

CELEBRATING WOMEN'S HERSTORY MONTH

March 2020

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Spokane's Black Community News Source

THE BLACK LENSTM SPOKANE

NEWS FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

BLACK COUNT 2020

2020 Census African American Partnership Summit in L.A. Addresses Historically Undercounted Black Community

By Sandra Williams

Every ten years, the United States conducts a Census. The goal of the census is to count every person living in the 50 states, District of Columbia, and five U.S. territories.

The Census is used to determine how federal funds are distributed to communities across America as well as how communities are represented in their state capitals as well as in Washington, DC.

There are 100s of billions of dollars at stake, tied to the results of the census and to how complete and accurate the count is in various communities. However, Black communities, as well as other communities of color, have historically been undercounted, with devastating effects for our communities.



On February 25, community members from California, Hawaii and Washington state gathered with Census staff in Los Angeles for the 2020 Census African American Partnership Summit.

The purpose of the summit was to connect the people who are already working in their communities, share information and resources, and discuss barriers to achieving a more complete count of the African

American community in the 2020 Census.

Decades of government mistrust and concerns about the safety of the census information was discussed as primary reasons for reduced

participation in the census from the Black community, as well as the perception that the Black community has little to gain. Generational poverty and housing instability were also discussed as obstacles for accurately counting African Americans, with African American men, ages 18-35 identified as one of the most undercounted groups.

Despite the challenges and concerns, the consensus from those in attendance was that the value for the Black community of participating in the census makes it critical that as many of us are reached and counted as possible.

The summit concluded with participants working together to develop strategies that they will take back to their respective communities.

Continued on Page 17

Martin Luther King Center at East Central Expands to Serve Community

Following a Fifth Avenue Revitalization meeting last Saturday, Martin Luther King Center Executive Director, Freda Gandy, took Spokane's newest City Councilmember Betsy Wilkerson and others on a tour of their newly completed expansion and renovation.

The expansion of the center, which is located at Fifth and Stone in the East Central neighborhood of Spokane, added an additional 5,000 square feet to the southwest corner of the building and turned an old garage on the west side into two preschool rooms as well.

Three classrooms were renovated as a part of the 2.1 million project and the new addition adds a total of five classrooms which will enable the MLK Center to expand its early learning program and before- and after-school care for children, which both currently have waiting lists.

The Martin Luther King Center took over management of the East Central Community Center in January 2018, moving from its previous location on Sherman Avenue.

For more information about the MLK Center visit mlkspokane.org or call (509) 455-8722.



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ON MY MIND

THOUGHTS FROM THE EDITOR

by Sandra Williams



I spent a good chunk of my deadline time this month traveling to and from and attending a conference in California learning how to make sure that the Black community gets counted in the 2020 census, since we are historically undercounted. My desire is to do what I can do about that. At least in this community.

But, to be honest, I've run out of steam. So, here's a photo of me filled with gratitude at my anniversary party earlier this month. Next month I'll come up with something doubly profound to say. Or maybe not.

Sandy

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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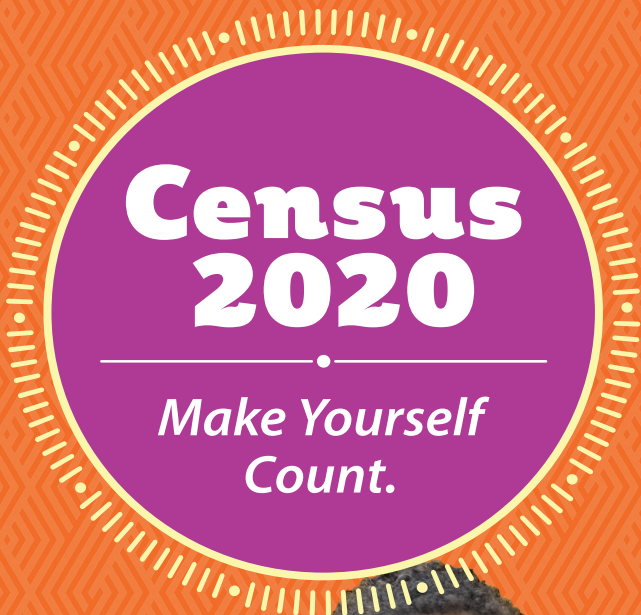
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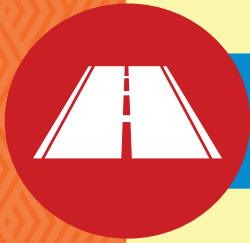
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YOU SHOULD KNOW

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

ART AND HISTORY by Bertoni Jones Bey

Norma Merrick Sklarek

Norma Merrick Sklarek was born April 15, 1926 in Harlem, New York. Her father was a doctor and her mother was a seamstress both immigrating from Trinidad. An only child, Norma grew up in schools normally reserved for Caucasian children, but she was a standout in art, science, and mathematics. By having a close and loving relationship with her father, he was able to convince her that her art and math skills combined could mean great success in architecture.

She attended Barnard College in 1944 as a one-year requirement for entrance into the School of Architecture at Columbia University. Her years at Columbia were difficult. While she came in green, many of her classmates were coming home from World War II and were more worldly, already possessing bachelor's and master's degrees. While most students were together completing projects, Norma worked on hers alone. "The competition was keen, but I had a stick-to-it attitude and never gave up". Norma graduated from Columbia in 1950 with a bachelor's degree in Architecture, one of only two women and the first woman of Moorish descent ever to receive a degree in architecture.

The real-world reality of her complexion plus being a woman began to manifest in her life. In her first attempts to be hired, she was rejected by nineteen firms. Ultimately her first position was junior draftsman for the City of New York's Department of Public Works. In 1954, Norma took the New York State architectural licensing exam and after a grueling four-day exam passed on her first attempt, becoming the first Moorish woman licensed as an architect not only in New York but in the whole country.

Upon leaving for new employment she found that her former boss had been giving negative reviews about her employment history to prospective employers. She

opined: "It had to be personal. He was not a licensed architect, and I was a young kid – I looked like a teenager – and I was Black and a licensed architect."

By 1955 Norma went to the firm of Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (S.O.M.). For the first time in her professional career responsibility was shared with her and she saw more and more works land on her table while she taught at New York City Community College. Four years later she became the first ever Moorish woman to hold membership with the American Institute of Architects.

She moved to California to be close to family and went to work for Gruen Associates of Los Angeles. Once again double standards would appear. Without a car she commuted with a Caucasian male co-worker who was always late for work prompting her new boss to question her commitment: "It took only one week before the boss came and spoke to me about being late. Yet he had not noticed that the young man had been late for two years. My solution was to buy a car since I, the highly visible employee, had to be punctual."

By 1962 Norma was the first ever Moorish woman to gain California's state architect's license and her work for Gruen gained her the executive level position of director of architecture (she was now down by law on both coasts). While there she taught at UCLA and USC as a member of the architectural faculty.

After twenty years at Gruen, Norma left to become Vice-President of Welton Becket Associates and was directly responsible for Terminal One at Los Angeles International Airport (LAX), a project costing fifty-million dollars that prepared for the 1984 Olympics. By 1985 she co-founded Siegel Skarek Diamond Architectural firm, the largest firm owned entirely by women. Unfortunately, the women saw less work and



fewer large-scale commissions adversely affected their financial opportunities.

Norma retired in 1992 with a simple architectural design philosophy: "architecture should be working on improving the environment of people in their homes, in their places of work, and their places of recreation. It should be functional and pleasant, not just in the image of the ego of the architect." Her works include California Mart, Los Angeles; Fox Plaza, San Francisco; Park Center Commercial Complex, San Jose; San Bernardino City Hall; Commons-Courthouse Center, Columbus Indiana; The U.S. Embassy, Tokyo; Pacific Design Center, Los Angeles;

Terminal One at LAX, Los Angeles; and Mall of America, Minneapolis.

One of the most fascinating things about Norma is that she was a trailblazer in her field who reached the pinnacle of her work without ever having one single mentor. No one ever reached out to show her. "In architecture, I had absolutely no role model. I'm happy today to be a role model for others that follow". Norma Merrick Sklarek passed away on February 6, 2012 in Pacific Palisades, California at the age of 85.

Sources: pioneeringwomen.bwaf.org/norma-merrick-skarek; *Black Heritage Day III* – Jamiyo Mack.

Mary Beatrice Davidson Kenner: Inventor of Women's Sanitary Belt



(Source: blackthen.com; goodblacknews.com; revolv.com) Mary Beatrice Davidson Kenner, born on May 17, 1912, was an African-American inventor most noted for her development of the sanitary belt.

She was born in Monroe, North Carolina and came from a long line of inventors. Her father, Sidney Nathaniel Davidson (June 1890-November 1958), who she credited with inspiring her interest in discovering things, patented a clothing press that would fit into a suitcase, although he ultimately made no money on the invention. Her sister, Mildred Davidson Austin Smith (1916–1993), invented and commercially sold board games. Her grandfather invented a light signal for trains.

In 1931 Kenner graduated from high school and earned a place at the prestigious Howard University, but was forced to drop out a year and a half into her course due to financial pressures. She took on odd jobs

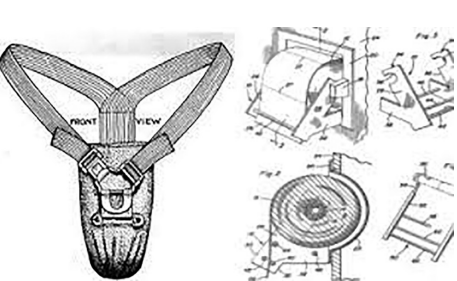
such as babysitting before landing a position as a federal employee. She continued inventing in her spare time.

By 1957 Kenner had saved enough money for her first ever patent: a belt for sanitary napkins. It was long before the advent of disposable pads, and women were still using cloth pads and rags during their period. Kenner proposed "an adjustable belt with an inbuilt, moisture-proof napkin pocket, making it less likely that menstrual blood could leak and stain clothes." A company contacted her and expressed their interest in her idea. However, after they discovered the idea came from a Black woman, they turned her down. Kenner's invention was the precursor to self-adhesive maxi pads which wouldn't become readily available until the 1960s. It would be 30 years before the sanitary belt was patented.

