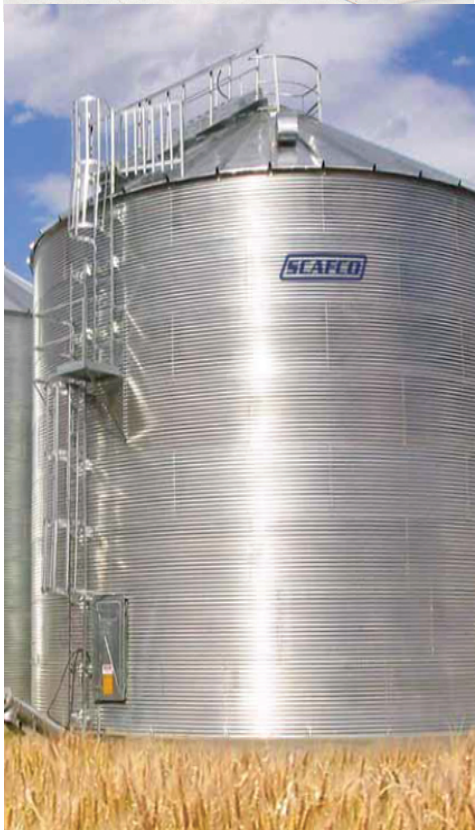
You can also send your resume to SCAFCO at 2800 E Main Ave Spokane, WA 99202.

Benefits Package Includes:

Medical, Dental, Vision Insurance, Vacation, Excellent 401(K) and Profit Sharing.







Be The Change You Wish To See In The World! - Gandhi

At Volunteers of America, we believe in the potential of every human to overcome the cycle of poverty and homelessness! We work alongside individuals from any and every background and identity and we celebrate diversity.

Everyday brings its share of new challenges and adventures, but whatever happens, you will have a great team, amazing clients, and meaningful work!

Currently hiring for multiple positions: voaspokane.org/jobs



Volunteers of America®

EASTERN WASHINGTON & NORTHERN IDAHO



We're hiring!

BHT is recruiting for three open positions:

- Communications Manager
- Office Coordinator/Receptionist
- Navigator

BHT provides a range of excellent benefits, including:

- 100% employer paid health, dental, and vision insurance
- Retirement plan with employer match to 6%
- 6 weeks paid time off
- Downtown location with paid parking

BHT serves a diverse community and encourages applicants from qualified individuals who reflect the growing diversity that enriches Spokane and the surrounding counties.



Visit bit.ly/bht-hiring to learn more about these positions and to apply!

To advertise your employment opportunities in the Black Lens call 509-795-1964 or e-mail sandy@blacklensnews.com

JANUARY EVENTS

JANUARY 2
FIRST THURSDAY DISCUSSION GROUP
Looking for 5-10 people interested in racial and social justice, willing to meet regularly for deep discussions, to plan strategies and take action.
6-8pm
For location information contact Bob Lloyd at (509) 999-1263 or rdllloyd@comcast.net.

JANUARY 7
POETRY RISING AT THE SOUTH HILL LIBRARY
Poetry Rising at the South Hill Library is a program we will be offering every other month, featuring poetry and prose readings and music and art presentations. This months artists include: Poet - Gaye Hallman; Author - Annette Drake; and Musician - Steve Schennum
6:30
South Hill Library
3324 S. Perry, Spokane
Cost: Free.

JANUARY 8
FUSE SPOKANE - DIVERSE VOICES BOOK DISCUSSION
The *Body Papers* by Grace Talusen powerfully explores her own life as a Filipino immigrant and survivor of cancer and childhood abuse.
6:30pm - 8:00pm
Fellini House
1603 W. Pacific Ave Spokane, 99201
Free and open to the public. Participants receive a 15% discount from Auntie's Bookstore. Questions email Erin at EJToungate@gmail.com

JANUARY 9
JUSTICE NIGHT
Speak with an attorney. Free Consultations in these areas: LFOs (Legal Financial Obligations), Housing, Juvenile Law, Family Law, Seal/Expunge/Vacate Convictions, Police Accountability. NO CRIMINAL LAW.
5:30 - 7pm
Center for Justice
35 W Main, Spokane 99201
Cost: Free. Sponsored by Center for Justice.
For more information call 509.835.5211 or visit their website at www.cforjustice.org.

