

THE BLACK LENSTM

NEWS FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

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

By Itoro N. Umontuen

(Source: The Atlanta Voice, theatlantavoices.com, Photo: blackvotersmatterfund.org)

The New Georgia Project, the Black Voters Matter Fund, and Rise Inc. have filed the first lawsuit alleging racism and violation of voter's rights stemming from the passage of Senate Bill 202 Thursday. The complaint filed in federal court in Atlanta, alleges Black and minority voters will be hit especially hard by the new legislation, believing that the new law illegally suppresses voters' rights in violation of constitutional protections and the 1965 Voting Rights Act.

According to the lawsuit, the new restrictions are "clearly intended to and will have the effect of making it harder for lawful Georgia voters to participate in the State's elections," adding that the measure will impose "unjustifiable burdens" that disproportionately impact people of color, as well as young, poor and disabled voters.

"We will continue to fight and we will be here as activists to have our state representatives back at all times," said Shenita Binns of Absolute Justice Now.

The Georgia chapter of the NAACP, the Georgia Coalition for the People's Agenda, the League of Women Voters of Georgia, the GALEO Latino Latino Community Development Fund, Common Cause, and



the Lower Muskogee Creek Tribe have also filed a lawsuit, alleging Senate Bill 202 is "culmination of a concerted effort to suppress the participation of Black voters and other voters of color."

In addition, the lawsuit states majority-Black neighborhoods comprise only one-third of Georgia's polling places, but account for two-thirds of the polling places that had to stay open late for the June primary to accommodate long lines. A recent study found that the average wait time in Georgia after polls were scheduled to close was six minutes in neighborhoods that

were at least 90% white, and 51 minutes in places that were at least 90% non-white.

"Today, Black Voters Matter joined partners across the state and country to 1) stand in solidarity with Rep. Park Cannon who returns to work today, 2) continue holding corporations accountable for their failure to stand up for Black voters and 3) to remind voters that our lawsuit against GA officials is moving forward. We are prepared to undergo an economic boycott targeted at those companies to hit them where it hurts most — their bottom line," according to the Black Voters Matter Fund lawsuit.

"The law is supposed to be equal for all and not just a few," said Jada Longchamp of the Clayton County Democratic Party. "And if we're going to have equal protection under the law, they need to hold themselves accountable for the statements they make. And the legislation that they have on the books already. We're supposed to be all equal under the law. And we are not all equal under the law as they proved once again."

Governor Brian P. Kemp has decried the criticism that Senate Bill 202, passed after a bruising 2020 Presidential Campaign that saw Georgia Republicans lose both U.S. Senate seats and the Presidential election, is the second coming of Jim Crow as has been charged. Kemp says instead that the new laws "expand voting."

"The thinly-veiled attempt to roll back the progress we have made to empower Georgians — to use their voices in the democratic process — creates an arbitrary law that does not improve voter confidence, secure election integrity, nor increase access to the ballot box," said the Rev. James Woodall, president of the state NAACP.

To read the full text (95 pages) of Georgia Senate Bill 202 that was signed into law on March 25: <https://www.legis.ga.gov/api/legislation/document/20212022/201121>

Virginia Governor Restores Rights of Nearly 70,000 Formerly Incarcerated

By Jeremy M. Lazarus

Special to the Trice Edney News Wire from the Richmond Free Press

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - Nearly 70,000 formerly incarcerated felons in Virginia can now register to vote, serve on juries and run for public office. Gov. Ralph S. Northam on Tuesday used his executive authority to restore the rights of individuals no longer in prison, even if they are still reporting to a parole and probation office.

In the signed executive order, Gov. Northam also provided for automatic restoration of rights for anyone released from prison from now on.

"Too many of our laws were written during a time of open racism and discrimination and they still bear the traces of inequity," Gov. Northam stated in going further than any of his predecessors in authorizing felons to take part in elections and to participate more fully.

"We are a Commonwealth that believes in moving forward, not being tied down by the mistakes of our past," he continued. "If we want people to return to our communities and participate in society, we must welcome them back fully — and this policy does just that."

The action, which boosts Gov. Northam's restoration of rights to 111,000 people during his four years, helps fulfill a long-standing policy goal of the Virginia Legislative Black Caucus.