In addition to the sanitary belt, Kenner invented a serving tray after her sister was

diagnosed with multiple sclerosis and had to get around with a walker, a toilet tissue holder that always made sure the loose end of the roll was within reach and a back washer that could be attached to the wall of a shower to help people reach the parts of their back that were hard to get to.

Between 1956 and 1987 Kenner received five total patents for her household and personal item creations. She said she never intended to make money off of her inventions, but just wanted to make people's lives easier. Kenner died on January 13, 2006.



NAACP UPDATE:



By Deborah Cano
Secretary, Spokane NAACP Branch 1137

I was a child of the '50s and '60s. Growing up in the Rocky Mountains, I met almost zero people of color. But, thanks to the power of television, I saw what was going on in our country. I was 11 years old when I saw George Wallace proclaim "segregation now, segregation forever". White men, women and children supported him with their ugly words and actions.

Through ensuing years there were many more sickening repeats of that ugly. I was raised with Jesus' words: "love one another as I have loved you". I saw the racist hypocrisy, was disgusted by the divisively toxic behavior and wondered why mature adults didn't remedy this horrific sin. I cheered for the Black men, women and children who acted for equal rights, deeply wanted to be a Freedom Rider after Bloody Sunday. I did get my chance to join my heroes, to find ways to help. And I'm still here.

The structural racism that has replaced Jim Crow is soul crushing. Racism is not a Black, Native, LatinX, or Asian issue. It is a human issue. When we demand, as human beings, justice in education, the work force, housing, criminal justice and health, we are creating slow but steady change. Our Spokane NAACP forebearers fought for racial equality for themselves, their children, us. We invite you to join our legacy by becoming members and joining a committee. People like to complain. Become part of the solution.

Education Committee – Fourth Monday of the month, 6:00 PM, Community Building Mezzanine, 35 West Main. We support families targeted by racial bullying. Join us as we examine the challenges our children face at home/school and develop ways for children to stay in school and enjoy learning. **Contact amymccolm@gmail.com.**

Health Care Committee – Second Tuesday of the month, 5:00 PM, Community

Building Mezzanine, 35 West Main. With SRHD we have facilitated focus groups within the Black community to identify targeted health priorities and promote solutions. **Contact elinswims@gmail.com.**

Criminal Justice Committee – Meetings are set by committee chair, Devon Wilson. After arrest, people can spend months to years in jail, awaiting trial. Together with other partners, we assess current breakdowns and identify potential solutions. **Contact devonwilsonuky@gmail.com.**

Civic Engagement Committee – Meetings are set by committee chair, Stacey Wells. Though we are nonpartisan, we advocate for voter registration and active support of legislation that impacts our community. Voting is a huge factor in determining the directions our local and national governments take. Participation is an excellent way to learn about and advocate for legislated issues impacting

our community. **Contact stacey.wells.spokane@gmail.com.**

Economic Justice Committee – Meetings are pending. Issues of wages, housing, jobs and more are being used as tools to support structural racism. **Contact spokanenaacp@gmail.com.**

Executive Committee elections, Nov. 2020 –In this time period we will receive nominations for all officers I/e : president, first, second and third vice presidents, secretary, treasurer and members at large. You must be a member in good standing since April of 2020 to be eligible to run for office.

Spokane NAACP general meetings are held the third week of every month, usually on a Monday Building lobby, 7:00 PM, though locations can change.

For more information contact spokanenaacp@gmail.com or (509) 209-2425.

NAACP Hosts Call to Action on The State of Black Students in America

On February 19, 2020, the National Association for the Advancement of Black People (NAACP) held their monthly Call to Action on The State of Black Students in America. Thousands of participants dialed in to ask their questions and hear a discussion led by the NAACP National Youth and College Director, Tiffany Dena Loftin.

The town hall gave listeners the opportunity to learn how to get involved in the crucial work of ensuring that schools, campuses, and communities are safer for communities of color.

Loftin was joined by a youth panelist that shared how community members can get involved and offer real solutions to our communities' problems.

Panelists included:

Brandon Evans, NAACP University of Hartford Chapter, President

Brea Baker, Inspire Justice, Programs Director

Zellie Imani, Black Liberation Collective, Co-founder

Delanie Seals, High School Organizer, #HeadWrapsMatter, Crown Act

Yoel Haile, Afrikan Black Coalition, Political Director

Tiffany Dena Loftin opened the call by speaking on the role of youth and their



responsibility in the spaces that they are in.

"It is necessary," she said, "for those that are directly affected to lead when we see discrimination in our culture and our communities. If we want solutions that please us and make our lives better, they have to be driven by the people on the phone and the people affected."

When a caller asked about discrimination on predominantly white cam-

puses, Zellie Imani said, "one of the most common problems is the white supremacy on these campuses and the complacency by the university officials.... If you bring an incident to their attention, often times they will make it seem as though it is an isolated incident. Students have to demand that they feel safe on their campuses. These universities need to do something systematically and policy wise."

Delanie Seals echoed that sentiment by stating, "when you have people who

look like you and have experienced the same things as you, you get more empathy and more support when it comes to issues that concern you."

Delanie, who is still in high school, went on to say, "even before I was able to vote, I was making sure that I was contacting my state representatives and telling them the issues that I see in our schools. I think it's very important for Black residents to tell their representatives what they're struggling with and their concerns."

Yoel ended the conversation by reminding everyone of a quote by Kwame Ture (aka Stokely Carmichael), "If your people are oppressed and you are not making a contribution to end the sufferings of your people, by your very act of in-action, you are against your people, there is no middle ground."

Yoel went on to say that "none of us has the luxury to sit out of the struggle. We shouldn't ever have the feeling that we get to sit out on the struggle of healing our people."

To stay connected and learn ways that youth can help in our communities, text 2020 BLACKOUT to 40649. For more updates follow @NAACP on Twitter and @NAACP_YC on Instagram.

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BLACK NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Local, State, National and Around the World

NAACP Chapter Opens in Kootenai County, Idaho

(Source: Jennifer Passaro, cdapress.com; KXLY.com; KREM.com)

The NAACP launched a local chapter in Kootenai County, which is located in North Idaho. The chapter is the first in NAACP history to be located in the region.

The opening of the chapter was honored during the second annual “Day of Unity,” an event organized by T.O.C. (The Other Choice) Diversity Resource to celebrate Black History Month and held at the Coeur d' Alene library.

The new NAACP chapter was spearheaded by James McDay, a Civil Rights advocate that has lived in the North Idaho area for twenty years. McDay runs a diversity resource program in Coeur d' Alene.

The keynote speaker for Day of Unity was Senate Candidate Paulette Jordan, a former Democratic member of the Idaho House of Representatives, representing District 5A, and 2018 gubernatorial can-



didate. Jordan recently announced her campaign to run for U.S. Senate.

Founded February 12, 1909, the NAACP is the nation’s foremost, largest, and most widely recognized civil rights organization. Its more than half-million members and supporters throughout the United States and the world are the premier advo-

cates for civil rights in their communities, leading grassroots campaigns for equal opportunity and conducting voter mobilization.

The mission of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is to secure the political, educational, social, and economic equality

of rights in order to eliminate race-based discrimination and ensure the health and well-being of all persons. NAACP objectives include: ensuring the political, educational, social, and economic equality of all citizens; achieving equality of rights and eliminating race prejudice among the citizens of the United States; removing all barriers of racial discrimination through democratic processes; seeking enactment and enforcement of federal, state, and local laws securing civil rights; informing the public of the adverse effects of racial discrimination and seeking its elimination; educating persons as to their constitutional rights and taking all lawful action to secure the exercise thereof, and taking any other lawful action in furtherance of these objectives, consistent with the NAACP’s Articles of Incorporation and this Constitution.

According to the Coeur D' Alene Press, the Kootenai County NAACP chapter already has more than 50 members, and is looking to grow to 100.

For more information, visit tocitydiversityresource.org.

'Self-Made': Madam C.J. Walker Netflix Series to Debut on March 20

Source: Shalwah Evans, essence.com; Photos Courtesy Netflix)

'Self Made: Inspired by the Life of Madam C.J. Walker', a Netflix series, will premiere on March 20, with Academy Award winner Octavia Spencer in the leading role of Madam C. J. Walker, who became America's first Black female millionaire.

The series, which is set in the early 1900s, not long after the abolishment of slavery, is based on the biography, "On Her Own Ground," by Walker’s great great-granddaughter and historian A’Le-



lia Bundles. It looks at Walker's journey and the circumstances that launched her business.

The four-part limited series is directed by Kasi Lemmons and De-

Mane Davis with Octavia Spencer and LeBron James attached as executive producers.

It also stars Tiffany Haddish, Blair Underwood, Carmen Ejogo,

Garrett Morris, Kevin Carroll, Bill Bellamy, Mouna Traoré and Zahra Bentham.

For information and to see the trailer visit <https://www.netflix.com/title/80202462>



New U of Washington Study Discovers Racial Gaps in King & Pierce County Eviction Rates

(Source: Journal of Blacks in Higher Education, jbhhe.com/2020)

A new University of Washington study of eviction rates in Washington State found that Black adults are almost seven times more likely to be evicted from their homes than White adults.

The disparities are among the findings in the Evictions Study, created by a team of University of Washington researchers and led by Tim Thomas, a postdoctoral researcher now at the University of California, Berkeley.

Based on eviction filings from each of Washington’s 39 counties, the report and its series of interactive maps illustrate where, and to whom, evictions hit hardest.

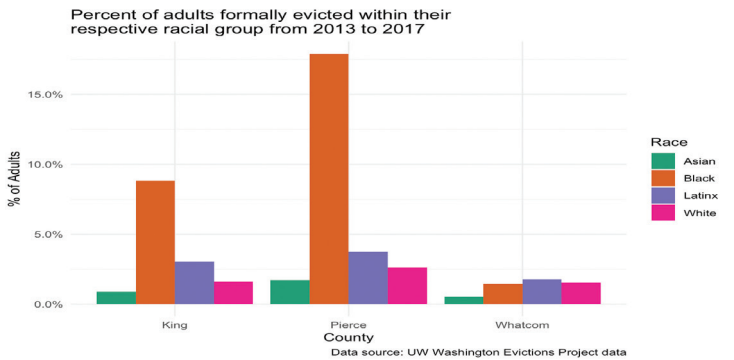
Eviction — the forcible removal of a tenant, usually due to unpaid rent — starts with a filing in court by a landlord. The process of notification, response, and hearing before a judge is generally the same across the country, but how much time tenants are given to respond, for example, can vary by state.