JANUARY 11
PLATINUM AND PEARLS CENTENNIAL BALL
Join the Pi Xi Zeta Chapter of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. for an evening of elegance, cuisine, and dancing in celebration of our Centennial & Founders' Day! Proceeds will be dedicated to our student scholarship awards, and support our community projects and initiatives. *Attire: Black Tie (Formal)*
7-11pm
Spokane Valley Event Center
10514 E Sprague Ave, Spokane Valley 99206
For tickets visit <https://pixizeta.square.site>.

JANUARY 19
MLK COMMEMORATIVE CELEBRATION
Join the Martin Luther King Center for a community celebration to honor the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
4-6pm
Holy Temple Church of God in Christ
806 W Indiana Ave, Spokane, WA 99205
For more information visit mlkspokane.org or call 509-868-0856.

JANUARY 20
MLK UNITY RALLY & MARCH
Join the Martin Luther King Center for a unity rally and march through downtown Spokane to honor the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Followed by a resource fair.
10am
Spokane Convention Center
334 W Spokane Falls Blvd, Spokane, 99201
For more information visit mlkspokane.org or call 509-868-0856.

JANUARY 20
LIFTING AS WE CLIMB: A TEACH-IN ON VOTER'S RIGHTS AND SUPPRESSION
Focusing on voter suppression and the Civil Rights Movement, modern voter restrictions, the intersection of race, the criminal justice system, and voting access. Speakers include guests from the Spokane NAACP, the Spokane County Elections Office, and Gonzaga University's Sociology & Criminology Department. Following Spokane MLK Day March
12:30 - 2:30pm
Gonzaga University-Hemmingson Ballroom
702 E Desmet Ave, Spokane, WA 99202
The event is free and open to the public. Sponsored by Gonzaga University's Unity Multicultural Education Center and the Center for Community Engagement. For more details, email ayers@gonzaga.edu

JANUARY 27
PASSOVER - STAGED READING
A play by Antoinette Nwandu, that was partially inspired by the killing of Trayvon Martin, features two black men, sitting on a sidewalk, addressing issues of police brutality and institutionalized racism. **Explicit Language
7:30pm
Stage Left Theater
108 W 3rd Ave, Spokane, WA 99201

ZETA PHI BETA SORORITY, INCORPORATED
PI XI ZETA CHAPTER PRESENTS

PLATINUM & PEARLS

CENTENNIAL BALL

Join Us For An Unforgettable Evening Of Elegance

January 11, 2020
Doors Open At 7:20PM

Spokane Valley Event Center
10514 E Sprague Avenue

Purchase Tickets Here:
pixizeta.square.site

 ONE ZETA. UNIFIED. MOBILIZED. ZETARIZED



NAACP MONTHLY MEETING
Join the NAACP for our monthly general membership meeting. January's meeting date and time are to be determined.
For more information please check social media or contact the NAACP at 509-209-2425 or visit: naacpspokane.org.

SAVE THE DATE

IMPACTED YOUTH FORUM

February 29, 2020
10am - 1:30-pm
Spokane Falls Community College

Sponsored by Spokane NAACP & SFCC Black Student Union

RSVP: mrletaxione@gmail.com or virla_spencer@yahoo.com

Send information about upcoming community events to sandy@blacklensnews.com.



SPOKANE HOMELESS CONNECT

JOIN US FOR THE 9TH ANNUAL

HOMELESS CONNECT

ONE COMMUNITY, ONE GOAL.

January 30th, 2020
10AM - 3PM

The Spokane Convention Center
334 W Spokane Falls Blvd
Spokane, WA





SPARK SALON

A Benefit & Paddle Raise



Jess Walter
in conversation with
Mark Steilen
DIRECTOR, SCREENWRITER, & PRODUCER



Friday, January 24
DOORS OPEN 6 PM
HANGAR EVENT CENTER
6095 E RUTTER AVE
(FELTS FIELD)



TICKETS \$100
TABLES \$775 (SEAT 8)