The governor's action is even more striking as it eliminates a longtime barrier to voting in Virginia at a time when lawmakers in 43 states, according to a study, are pushing proposals to impose new restrictions on voting.

The historic move to expand Virginia's legal pool of voters also occurs just ahead of elections for governor, lieutenant governor and attorney general and for the 100 members of the state House of Delegates.

Continued on Page 28



Desmond Meade Pictured (Cassi Alexandra / NBC News file)

ON MY MIND

THOUGHTS FROM THE EDITOR

by Sandra Williams

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY IN FIVE SHORT CHAPTERS

Chapter 1
I walk down the street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I fall in.
I am lost... I am helpless.
It isn't my fault. It takes forever to find a way out.

Chapter 2
I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I pretend I don't see it.
I fall in again.
I can't believe I am in this same place.
But it isn't my fault.
It still takes a long time to get out.

Chapter 3
I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I see it is there.
I fall in... it's a habit...
but my eyes are open.
I know where I am.
It is my fault.
I get out immediately.

Chapter 4
I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I walk around it.

Chapter 5
I walk down a different street.

(adapted from "An Autobiography in Five Short Chapters" from the book *There's A Hole in My Sidewalk* by Portia Nelson)

This poem was given to me decades ago by a friend and it has literally changed my life. I use it as a guide. When I feel stuck or frustrated or angry or hopeless, I do an internal check to see where I am.

I am trying my best to live my life in Chapter 5 these days. I have grown weary of "walking down the same street." That is why I am focusing my attention on the Carl Maxey Center right now. The Carl Maxey Center feels like Chapter 5. It puts me on a different street and that feels good.

I was asked some time ago to do a training on equity and inclusion, which I don't do very much anymore, because it feels like walking down the "same street." I have grown weary of the same conversation. I decided to adapt the autobiography poem for the training and it made for quite an interesting conversation. So, I will share it here.

Spokane is stuck in Chapter 1, so are some of my left leaning friends. It's what seems to be normal. My hope is that maybe Chapter 5 will become a new normal for all of us.



An Autobiography of Inclusion in Five Not So Easy Chapters

Chapter 1 – I don't see difference – we are all the same.

Chapter 2 – I guess there are some differences, but it doesn't matter because we are all the same.

Chapter 3 - Yes there are some differences, and yes, the differences matter, but they make me uncomfortable, so can't we just move past that already, stop focusing on the things that separate us and focus on what's really important, which is things that make us alike, because we are all the same.

Chapter 4 - Yes there are some differences, and yes, the differences matter, and I understand they are important to the people that are different from me, so I will tolerate the differences because what is important is that we are all the same.

Chapter 5 – Yes, there are differences, lots of them. It's important that I notice them, honor them, learn about them, seek them out, and celebrate them, because we are NOT all the same. I recognize that our differences are actually our strength, and I think that is exciting!

(adapted from "An Autobiography in Five Short Chapters" from the book *There's A Hole in My Sidewalk* by Portia Nelson)

THE BLACK LENS NEWS

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

Contact Information:
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Subscriptions:
Delivered monthly by mail - \$45/year or online by e-mail - \$12/year

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Advertising deadline: 15th of every month for the next month's issue

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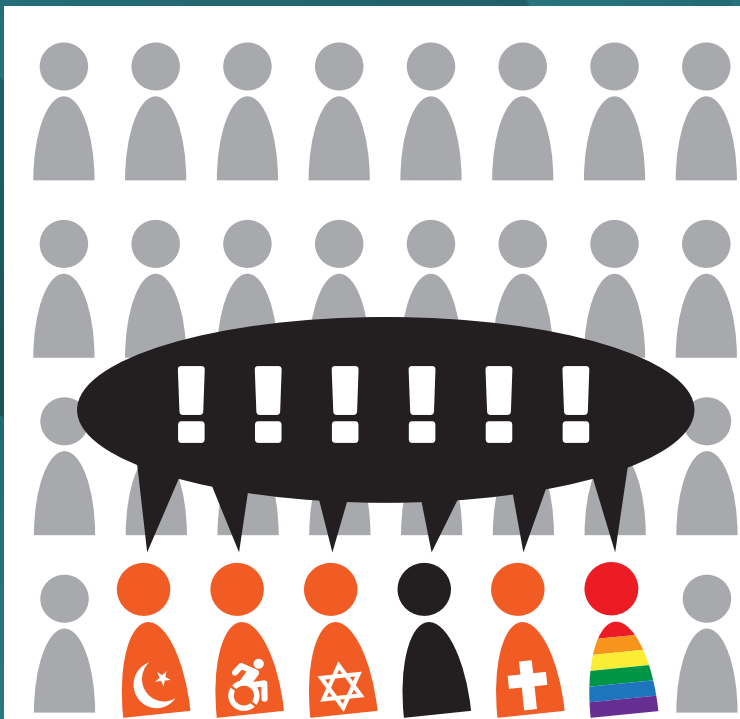