Black adults in King and Pierce Counties are almost seven times more likely to be evicted from their homes than White adults.

“Our research shows that evictions are pervasive, where between 2013 and 2017, 1 in 55 Washington adults were named in an eviction filing — over 400,000 adults between 2004 and 2017,” said Dr. Thomas.

“The most concerning finding is the severe over-representation of Black adults in the Western Washington eviction filing process. In Pierce County, 1 in 6 Black adults were named in a filing between 2013 and 2017, and 1 in 11 in King County during that same time. For Whites, it’s 1 in 55 and 1 in 100, respectively. This severe racial disparity makes evictions a civil rights issue.”

For more information visit: <https://evictions.study/washington/index.html>



BLACK NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Local, State, National and Around the World

NASA "Hidden Figures" Mathematician Katherine G. Johnson Dies at 101

(Source: [nasa.gov](https://www.nasa.gov); Dana Givens, blackenterprise.com; Britni Danielle, theroot.com; Photos courtesy: NASA)

Katherine G. Johnson, the African American NASA mathematician, whose story was featured in the 2016 film *Hidden Figures*, died Monday, February 24. She was 101 years old.

In a statement, NASA said: "Ms. Johnson helped our nation enlarge the frontiers of space even as she made huge strides that also opened doors for women and people of color in the universal human quest to explore space. Her dedication and skill as a mathematician helped put humans on the moon and before that made it possible for our astronauts to take the first steps in space that we now follow on a journey to Mars. Her Presidential Medal of Freedom was a well-deserved recognition. At NASA we will never forget her courage and leadership and the milestones we could not have reached without her. We will continue building on her legacy and work tirelessly to increase opportunities for everyone who has something to contribute toward the ongoing work of raising the bar of human potential."

Born in 1918 in White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia, Johnson was a research mathematician, who by her own admission, was simply fascinated by numbers. By the time she was 10 years old, Johnson was a high school freshman--a truly amazing feat in an era when school for African-Americans normally stopped at eighth grade.

Johnson's father drove his family 120 miles to Institute, West Virginia, so that his daughter could continue her education through high school. She skipped grades to graduate from high school at age 14, and from college at age 18.

In 1953, after years as a teacher and later as a stay-at-home mom, Johnson began working for NASA's predecessor, the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics, or NACA. The NACA had taken the unusual step of hiring women for the tedious and precise work of measuring and calculating the results of wind tunnel tests in 1935.

In a time before the electronic computers that we know today, these women had the job title of "computer." During World War II, the NACA expanded this effort to



include African-American women. The NACA was so pleased with the results that, unlike many organizations, they kept the women computers at work after the war.

By 1953 the growing demands of early space research meant there were openings for African-American computers at Langley Research Center's Guidance and Navigation Department -- and Katherine Johnson found the perfect place to put her extraordinary mathematical skills to work. As a computer, Johnson calculated the trajectory for Alan Shepard, the first American in space. Even after NASA began using electronic computers, John Glenn requested that she personally recheck the calculations made by the new electronic computers before his flight aboard Friendship 7 -- the mission on which he became the first American to orbit the Earth.

Johnson continued to work at NASA until 1986, combining her math talent with electronic computer skills. Her calculations proved as critical to the success of the Apollo Moon landing program and the start of the Space Shuttle program, as they did to those first steps on the country's journey into space.

On November 24, 2015, Johnson received the nation's highest civilian award, the Presidential Medal of Freedom, from President Barack H. Obama. NASA also named the Computational Research Facility in Johnson's honor.

"In her 33 years at NASA," President Obama said, "[Johnson] broke the barriers of race and gender, showing generations of young people that everyone can excel in math and science and reach for the stars."



Lanequa (Nikki) Jones Competes for Miss Spokane

Lanequa Jones, also known by her friends and family as Nikki, joined nineteen other women on Sunday, February 16, to compete for Miss Spokane.

Miss Spokane and Miss Spokane's Outstanding Teen are local preliminaries to the Miss America and Miss America's Outstanding Teen Competitions, which are the nation's largest providers of scholarships to young women. Each year, 20-25 young women representing titles from around the state compete for scholarships, prizes and the chance to represent Washington in the Miss America competition.

Competing in the Miss Spokane competition was no small accomplishment for Nikki. She was born and raised in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, but family tragedy brought her

to Spokane fifteen years ago to live with her grandparents.

Despite the challenges, Nikki has a long list of accomplishments. She graduated from high school, started college as a College Success Foundation Scholar, went to the state Track & Field championship 4 years in a row and even had the opportunity to run in the Jr. Olympic Games,

Nikki competed for Miss Spokane with mental health/illness awareness as her platform, pointing out that Spokane has a higher rate of mental health issues than the state average. Something Nikki says, "troubles me deeply, as it would anyone who cares about the improvement of mental health within our community."

Judges this year included Spokane City Councilwoman Betsy Wilkerson, former titleholder Erin Regrutto and Gonzaga University Assistant Dean Colleen Quinn Vandebloom.

Unfortunately, Nikki was not crowned Miss Spokane 2020 in this year's competition, that honor went to Gabby Dansereau (21), but she is not letting that or anything else deter her.

In speaking about her childhood, Nikki says, "It was rough and filled with sadness, but I had a strong mother who made sure that this woman standing in front of you had room to dream and grow. For information visit: missspokane.org



AFRICA NEWS

News Highlights From and About the Continent of Africa

Kenyan Women's Group Builds 5-Story Apartment Bldg

(Reprinted from Africa Global News, Samuel Abuya, africaglobalnews.com; Photo courtesy NewsDeeply)

The Murang’a County Women SACCO, as the six year old cooperative group is known, are credited with raising almost \$1 million to complete a 102-room apartment building. Even though their daily contributions per person were as little as \$0.1, in some instances, the Kenyan women's group managed to pool together to accomplish a big project that would have been, in the eyes of many, unbelievable.

Last year, the Kenyan women's group unveiled a students’ apartment block, fully built from scratch by their own contributions, something which set a tone in their investment ventures.



According to the women, they basically leveraged their numbers to make sure that they did not lose sight off they target of becoming landlords.

Instead of sharing the contributions with each other, they opted to deny themselves and bought the land instead and build the 5-storey apartment building with more than 100 rooms which will be hosting students from the neighboring colleges and universities.

The project did not come easy, however, and there were many social and cultural difficulties that threatened to stall the project along the way. One member of the group, Grace Ndegwa, who is a mother of two and lost her husband in 2003, struggled through the difficulties, but can now saw the fruits of her labor. Her aspirations were, all through, to someday start a business that would help bring up her family. Now, she is a proud co-owner of the property in question.

The completion of the apartment project marked the opening of other opportunities as the women can now venture into other investments backed up with improved credit worthiness that can afford them even better and bigger financing from banks as well as Credit Cooperative Organizations, commonly referred to, in Kenya, as SACCOs.

The group investing well, buying land in an area that is populated with university students. Indicators from the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics show that by last year, the number of students enrolling in Kenyan public and private tertiary institutions, which basically forms the primary target of this Kenyan women group in their investments, had shot up from 78.2% to 107.6%.

According to the women, they are not resting any time soon with their achievement. They are looking forward to purchasing another 2,000 acres of land from the proceeds



that will be generated from the project they have already completed.

The group has also benefited from a Kenyan government’s directive that at least 30 percent of all tenders be given to women, the youth and people living with disabilities. This group, for instance, is said to have managed a tender to rehabilitate a road in their locality, a project which gave them \$300,000. This tender saw the women doing jobs like clearing bushes, concrete mixing and trench digging to mention a few.

The Kenyan women group is an excellent example of what great entrepreneurial minds can do when they come together.

Africa Global News Publication.

Report: HIV+ Women in South Africa Subject to Forced Sterilization

Source: Mogomotsi Magome, (AP) abc-news.go.com/International; BET Staff, bet.com/news)

A new report, published in February, shows that dozens of women in South Africa who are HIV-positive were either forced or coerced into sterilizations after having babies in public hospitals.

The Commission for Gender Equality, a constitutionally-based advocacy organization, released the results of an investigation that reveals at least 48 women complained of “cruel, torturous or inhumane and degrading treatment” in the medical facilities where they were being treated.

In the 58-page report, the CGE documents say that just prior to giving birth, but as they were in labor or suffering extreme pain, the women were pressured to sign documents that they later learned were consent forms giving permission to the hospitals to sterilize them. Each of the women who were subject to sterilization delivered their children through cesarean section.

A nonprofit group called the Women’s Legal Centre lodged a complaint with the CGE of the 48 cases, which then investigated and found several gross human rights violations as well as denial of legal structuring around consenting to be sterilized.

In a 2011 case, a woman was told that she was being sterilized because she had too many children and that the law required it. She protested, saying that she was in the hospital without her family. When she



tried to contact them, nurses took away her cellphone.

Months later she revealed to her fiancé what happened, causing him to be furious. Eventually, she said, their marriage could not take place because he was no longer interested in their relationship.

In a case that stretches back to 2001, a woman who was seven months pregnant went to a hospital for prenatal care. She was diagnosed with high blood pressure, which nurses were unable to lower or stabilize and she was scheduled for a caesarean section the next day.

A nurse told her she needed to sign a series of forms before being taken for the procedure. But while she gave birth, she was also sterilized. After two weeks, the scar from the cesarean had not healed and she was admitted into a better-equipped hospital, where she stayed for more than two months. A few years later, a doctor who examined her because she was failing to conceive revealed that her fallopian tubes had been cut.