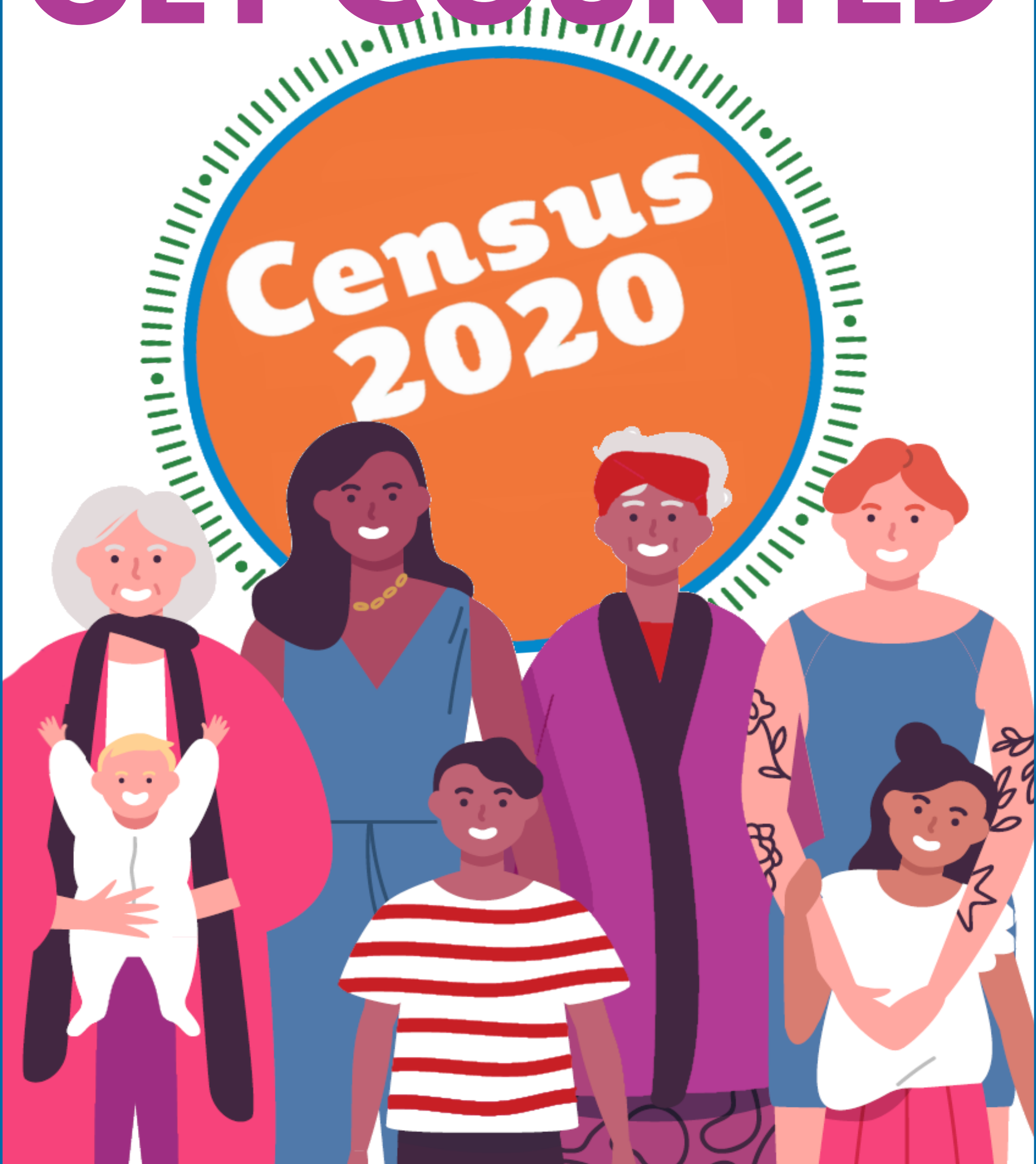
Your ticket includes dinner & your first glass of wine

TICKETS AVAILABLE AT
SPARK-CENTRAL.ORG

All proceeds benefit **SPARK CENTRAL**, a 501(c)3 nonprofit that breaks barriers to creativity so people of all economic backgrounds can create the future they imagine.

CONTACT DONATE@SPARK-CENTRAL.ORG WITH ANY QUESTIONS!

YOU MATTER GET COUNTED



April 1st is Census Day! Are you ready?
spokanecensus.org