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(Or Things You Probably Didn't Learn In School)

ART AND HISTORY *by Bertoni Jones Bey*

History on European Enslavement of Moors (Part I)

Chattel bondage in America represents the lowest point in human civilization principles in this country's history. By studying the supreme laws of the land we can know the intentions of the European Founders in regards to our enslaved ancestors, but how much of what they preached did they really practice?

The four guiding laws are, in chronological order, Articles of Association, Declaration of Independence, Articles of Confederation, and The Constitution.

The Articles of Association (October 20, 1774) is The Colonists response to Father England – Section 2. *"We will neither import nor purchase, any slave imported after the first day of December next; after which time, we will wholly discontinue the slave trade, and will neither be concerned in it ourselves, nor will we hire our vessels, nor sell our commodities or manufactures to those who are concerned in it."* It promised to be rid of the slave trade and all associated with it by December 1, 1775. No such event occurred.

Less than two years later, The Declaration of Independence (July 4, 1776) stated: *"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness."* Another promise of liberty made and again another breach. Twice now the Founders had openly affirmed the God given right to liberty and now twice denied them.

The Articles of Confederation (March 1, 1788-March 4, 1789), which established the functions of the national government of the United States after it declared independence from Great Britain, doesn't speak for or against bondage. By taking no explicit action against bondage, the Founders have tacitly taken action for it.

By the time of The Constitution, the Founders were no longer paving the way to



eliminate slavery but were in fact endorsing it through a government tax on it.

Article I Section 9 – *"The Migration or Importation of such Persons as any of the States now existing shall think proper to admit, shall not be prohibited by the Congress prior to the Year one thousand eight hundred and eight, but a Tax or duty may be imposed on such Importation, not exceeding ten dollars for each Person."*

Government tax is government consent. The Founders promised to be done with the slave trade by December 1, 1775 and yet by June of 1789 they had not only continued the slave trade but were openly endorsing it through taxable interest – a complete reversal of oath. Plain and simple, The Constitution of the United States endorsed the institution of slavery.

That pattern would continue until the 13th Amendment to the Constitution on December 6, 1865. From the original promise in 1774 until the 13th Amendment in 1865 represents a ninety-one year breach of covenant. Noble Drew Ali said that before 1774 our enslavement was physical, after 1774 our enslavement was mental – a result of not understanding our history. And while the intentions and words of those guiding documents were indeed honorable and brought great liberties for the Colonists, the enforcement of those four covenants proved fruitless for those most in need of liberation.

Ultimately, when it came to the enforcement of our ancestor's liberties, those gifts from the Creator, the European Founders of this country didn't put their money where their wooden teeth were. Their lust

for riches appears to have overcome their compass. We were denied our liberty, subjected to cruel and unusual punishment, and our value was defined according to others' standards.

Yet at the exact same time in history on the Continent of Africa could our ancestors have engaged in a similar shoe on the other foot type of behavior? Part II- History of Moorish enslavement of Europeans.

Sources:

Articles of Association – October 20, 1774.
Declaration of Independence – July 4, 1776.
Articles of Confederation – March 1, 1781 -March 4, 1789.
Constitution for the United States – June 21, 1788.
Alienable Rights: The Exclusion of African Americans in a White Man's Land, 1619-2000 – Barry Sanders, Francis Adams.

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Ramadan: Holy Month of Fasting

By Duaa-Raheemah Williams

GREETINGS SPOKANE! WE’RE HERE.