In another affidavit, a woman described the curt treatment she got from a nurse. “When I asked the nurse what the forms were for, the nurse responded by saying: ‘You HIV people don’t ask questions when you make babies. Why are you asking questions now, you must be closed up because you HIV people like making babies and it just annoys us. Just sign the forms, so you can go to theatre.’”

According to the World Health Organization, South Africa has the world’s worst HIV epidemic at 7 million people infected. As many as 19 percent of all people living with HIV are in the country, which also has 15 percent of new infections.

Meanwhile the CGE has recommended that more inquiry be conducted into how widespread the practice of forced sterilizations in South Africa has become. The report does not indicate how many women have undergone the illegal procedure.

Photo: Finger pricked for HIV testing. Johannesburg, Gauteng Province, South Africa. - stock photo

Tongues of Fire

By Beverly Spears

In the Upper Room



My first column for the Black Lens News came in December 2016 on the heels of the election of Donald Trump to the office of President of the United States. I chose the title for the column, *Tongues of Fire*, from one of several descriptions of the *Holy Spirit* in Hebrew and *Christian* scriptures.

The Spirit is represented by names that denote breath and life, wisdom, understanding, empowerment and action in the world. Spirit comes as the sound of a *mighty rushing wind— as Tongues of Fire descending*. In this form it is radical, fierce and purifying. I’ve often brought those *Tongues of Fire* to bear with a passion in my column, because it is necessary that we take an honest look at ourselves and our participation in the world, if we are to bring the fierce and penetrating Holy action that is required to restore sanity, balance and compassion to this country.

Recently I’ve been mindful that there are more quiet experiences and more gentle names for The Spirit. Spirit in these forms moves just as strongly in us and in the world, even more so. In fact, unless we can experience Spirit as The Breath of Life and as Holy Wisdom; unless we find The Spirit in the whisper of a breeze as well as a *mighty rushing wind*, we run the risk of spiritual imbalance. If we’re listening for Divine direction—for the *still small voice* of God, or in more secular language, if we’re discerning right-action, we will never hear it or discern it, unless our minds are still enough, and unless our hearts are quiet enough.

I find myself out of spiritual balance lately. In these times when an open heart, clear thought and well-considered actions are most needed, I am whipped and thrown around by the permeating and intensifying energies of evil in which we live. So much so that it’s easier and easier to lose track of the inner knowledge that the transforming power of Love is still alive in this country and in the world, and that collective energies for the common good find ways to overcome malevolence every day. We won’t often read or hear these Love stories in mainstream media. We have to look to find them. I realize I rarely make an effort

to find the good news. When I see uplifting and heart-warming stories, I’m usually moved to tears simply witnessing evidence that there is still love and kindness in the world. But I’m in trouble when I see them and think, this is a tiny drop of good news in an ocean of pain— “So what?”

I feel like I’m holding on by a slender thread, albeit a golden one, to that which connects me to the Source of all life itself. I’m at the mercy of what is temporal, not grounded in that which is timeless and eternal. I cannot hear the still small voice of God because my ego refuses to be quiet. It is altogether impossible for Spirit *not* to move in and through me, but it does little good if I’m too distracted or too numb to feel its presence.

Jesus, immediately after he was anointed by the Holy Spirit, retreated into the Judean desert where he prayed and fasted for forty days and forty nights, vanquishing his own internal demons. Before Prince Siddhartha was the Buddha, *The Enlightened One*, he was anguished by the suffering he saw in the world. He sat still and fasted under the Bodhi Tree for 49 days, until he reached Enlightenment

Since childhood, I’ve found solace and strength in old Gospel songs. I used to listen to Mahalia Jackson albums growing up. One of my favorite songs was *In The Upper Room*:

In the upper room with Jesus, singing in tears, blessed fears. Daily there my sins confessing, begging for his mercy sweet. Trusting in his grace and power. Seeking help in loving prayer. It is here that I feel the Spirit, as I sit with him and pray...

I rediscovered the song many years later, sung by *Sweet Honey in the Rock*. I would listen to their album, *I Feel Something Drawing Me On*, as I drove to work every morning, searching for spiritual adrenaline, and strength for the day. I turned to it the other day, and as it ever did, *In the Upper Room* brings me to my knees.

Periodic retreats, concentrated prayer, lengthy meditation, fasting, and silence all have an important place in my spiritual

life. But spiritual renewal and revitalization doesn’t have to come in hours of uninterrupted prayer or involve self-deprivation. In the last week I’ve started attending a twice-weekly Qi Gong class and joined a community Gospel choir for the first time in my adult life. Qi Gong is meditation in movement. I leave my sessions centered and relaxed. I leave Choir rehearsal, exuberant and joyful.

I’ve returned to walking regularly around my beloved Spring Lake, absorbing the natural world. I delight in the heron on the log, tall and still as a statue; a love-matched pair of swans moving tranquilly through the still water; the majesty and power of a red-tailed hawk gliding effortlessly on the currents of the wind. I love the soothing sound of water lapping gently on the shore. I’m awed by the beautiful vista of the rolling meadowed and Oak-studded hills that rise almost directly behind my home. My heart fills with gratitude that I live in such a beautiful place.

As a Christian I pray; as a mystic I meditate, following in the example of holy people throughout human history. But the Buddha did not stay under the Bodhi Tree, basking in his new-found and profound awareness of the nature of life. He did not choose the life of an ascetic, living apart from the world. He rose and went into the world to live and teach *The Middle Path* of moderation between extremes, the way that leads to the end of suffering and towards enlightenment.

Jesus emerged from the desert not to sit by the river and wait for people to discover he was the Holy Anointed One, but began his ministry among the people, traveling the countryside bringing awareness of the true nature of God as Love. Jesus, strengthened by his time of deep self-inquiry and communion with God, was able to heal our blindness by revealing to us our lack of compassion for people who live on the margins of society. Jesus restored outcasts back into the fullness of community, practicing radical hospitality and inclusion. It was after the desert that he brought relief to poverty stricken and oppressed people, commanding those of us who have more

money, privilege and power to use our blessings to insure everyone, absolutely everyone, is fed, clothed, housed, and kept healthy in body, mind and spirit.

Life is a constant cycle of movement and rest in all of nature. We sleep to renew our energy in preparation for our waking life. There is a time for growth in nature, and a time for dormancy. There is a time for quiet prayer on our knees, and a time to rise from contemplative prayer, and pray through non-violent action in the streets and bring justice to the Nation.

My ministry is to help heal a broken world, but I can’t minister in the world effectively until I drain the swamp of my own fear and hate. I cannot help resolve the crises of this country, if I am consumed by that crisis myself. It’s been a traumatic, and relentlessly depressing three and a half years of living in America. But this evil has also been the catalyst in waking us up from our dormancy and galvanizing a powerful force for good.

Now is the time for us to retreat into the desert for a short while and purge ourselves of doubt and fear, so we can come back strengthened and grounded in compassion and love. Now is the time to sit under the Bodhi Tree and seek enlightenment, so we can come back with clarity of mind and heart, able to make difficult choices and decisions. Now is the time to ascend to the Upper Room to lay our burdens down, so we can descend prepared to resume the heavy lifting that is required of us, from now through November 3, 2020 and beyond.

Let our communion with Spirit in the small gentle breeze fill us from the Source of all power in the cosmos, so that we can continue to bring the mighty rushing winds of justice, equity and peace to bear. Now is the time to seek the restoration of our own Souls in order to restore the Soul of America.

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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

Allow Ourselves to Forget

Have you ever walked in a grocery store to pick up a few items and forgot what you went into the store to get? Ever been midstream in the middle of a sentence and the words you wanted to say slipped your mind? Ever tried to remember a phone number by saying it out loud over and over again, only to forget it once you tried dialing it. Forgetting can be so frustrating.

I, like many of you, have found myself in those forgetful situations many times. Wanting to remember something that felt critical only to have the information flee my mind, causing me not to recall it at all. In those moments forgetting seems to be nothing more than a nuisance and unhelpful at best.

Then there are times when forgetting is exactly what we need to do. I recall being told as a young woman to forgive but never forget. We have been conditioned to remember the transgressions of those who hurt us with the intent of not allowing it to happen again.

I fully understand that way of thinking. I mean who would want to experience painful encounters at the hands of another person over again. It's a natural human reaction to want to distance ourselves from people, places and things that hurt us. While I agree that keeping a healthy distance from danger is certainly best practice, I would like to suggest a radical way of thinking. I am suggesting we forget.

The thing about forgiveness is that when we store in our subconscious hurt or trauma of any kind, while it does protect us from that same experience, it also prevents us from being able to truly move forward in complete and utter love.

What I propose is that we allow ourselves to forget. Now I know you may be thinking, there is no way I will ever forget what someone has done to me. The thought of forgetting likely brings up feelings of vulnerability, it certainly does for me. However, forgetting allows us to release the space in which we hold trauma and pain safely tucked away.

Imagine if you literally could not remember the hurt someone has inflicted in your life. How might that ability to forget allow you to show up in the world? Would you be free to offer unconditional love? Would your subconscious be lighter and open to new, positive experiences with those who have hurt you? Would the space in your heart for which you hold pain and trauma be enlightened?

This idea of forgiving but not forgetting is actually not healthy. It implies that through our memory we must be prepared for the next time that person or situation will hurt us. What if there was no next time? What if by remembering, we hold space to be retraumatized, we anticipate pains return? What if by remembering, we are actually silently beckon-



ing the same experience to ourselves. What I am suggesting is that forgiving without forgetting is the equivalent of retaining without releasing. Grant yourself and those who have hurt you, freedom.

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

Black women in the U.S. are nearly 40% more likely to die of breast cancer than white women. Let's change that.

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Girl Scouts to Honor Women of Distinction at Annual Gala



On March 14, the Girl Scouts of Eastern Washington and Northern Idaho will be honoring eight Women of Distinction during their annual gala, Sweets Before Supper.

Sweets Before Supper celebrates the achievements of women and girls throughout eastern Washington and northern Idaho. This year's Women of Distinction honorees come from Spokane to Coeur d'Alene to the Tri-Cities.

Latisha Hill is the VP of Community & Economic Vitality for Avista Corp. and a Senior VP for Avista Development, a subsidiary of Avista Corp. She spearheaded the development of the new Catalyst Building and Gateway Bridge in the University District.

Reka Robinson is lead morning show host at KIJ-FM radio and a popular radio personality in the Tri-Cities region. Recently, she was named the top influencer in the area. Her mission is to be a light for women, to encourage, to be a positive example and to share her story.

Other honorees include:
Nancy Fike, senior development director at Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine

Audra Fuller, owner of Maximus Gym and Zillah Police Department officer

Laura Little, theatre producer and owner of Laura Little Theatricals

Shelley Redinger, superintendent of Spokane Public Schools

Susan Stacey, chief nursing officer at Providence Sacred Heart Medical Center and Children's Hospital

Michelle Whitney, superintendent of Pasco School District



girl scouts
of eastern washington
and northern idaho

Secretary of State Kim Wyman will deliver the keynote address for Sweets Before Supper and local chefs will compete with one of a kind, Girl Scout cookie-inspired, bite-sized desserts. Guests will choose their favorite creation.

During dessert, there will be a silent auction, followed by a fabulous dinner prepared by The Historic Davenport Hotel. The evening's program will consist of awarding women leaders and an influential company in our local communities, and a celebration of Gold Award Girl Scouts, culminating in a live auction and Raise the Paddle. All proceeds will go to support Girl Scouts of Eastern Washington & Northern Idaho.

Sweets Before Supper will take place on March 14 at 5:30 p.m. at the Historic Davenport Hotel's Grand Pennington Ballroom. Individual tickets and table sponsorships for the event are available. Tickets are \$75 and table sponsorships are \$1000.

Registration will be open until 11:59 p.m. on March 9.

For more about the event: <http://bit.ly/2wvQfUp>

To register: <http://bit.ly/SB4S2020>



"B.Lyte (be the light)"

A poem by Bethany 'B.Lyte' Montgomery

Don't wish death to my enemies
I just want to spread good energy
Everything is energy
So if it's meant to be
Then it'll be

Kill them with confidence
Stimulating your consciousness
Look in the mirror
Find out who the real monster is

Formed from the shadows
Through triple darkness
Follower of prophets
Shout out Elijah Mohammed

I ain't no Muslim
But I ain't dumb
So words from the wise
I'm going to take it and run

Infused with more wisdom
Every second I breathe
Try and go another way
But always end back
On the road to destiny

Birth name Bethany
But now I go by B.Lyte
Because I be the light
That I channel in the inside

Darkness is not my enemy
I embrace my shadow
Now I'm nocturnal
Internalize the spirit of an owl

I see in the night
Not afraid of the dark
Don't believe in the hype
Darkness is not the absence
of light

No need to open my eyes
Closed I still see
I am the light
So heaven is me

I believe in the heavens
So I believe in myself
I have the power to do anything
And excel

I'm young Black and different
I was born gifted
I use these tools
To form my vision

I don't make excuses
I just take advantage
Nothing is a given
Everything is a blessing

Infinite Gratitude
Leveled up my attitude
Why waste time being
mad at you
When I could be channeling
my energies
Into creating something
magical

My level of appreciation
Is not a determination
Of my situation
Promote love
And the elimination of all the
hating

No more spectating
It's time to start playing
And this is not a game
More like a conversation
A metaphor for doing more
Than just sitting, watching,
waiting and complaining

Reality is a mentality
So are you going to be a
Warrior of Lyte
Or just another causality
Now let me stop
So you can think

Power 2 The Poetry

More poems at power2thepoetry.com



The Shades: An Exploration Of Blackness

Gonzaga's Black Student Union Annual Black History Month Dinner



I Am a Strong, Independent Black Woman

By Jacquelyn Renee Gaither

I am a strong, independent Black woman

One that has experienced the oppression
But overcame its depression
Society defining me by the color of my skin
From the stereotypes passed down
from their kin
Who am I? You ask
While the true me is under an
everlasting mask

With my shadowed down skin with even
darker Bags under my eyes
Showcasing countless nights of staring up in
bed and wondering... why?
My ashiness in dying need of lotion
As my tears fill the room like an ocean

Where I look to the police for protection
But only faced with unwarranted inspection
33 times have thy neighbor complained
Just because my skin is of a different stain
Hands up don't shoot!
For most, that statement they will only dilute

They get the birds and the bees
I learn that being Black comes with fees
The acts of hatred forming lists upon lists
Because they unwelcome me to exist

I am a strong, independent Black woman

Who has been faced with violent bats
By white men dressed in red hats.
Arms raised high Saluting the sky
While my six year old sister
Drops her head so confused of why.

People say progress?
Well I see distress

Black men and women still bowing their
heads Praying that night they will again reach
their beds

My ethnicity is nothing of a guessing game
Nor that of a shame
For I am a creation of the slave
That many years ago found its peaceful grave.
That history runs through my veins
And is cuffed to me like chains
along with the pains

My race is nothing of a joke
I'm here to make you woke

No I'm not ashamed of my aggressiveness
And I will no longer sanction
society's possessiveness
I yearn for my honesty to shake your ground
And leave the ignorance to wither and drown

Yes I can be loud, penetrating your ears with
noise But I can assure you, you gonna hear
my voice



I am a strong, independent Black woman

That no longer submits but claims space
Knowing my resistance will never erase
I have the privilege to stand here
So ima roar and reject the damn fear

I want to be the voice of the frightened
Hoping to leave many enlightened
I am first generation
Here to end damnation
Unapologetic of my presence
And no longer desire the acceptance

I hope to be the inspiration
That extinguishes the frustration
And be the role model
That shows people that they can be
unstoppable

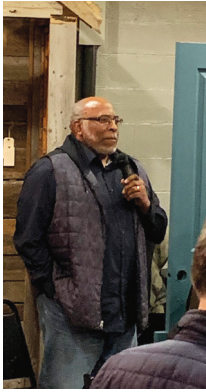
I am here to make my family proud
And tell it how it is out loud

I am a strong, independent Black woman

Black Lens Celebrates 5 Years



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Washington Housing Advocates Seek 'Housing Justice'

Proposed Legislation will Require 'Just Cause' for Evictions

HB 2453 - Just Cause has been voted out of committee and is now being considered by the House of Representatives.

This bill will end 20 day no cause notices to terminate tenancy that cause homelessness to renters at no fault of their own.

Tenants who are current in rent and obey all of the rules are being served these notices at any time while renting with a month to month rental agreement.

Elderly tenants of color who have lived in their same home for decades are particularly vulnerable because there is no advance warning beyond the 20 days.

These notices also hide discrimination making it nearly impossible for tenants to file fair housing complaints. They circumvent current tenant protections that require landlords to give 120 days notice when buildings are being remodeled or demolished.

Real estate investors are buying buildings and remodeling and upgrading to significantly raise rent in Spokane now in order to maximize profit.

The racial divide in home ownership is greater in Spokane than the state and nation.

70% of White households in Spokane are homeowners while 70% of Black and Brown households are renters.

The same protections provided to homeowners are not provided to tenants. This means that people of color in Spokane are being disproportionately displaced which is reflected in the annual homelessness point in time count

70% of White households in Spokane are homeowners while 70% of Black and Brown households are renters.

and in the city Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing.

HB 2453 would close a significant loophole in Washington’s tenant protections and fair housing laws by requiring landlords to have a legitimate reason to make someone move.

Right now, Washington State only requires that landlords provide 20-days “no cause” notice, meaning that the landlord does not have to disclose the reason for the termination. Allowing landlords to mask the reason for termination upholds discriminatory and retaliatory reasons that are otherwise not allowed under current law.

Under HB 2453 tenants would have the opportunity to defend themselves, especially when eviction and loss of home are at risk. Requiring cause for eviction will not only expose the reasons for termination, it will require that the reasons be fair. This would provide much needed security for tenants to ask for repairs and enforce their rights without having to worry about retaliation in the form of losing their home.

After the first year of tenancy, SHB 2453 would require cause to evict. Causes for eviction that would be allowed include:

- Nonpayment of rent,
- Breach of lease or rule,
- Nuisance or disturbance to neighbors,
- Landlord wants to move their family into the home, remove the rental from the market or convert to a condo,
- Owner wishes to end a shared living arrangement,
- Owner offers new rental agreement and tenant refuses to sign,
- Tenant misrepresented key facts in their application for housing,
- Tenant has chronically failed to pay rent in a timely manner,
- Landlord wants to do substantial rehabilitation or renovations,
- Other good cause that the landlord can show.

Many jurisdictions across the country already require cause to evict, these include Oregon, California, New Jersey, New Hampshire, Washington DC, Chicago, New York City, Seattle, Burien, Federal Way. But in Washington, landlords are fiercely opposing the bill.

The Tenants Union of Washington State is encouraging community members to show their support for HB 2453 by reaching out to state legislators or by visiting <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SHB2453SignOn>.

For more information on statewide or local tenant protection efforts, contact Terri Anderson, Co-Executive Director of Tenants Union of Washington State at 509-464-7620 or terria@tenantsunion.org.

Black America's Housing Crisis

Continued From Page 14

that is wrought from the tension of public service against the real estate industry’s goal of profit, there’s little wonder why so many public-private partnerships fail to serve both interests.

In a recent Chicago Tribune interview, Professor Taylor explained her view.

“You don’t need a total transformation of society to create equitable housing for people,” said Taylor. “We have come to believe that equitable housing is just some weird thing that can’t happen here, and the reality is that we have the resources to create the kinds of housing outcomes that we say we desire.”

“The way to get that has everything to do with connecting the energy on the ground to a different vision for our society — one that has housing justice, equity and housing security at the heart of it,” Taylor continued. “The resources and the money are there, but there’s a lack of political will from the unfortunate millionaire class that dominates our politics... I think, given the persistence of the housing crisis in this country, we have to begin to think in different ways about producing housing that is equitable and actually affordable in the real-life, lived experiences of the people who need it.”

Charlene Crowell is the Center for Responsible Lending’s communications deputy director. She can be reached at charlene.crowell@responsiblelending.org.



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Communities of Color Talk Environmental Justice

WHAT: Washington’s Environmental Justice Task Force is collecting input as it prepares recommendations on how Washington State Government Agencies can create a safe and healthy environment for everyone. **On March 28**, we’ll discuss the work of the Task Force and we can elevate community voices at the meeting by providing them feedback. We’ll highlight local issues that impact our health and develop ideas on how government can protect the environment for people of color and low-income communities.

WHERE: East Central Community Center, 500 S. Stone St., Spokane

WHEN: 11AM-2:30PM - Saturday, March 28

HOW: Facilitated community conversations and lunch will be provided!

RSVP to sameer@frontandcentered.org



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National Black Political Convention Aims to Set Black Agenda

By Brianna Nargiso

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - As political observers continue to track America's high valued Black vote to see which Democratic Presidential candidate may win the lion's share this election year, the National Policy Alliance will host the National Black Political Convention at the Washington Plaza Hotel in Washington, D.C. April 16-18, 2020 to create a universal Black agenda.

“Voices sharing what we need to be focused on, planning and getting an agenda that is actually pertinent to our future.” This is how convention planner Linda Haithcox Taylor describes the convention, expected to draw members of Congress, speakers and political activists from around the country.

Presidential candidates Mayor Pete Buttigieg, Sen. Elizabeth Warren, Mayor Michael Bloomberg and Vice Pres. Joe Biden have all confirmed their attendance. Confirmed speakers include Sen. Cory Booker, Sen. Kamala Harris, Congressman Anthony Brown, Congresswoman Maxine Waters, Doug Williams and more than 30 others. Pres. Barack Obama has also been invited to speak about what Black people should be doing during this election period and throughout the next eight years.

The convention will serve as a political caucus for both Black voters, government officials and community organizers as Black leaders reconcile some of the most compelling issues and concerns that are heavily impacting the Black community. The status of healthcare, economic and environmental justice, affordable housing, education, criminal justice, Black veteran's affairs, energy, media relations and the role of the Black entertainment industry are among those crucial issues.

On April 16, two weeks before the Maryland primary, The National Black Political Convention will kickoff its weekend of events with a presidential forum at Bowie State University



in Baltimore. Bowie is significant because not only is it the oldest historically Black university in Maryland, but in 2017 the university also welcomed its first female president, Dr. Anita Breaux.

The goal is to spend the weekend creating a united Black agenda to be sent to both the Democratic National Committee and the Republican National Committee. Issues will be discussed through a series of speaker-led sessions. Sessions can also expect to be diverse in generation, offering representation for both older and younger voters. Conveners for the convention include National Blacks in Government, National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education, National Black Agenda, and the Futures Forum among others.

Attendants can register for the National Black Political Convention by going to the website of the National Policy Alliance: <https://npalinks.org/nbpc>

The first National Black Political Convention in 1972 served as the first major gathering of Black voters and political thinkers in Gary, Indiana united to discuss the pressing social and economic issues of the time. These issues included minimum wage discrepancies, home rule for Washington, D.C, the elimination of capital punishment and more.

Thousands of African-American intellectuals,community organizers and voters were present alongside representatives from 46 states. Notable attendees were then presidential candidate Shirley Chisolm, volunteer sargeant at arms Muhammad Ali, Black Panther Party co-founder Bobby Seale, Mrs. Coretta Scott King, the Rev. Jesse Jackson Sr., Min. Louis Farrakan, civil rights icon Dick Gregory among others.

From this convention came several united principles pursued by Black civil rights organizations, religious leaders, local, state and national officials. Convention participants convened to discuss the creation of a Black agenda to be given to political parties.

Echoing the legacy of the 1972 convention, 44 years later, in 2016 another convention was hosted, this time by the National Policy Alliance. Missioned as an organization that “brings together public officials, community leaders, aspiring public servants, and the citizens they serve,” the National Policy Alliance organized what would be the second National Black Political Conference marking the end of Pres. Barack Obama’s term as president. The agenda of issues included but was not limited to education, gun control, healthcare, voting rights and economic opportunities for African-Americans.

Since the first convention in 1972, the number of Black members of Congress has more than tripled, significantly increasing Black representation in government. However, many challenges remain and can expect to be redressed and brainstormed for applicable solutions.

Taylor says the National Policy Alliance wants the room full of people dedicated to the Black agenda, ready to propose solutions and share experiences contributable to the cause of the convention. She concludes, “This is not and has never been a meeting about complaining, it’s a meeting about solutions.”

2020 Census African American Partnership Summit

Washington Participants



Left to right: **LaCretiah Claytor**, Blacks in Government, Port of Seattle BIG Chapter; **Sandy Williams**, Carl Maxey Center & The Black Lens News, Spokane and Eastern WA; **Awahle Farah**, Somali Community Leader, City of Kent, WA and Puget Sound Region; **Dr. Virginia Prioleau**, Co-Pastor, Triumphant Life Worship Center, Vancouver WA; **Lexi Bongiorno**, President, SW WA Communities United for Change, Vancouver WA; **Ophelia Noble**, The Noble Foundation, Culturally Specific Community Healthcare, SW WA; **Terrell Sams**, Casa Nuestra Housing and Outreach Programs, SW WA; **Lata Ahmed**, Ethiopian Community Leader, City of SeaTac and Puget Sound Region.

The money doesn't go where the need is, it goes where the count is.

-Dana Carroll



Seeking Black Teen Girls to Participate in Leadership Academy at Princeton University



(Source: blacknews.com) Princeton, NJ — Jacqueline Glass-Campbell, CEO of At the Well Conferences, Inc. (ATW), celebrates molding the masterminds of tomorrow with her unprecedented Ivy League summer enrichment program, At the Well Young Women’s Leadership Academy. It takes place July 19-July 31, 2020 at McCormick Hall, Princeton University. The application deadline is March 31, 2020.

Minority girls in their sophomore and junior year in high school are given the on-campus college life experience by living in dormitories, and attending classes with core curriculum specifically created to develop Black female corporate leaders.

During the course of the two-week program, students learn critical thinking, college essay writing, as well as, attending leadership workshops.

ATW partners with many celebrities, high-profiled figures, educators and activists who share life challenges and personal testimonies. Recent speakers have included actress Nicole Ari Parker, scholar Julianne Malveaux, motivational speaker Brandi Harvey, 2016 Democratic National Convention Chief Leah Daughtry, physician Michele Reed, and plus-size super model Liris Crosse.

Workshop facilitators include role models from the medical, legal, financial, and non-profit fields. Financial guru and The Real daytime talk show’s Tiffany “The Budgetnista” Aliche, Lisa Ascolese, founder of A-to-Z and featured inventor on QVC and HSN, and young, rising actress Eden Duncan Smith are past participants. Topics range from financial literacy, body image and entrepreneurship, to health and wellness, and building self-esteem.

This summer, ATW is also hosting the At the Well Young Women’s Weekend Intensive at Princeton University July 31 – August 2, 2020. Eighth and ninth grade students will be empowered to become effective leaders with an intensive curriculum of critical reading, essay writing, and leadership workshops. This also offers a safe place for students to share personal challenges without judgment. It is a life-changing weekend the girls will never forget.

Application deadline is March 31, 2020.

For more information about At the Well Young Women’s Leadership Academy and the At the Well Young Women’s Weekend Intensive, go to www.atthewellconferences.org.

For interviews, please contact Yaminah Ahmad at 404-861-0497 or yaminahthewriter@gmail.com.

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Jada Pinkett Smith's Red Table Talk Renewed Through 2022 by Facebook Gets Spin-Off



(Source: goodblacknews.org)

Jada Pinkett Smith’s “Red Table Talk,” one of the most popular shows on Facebook Watch, will stay exclusively on the platform with new episodes of the talk show streaming through 2022, according to Variety.com. The series features host and executive producer Smith, her daughter Willow Smith and mother Adrienne Banfield-Norris (aka “Gammy”).

In addition, “Red Table Talk” is becoming a franchise: Smith and Westbrook Studios will produce “Red Table Talk: The Estefans,” bringing the trademark red table to Miami and feature Grammy-winning singer Gloria Estefan, her daughter and musician Emily Estefan, and her niece Lili Estefan discussing trending and personal topics with celebrity guests and experts.

To quote Variety:

“Red Table Talk,” which was nominated for a 2019 Daytime Emmy, debuted in May 2018 and has aired 50 episodes on Facebook Watch over two seasons. The show has over 7 million followers on Facebook and spawned a main discussion group with over 600,000 members as well as other group forums. “Red Table Talk” promises candid conversations of current social and cultural issues including race, divorce, domestic violence, sex, fitness and parenting.

“I’m incredibly proud of ‘Red Table Talk’ and thrilled to build upon this franchise with my family and with Gloria, Emily and Lili,” Pinkett Smith said in a statement. “‘Red Table Talk’ has created a space to have open, honest and healing conversations around social and topical issues, and what’s most powerful for me is hearing people’s stories and engaging with our fans in such a tangible way on the Facebook Watch platform. I’m excited to see the Estefans put their spin on the franchise and take it to new places.”



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OUR VOICES

Redefining Suffrage, Unerasing Black Women

By Gwen McKinney

(blackpressusa.com) Sojourner Truth. Harriet Tubman. Ida B. Wells. Shirley Chisholm. Rosa Parks. These household names, spanning a couple of centuries, qualify for the Suffrage Hall of Fame.

Almost a buzz word synonymous with the Year of the Woman, in 2020 the centerpiece of suffrage will be marked by the 100th Anniversary of the 19th Amendment granting women’s voting rights. Referred to as a bold justice movement, suffrage will be celebrated as America’s march to full democracy.

In popular parlance, can we unpack the significance of suffrage and inclusive democracy for Black women? Words matter. But the impact and impetus of their meaning matter more.

Here’s a composite definition from online dictionaries:

Suffrage is the right to vote in public elections. Universal suffrage means everyone gets to vote, as opposed to only men or property holders... For example, after trying for about a hundred years, American women were granted suffrage and voted for the first time in 1920.

The 19th Amendment was adopted Aug. 18, 1920, after the required number of states ratified the constitutional measure. Though many Black women led suffrage campaigns, the 19th Amendment put white women on an empowerment tract to electoral engagement.

Interestingly, the suffrage movement, festooned in the symbolic color white, is often portrayed through a narrow window uncomplicated by the strictures of race and power that framed the Amendment then and now.

Look no further than the historical landscape of that moment. Congressional approval of the Act in 1919 was the same year as the infamous Red Summer, a tumultuous white supremacist reign of terror and lynching in Black communities across the country. One year after the 19th Amendment was adopted



in 1921 racist mobs set ablaze Tulsa, OK, decimating what was revered as Black Wall Street.

The Year of the Woman battle cry is perversely at odds with Black women’s unbroken quest for liberation. Although lauded today as the most reliable and consistent voting bloc for democratic change, we’ve historically endured being marginalized, dismissed and erased.

Black women’s demand to be equal and heard extends beyond the century run-up to the 19th Amendment. It was intersectional and linked with abolition of slavery, anti-lynching battles, literacy drives, sharecropper land rights campaigns and the establishment of a radical Black press that was led by many Black women suffragists.

Our suffrage quest continued through the Civil Rights Era and passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 which finally, for the first time, delivered the franchise to Black people in the South.

Rewind centuries earlier. Our demand to self-govern pre-dates the formation of this republic, beginning in 1619 when the first Africans, snatched from their ancestral home, landed on these shores. Those nameless suffrage pioneers joined with their men to resist and carry the torch for all people – Native Americans, Chinese immigrants and even Irish indentured servants – denied fundamental liberty. Then and now, we wage claims to own our bodies, voices and choices.

We build on that truth by redefining suffrage beyond the limited act of casting a ballot. For Black women, the narrative is rooted in telling herstory, unerasing the achievements of yesterday and the possibilities for the future.

This centennial year is an appropriate time to redefine universal suffrage through the prism of triumphs and tragedies. Trust Black women must be more than a cliché.

Unerased Black Women promises to create brave spaces and in alliance with Black newspapers across the country, unfurl a frank public conversation about Suffrage, Race, and Power.

Through a digital destination, we’ll turn our ear to a beating heart of resilience, resistance, words and deed. Daughter of slaves, descendants of warriors, writers, journalists, teachers, mentors, activists – universal suffragists all – have something to say.

Frances Ellen Watkins Harper. Anna Julia Cooper. Mary Ann Shadd. Harriet Jacobs. Josephine St. Pierre Ruffin. Mary McLeod Bethune. Fannie Lou Hamer. Ella Baker. Gertrude Bustill-Mossell. Charlotta Bass. Marvel Jackson Cooke.

Most of these women can’t claim household name status in the traditional suffrage roll call. But their noble stories will be unerased. Stay tuned as suffrage, redefined, meets our truth.

Gwen McKinney is campaign director of an initiative, “Suffrage. Race. Power: Unerased Black Women,” that will launch in March.

The Pernicious Power of Patriarchy

By Julianne Malveaux

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - Our nation, these United States, is founded on the principles of racism and patriarchy. They are reflected in our very constitution, where enslaved persons were counted as a fraction of a person, and only men of property were allowed the right to vote. The filthy inequality at the foundation of this nation has now bubbled up and boiled over, now polluting every aspect of our lives.

Patriarchy places men at the center of life, and women at the periphery. It suggests that women do not matter. It allows for the subjugation of women when they attempt to enter public spaces that have previously been earmarked as “male” spaces. Thus, there were no restrooms for women legislators in the US House or Senate, even as women entered those spaces. They were only created when women demanded them. Of course, restrooms are just a minor manifestation of the hegemonic patriarchy that rules our nation.

A great picture of our nation’s racist patriarchy was the visual of doughy and dissipated white men interrogating the amazingly composed Anita Hill as she reviewed her experiences with now-Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas. Though Hill was persuasive, she was attacked in the vilest of terms, accused of nonsense like “erotomania,” and even recently harassed by Thomas’ unhinged spouse who was still seeking apology after two decades. Note to Thomas, take the phone from your wife when her meds are not work-

ing. In any case, Thomas is on the Supreme Court because white men chose to disregard the word of a Black woman, a decision that then-Senator Joe Biden says he now regrets. Thomas was confirmed by the narrowest margin in history 52-48.

Here we go again. By the time this is published the matter of 45’s Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh is resolved, but the issue of pernicious patriarchy will not be. Regarding Kavanaugh, he has been accused by Dr. Christine Blasey Ford of sexual assault more than 35 years ago, when both were teens. She disclosed her accusations in a letter that California Senator Dianne Feinstein received in July, but did not share with the FBI until later, mainly because Ford asked for confidentiality. Ford has requested that the FBI investigate her assertions, and the Senate judiciary committee is still fast-tracking the Kavanaugh vote. The outcome, while necessary, is not the bottom line. The issue is the way that racist patriarchy makes some offensive and illegal behavior acceptable.

Privileged white male culture allows and encourages excessive drinking and obnoxious behavior toward women. It is excused because “boys will be boys.” But what boys? Black boys, even accused of “reckless eyeballing”, are fair game for lynching! White boys on rampages are excused for assault, rape, and attempted rape. Can I call the name of Recy Taylor, the young Black woman who was walking home from church and raped by a gaggle of white men who thought her body their right? Can I remind us of the



Texas gubernatorial candidate, Clayton Williams, who said that if rape was inevitable, a woman should “lay back and enjoy it”? Ann Richards beat him, but that wasn’t quite the point. The point was that some man thought that rape was inevitable enough to “enjoy.”

Privileged white male culture allows a man who should not have been elected President to denigrate women regularly. We are “fat” “dogs” and “liars.” He bragged about grabbing women’s genitals, and our society is so poached in pernicious patriarchy that 52 percent of all women still voted for him. They thought he was joking because, for too many women, patriarchy has so seeped into our consciousness that the abuse of women is a joke.

If we women were honest, we would say that we have all cosigned patriarchy in the interest of keeping it moving. We have deflected the sexist comments that come our way, even as we cringe from them. We smile at men

that we abhor because they may have decision making power in their hands. We dress up or dress down depending on the occasion and the way we have to play the game. We know the system is slanted against us, we know we still have to play, and we decide when we choose to blow the whistle, a whistle we could blow every single day. #MeToo is the tip of the iceberg because it fails to deal with race systematically, but also because it manages the evident and personal, not the institutional.

In addition to being #MeToo women, we are mothers, sisters, daughters, and wives (hello Julie Chen Moonves), so some of us want to justify patriarchy for “our” men. Our son, husband, cousin, brother “didn’t mean it” and could not be that bad. Wake up call -- if they violated a woman, they were that bad. If they raped a Black woman and you turned away from the accusation, you are wrong, you are horribly and complicity wrong.

Tearing down the walls of pernicious patriarchy means attacking the very foundation of our nation. When we attack patriarchy, we also attack the racism that is also part of our foundation. Many have lined up to support Dr. Christine Blasey Ford. How many are equally willing to attack the pernicious racist patriarchal roots of our nation?

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.juliannemalveaux.com

OUR VOICES

In Honoring King’s Legacy, We Must Commit to the Work That Cost Him His Life

By Nina Turner

(blackpressusa.com) Two years before his death, the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King wrote that “there is no way merely to find work, or adequate housing, or quality-integrated schools for Negroes alone.” We could only achieve these goals, he said, by pursuing them for all people — regardless of their race, gender, class or creed.

Dr. King’s belief in universal programs as the key to our nation’s shared prosperity has long been central to the African American tradition. For centuries, Black men and women have struggled to guarantee human rights and economic security—not just for themselves, but for everyone. Their perseverance in this universal cause has resulted in the greatest strides towards progress that this country has ever made.

For example, the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution, which abolished chattel slavery, established equal protection under the law, and protected the right to vote, benefited people of all races. Reconstruction, which created public schools in the South and advanced the interests of poor farmers, benefited people of all races. And the Civil Rights Movement, which brought an end to the Jim Crow era, benefited people of all races.

Even accomplishments that we do not associate exclusively with civil rights and racial justice would not have been realized without Black leadership and struggle. Social Security and Medicare, key pillars of our safety net, were won by working-class movements in which African Americans played a central role. Millions upon millions of elderly people have been rescued from poverty thanks to their efforts.

The elites who would rather see us divided have tried to limit these victories every step of the way. At times, like during the early Jim Crow years, they resorted to open violence, hoping to terrorize us into submission. More recently they have relied on the less visible but no less real violence of budget cuts and austerity. But because of the



overwhelming popularity of policies in which everyone has a stake, they have not been able to do away with these hard-earned achievements for good.

This history provides a lesson: rather than adopting a narrow focus on the differences between us, the best way to advance the age-old struggle for racial justice and freedom is through universality.

African Americans are 50% more likely than our white sisters and brothers to be uninsured. This together with the stresses of economic hardship leaves us with worse health outcomes by almost any measure. We suffer from higher rates of hypertension, diabetes, asthma, and maternal mortality. The only way out of this public health crisis is through a Medicare for All system that provides every single person with access to the kind of care that the rich take for granted as their birthright.

We are 25% less likely to graduate from college yet have more student debt than anyone else. Black women like myself are the most indebted of all. I have served as a City Councilwoman and a State Senator and like millions of others still have monthly student loan payments. Free public higher education and the cancellation of student debt would enable millions of African Americans to get the education they want but currently cannot afford.

We are twice as likely to be unemployed, and the jobs we do have are more likely to pay starvation wages. This is the reason why the poverty rate among African Americans is so much higher than the national average. There is no better anti-poverty program than a federal jobs guarantee and labor laws that make it easier to unionize.

A Green New Deal would make desperately needed investments in our communities and go a long way towards addressing the environmental racism African Americans in urban and rural areas alike endure. A national housing program would benefit African Americans who, because of the history of redlining and segregation, are disproportionately renters, living month to month at the whims of predatory landlords and the forces of gentrification.

The list goes on and on.

Those who benefit from the status quo will tell us that these are radical ideas that the American people will never accept. But we should remember that the abolition of slavery was a radical idea until it was not. Social Security and Medicare were radical ideas until they were not. The integration of public schools was a radical idea until it was not. For people in my hometown of Cleveland, Ohio, public goods that alleviate the stress caused by economic insecurity are not pie in the sky proposals. They are much deserved and long overdue.

More than fifty years after Reverend King’s death, we have yet to achieve the basic level of economic security for all that he understood to be a precondition for true racial justice. But as the great civil rights leader Ella Baker put it, “We who believe in freedom cannot rest until it comes.”

This year, we have an opportunity to take a step in that direction. So, in the months to come let us dedicate ourselves to bringing people together around a vision that works for all of us. If we do, we can finally create the foundation for a truly just and free society.

Nina Turner is a former Ohio state senator and the national co-chair of Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders’ presidential campaign.

Fear Paralyzes

By Dr. E. Faye Williams, Esq.

(TriceEdneyWire.com) —With all the fearmongering, the unjust firings, transfers, the name-calling, the profanity laced rantings, the lying, the mean spirited actions, the early negative predictions about the Democratic Party and its candidates—one could just give up and ask, “What’s the use of trying to make a difference about anything?”

Well, I’m not on that list of the fearful, nor are many of my friends and associates. All is not lost because Joe Biden may not be the Democratic nominee for President. All Black people aren’t suddenly jumping over Joe to get to Michael Bloomberg. Those of us who’ve seen Black people rise to the occasion at the voting booth so many times haven’t conceded the November 2020 election to Donald Trump.

We continue to hear on the news how important the Black vote is. If that’s the case, it’s up to us whether we choose to be the victors for winning where we have such power or whether we choose to be blamed when candidates not in our best interest win.

If we choose to win, why should we be fearful? Those of us who believe what we’ve been taught that “God has not given us a spirit of fear.” 2nd Timothy tells us that what the Apostle Paul was saying to his young friend is that his fear was standing in his way of success.

All of us have struggles but we shouldn’t allow them to control us to the point that we lose faith in our ability to succeed. My friend, Dick Gregory, always said that fear and God do not occupy the same space, and we should not allow fear to block our good. If we put it out there, we’re sabotaging what we claim to want.

Let’s not become paralyzed and do nothing because somebody thinks we’re going to stay home or we don’t believe we can help to get a new occupant in the White House. Let’s go forward courageously doing all the things we can to win an election that brings about justice. God is faithful. Let’s look at the full promise that says, “God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.”

Instead of fearing the worst, let’s be like the Apostle Paul by mentoring the doubters and the fearful. Instead of criticizing them, let’s help them believe we have the power to make a difference in the coming election. Never allow our friends or families to concede the election to those who mean us no good.

Even if we’re not in need of a hand up, think about children at the border who’ve been kept in cages, children who don’t have nutritious meals, those who don’t have access to a safe home or a useable education. Think about the damage already done to a system some of our ancestors died to make better. Think of the embarrassment about our so-called leaders we face as we travel around the world.



Think about the threats faced by Americans who put their jobs and their lives on the line to testify before the House Impeachment Committee. Think about those who were too afraid to testify or to vote against what is evil and un-American.

So many of those who remained silent and try to make us believe they’re pro-Constitution are really traitors because they resisted every effort to be guided by the Constitution in making their decisions about impeachment and conviction of the scoundrel in the White House.

As was said in the movie “Black Panther” we have a duty to protect those we love, so let us never fear being courageous no matter what the consequences are.

Dr. E. Faye Williams is President of the National Congress of Black Women, Inc. She’s also host of “Wake Up and Stay Woke” on WPFW-FM 89.3.

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

MARCH EVENTS

MARCH 3

POETRY RISING @ 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. March artists include: Musician Alexander Manzoni, Author Cookie Robertson, and Poet Mika Maloney

3pm

South Hill Library

3324 S Perry St, Spokane, WA 99203

Sponsored by Stephen Pitters.

MARCH 5

FIRST THURSDAY DISCUSSION GROUP

Monthly discussion with people interested in racial and social justice and 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 rdlloyd@comcast.net.

MARCH 6

FIG TREE BENEFIT LUNCHEON

"Connects People, Inspires Action" is the theme for the 2020 Benefit Lunch. Lunch speakers will be Margo Hill, Eastern Washington University associate professor active in Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women; Mark Finney, executive director of World Relief; Linda Hunt, who welcomes young adults returning from global experiences through the Krista Foundation, and Jeanette Laster, executive director of the Human Rights Education Institute in Coeur d'Alene.

11:30am to 1pm

Cataldo Hall, Gonzaga University

429 E. Boone Ave., Spokane, WA

For information call 509-535-1813.

MARCH 7

BEYOND EMPOWERMENT:

A People of Color Specific Space

Exploring the realities and impacts of horizontal oppression in communities of Color. Facilitated by Dr. Leticia Nieto, Psy. D, LMFT, author of "Beyond Empowerment, Beyond Inclusion: A Developmental Strategy to Liberate Everyone."

1:30-4:30pm

Spokane Resource Center (Second Floor)

130 S. Arthur St. Spokane, WA 99202

Event Hosts: JustLead Washington & Excelerate Success. For more information contact: michaelab@unitedwayspokane.org or lesleye@unitedwayspokane.org.

MARCH 8

FIG TREE BENEFIT BREAKFAST

"Connects People, Inspires Action" is the theme for the 2020 Benefit Breakfast. Breakfast speakers will include Joe Ader, executive director of Family Promise; David Milliken, campus director of the Hutton Settlement; Dainen Penta, executive director of the Center for Justice, and Suzi Hokanson, social justice activist.

7am to 8:30am

Cataldo Hall, Gonzaga University

429 E. Boone Ave., Spokane, WA

For information call 509-535-1813.

MARCH 11

FUSE SPOKANE - DIVERSE VOICES BOOK DISCUSSION

On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous by Ocean Vuong. An instant New York Times Bestseller.

6:30pm - 8:00pm

Fellini House

1603 W. Pacific Ave Spokane, 99201

Questions email Erin at EJToungate@gmail.com.

MARCH 16

NAACP GENERAL 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.

MARCH 21 -21

PEACE AND JUSTICE ACTION CONFERENCE

"Believing in the Yet to Be" with Keynote Speaker Zach Norris of the Ella Baker Center.

Friday - 6-8pm

Saturday - 9am - 5pm

Register at www.Pjals.org/ 2020Conference. Volunteer Scholarships available. 509-838-7870

MARCH 28

COMMUNITIES OF COLOR TALK ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Join Washington's Environments Justice Task Force for facilitated conversations about the work of the task force and how we can create safe and healthy environments for people of color. and low income communities. Lunch will be provided.

11am to 2:30pm

East Central Community Center

500 S Stone St, Spokane, WA

RSVP to Sameer@frontandcentered.org



2020 FEATURES

Monday, January 13

DREAMCATCHER

A film by Kim Longinotto
Human Trafficking Awareness Month

Monday, February 10

ALWAYS IN SEASON

An Indie Lens Pop-Up in partnership with KSPS



A film by Jackie Olive
Honoring Black History Month

Monday, March 9

MISS SHARON JONES

A film by Barbara Koppie
Women's History Month/Music Appreciation Month

Monday, April 13

BLACK POWER MIXTAPE 1967-1975

A film by Göran Olsson
Black Women's History Month

Monday, May 11

ONE CHILD NATION

A film by Nanfu Wang/Lynn Zhang
Asian Pacific American Heritage Month

Monday, June 8

SPECIAL PRIDE MONTH SCREENING

Pride Month

ALWAYS AT MAGIC LANTERN AT 7PM

MAGICLANTERNONMAIN.COM/MONDAY-MOVIES

THE **ALLIANCE**

FOR MEDIA ARTS + CULTURE



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

Saving Grace Ministries of Spokane

1st Anniversary Celebration!



Sunday March 22, 2020

3151 E. 27th Ave. Spokane

Ministry Celebration
10am - 11:15am

Featured Guest Speakers:

Celebration of Pastor
Earon L. Davis, Jr.
4pm - 6pm



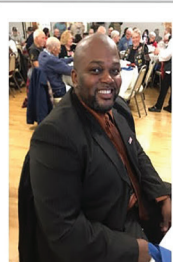
Pastor Robert Manaway
Tabernacle Missionary
Baptist Church
Seattle, WA



Pastor Lonnie Mitchell
Bethel AME Church
Spokane, WA



Bishop Shon Davis
Jesus is the Answer
Spokane, WA



For more information, contact Saving Grace Ministries of Spokane:
sgministries19@gmail.com or (509) 867-8849

XO 2020



MARRIAGE CONFERENCE

for the BLISSFUL or Messy Marriage

@ BETHEL CHURCH
645 S Richard Allen Ct
Spokane, WA 99202

MARCH 20 & 21
Fri 7-9 pm / Sat 9-1pm
xomarriage.eventbrite.com

Blissful or Messy - GOD'S HEART IS FOR MARRIAGE

God created marriage and understands the heart of every couple.

XO Conference is a *two-day video experience that provides expert marriage advice and practical teachings to help couples navigate their marriage journey.

Friday, March 20 - 7-9pm

Saturday, March 21 - 9am-1pm

For childcare availability email: ejmitchell729@gmail.com or call/text 509-981-8400. Refreshments available throughout the event. Additional parking off Ivory Street. *Select "Friday" when registering, even if you expect to attend one day.

Registration fee covers entire conference.

SPECIAL BLACKLENS READER PROMO CODE: Enter BLACKLENS at checkout for \$2.50 off per registration.

MIKE BLOOMBERG'S GREENWOOD INITIATIVE.

A Plan for Economic Justice for Black America.

MIKE BLOOMBERG'S GREENWOOD INITIATIVE

- Drive economic empowerment to create **one million** new Black homeowners and 100,000 new Black-owned businesses.
- Commit **\$70 Billion** to the 100 most disadvantaged neighborhoods to offer access to healthcare, education, infrastructure improvements and justice.

College Access & Affordability— How Mike Will Get It Done:

- ✓ Make two-year public college tuition free for all and debt-free for the lowest-income students
- ✓ Make four-year college tuition debt-free for the lowest income students
- ✓ Expand direct investments into Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUS)

Find out how Mike Will Get It Done here:
www.mikebloomberg.com/getting-it-done

Paid for by Mike Bloomberg 2020



mike
FOR PRESIDENT
2020

MIKE WILL GET IT DONE.



Text MIKE to 80510