“As Salamu Alaykum” is a greeting in Arabic that means “Peace be upon you” the response is “Wa Alaykum Salamu” which means “and upon you be Peace”.

As we are all aware the percentage of African American people in Spokane is low. So imagine if 0.3% of the population in Spokane identifies as Muslim. Then we can only imagine how many of them are of African /African American descent (think about it.... How many African American Muslims do you know in Spokane?).

We would like to introduce ourselves as we are here in the community dwelling amongst you. Students, employees, entrepreneurs, business owners, etc... We also like to share with you some of our customs, traditions, and religious holidays. We will start with Ramadan as it is set to begin April 12th.

RAMADAN

Ramadan is a holy month of fasting. It is meant to be a time of spiritual growth, for focusing on one’s relationship with Allah (God), offering extra prayers, increased charity and intense study of the Quran. Muslims believe that Allah (God) revealed the first verses of the Quran to Muhammad (SAW) on a night known as the “the Night of Power.” Ramadan is also one of the five fundamental principles of Islam.

Ramadan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar, which is based on the lunar calendar. Every year Ramadan begins 11 days earlier than the year prior. This year Ramadan will begin on Monday April 12th at sundown (which begins a new day), and ends Tuesday, May 11th at sundown or when the crescent moon is sighted (and Allah always Knows best). Ramadan is divided into three spiritual parts: ten days of Mercy – ten days of Forgiveness – ten days of Salvation.



For 29/30 days over a billion Muslims around the world will fast from food, drink, and sexual gratification from Dawn (Fajr) prayer (which can begin as early 4:36 am in Spokane), till sunset (Maghrib) prayer (which is around 7:36pm in Spokane).

Before Covid-19 many Muslims would go to the Masjid/Mosque (place of worship) for Iftar (breaking of the fast) and evening prayer (Maghrib). Praying, making dhikr (a form of devotion), studying the Quran, and socializing. Some would stay till the wee hours of the night for Taraweeh, a special prayer during the month of Ramadan that is done after Isha (evening prayer).

At the end of Ramadan, those billion Muslims will celebrate one of the two Islamic religious holidays: Eid Al-Fitr also referred to as the “Festival of Breaking the Fast” or “Festival of Returning to Our Nature”. This festival lasts over the first three days of Shawwal, which is the 10th month of the Islamic calendar.

Muslims will go to the masjid or a bigger venue. Eid Al-Fitr will commence with community prayer and a short reminder encouraging generosity. Folks will come out in their best clothes, wishing “Eid Mubarak” to each other, which means have a blessed festival, like saying Merry Christmas or Happy New Years. People come with gifts for children, family, friends, etc. For three days they will celebrate in a communal way with an abundance of food provided by The Most High giving everyone an opportunity to partake in the festival. Even those who are financially challenged will be blessed to eat, drink, and enjoy the provisions of Allah.

This, is part of the beauty of Islam – willfully surrendering one’s food, drink, lawful/healthy sexual desires, etc for the pleasure of Almighty Allah. In exchange we find nearness, discipline, better health, overall wellness and spiritual development.

Who would have thought one could gain so much just from giving so little away.

Photos by Alex Lockett/alexanderlockett@icloud.com





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BLACK NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Local, State, National and Around the World

Gov. Inslee Names Karen A. Johnson Director of WA State Office of Equity

In February, Gov. Jay Inslee named Karen A. Johnson, PhD, director of the newly created state Office of Equity. The Office of Equity, established by the Legislature, was signed into law by Inslee in April of 2020. The office will work with agencies to increase access to equitable opportunities in order to bridge opportunity gaps and reduce disparities. The office will also work with communities to develop the state’s five-year equity plan.

Johnson is currently the equity and inclusion administrator for the Washington State Department of Corrections (DOC), where she works to incorporate equity, diversity, inclusion and respect (EDI-R) into DOC policy and practices. She also represents DOC on the statewide Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Council.

Johnson’s career includes working for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, serving in roles ranging from regional equal employment opportunity (EEO) program manager to chief administrative officer of the James E. Van Zandt VA Medical Center. She then served as the director for Tri-Love Ministries in Seattle, working to ensure equitable access to resources and services for Black children and their families in King County before transitioning to local and state government work.

“Karen brings extensive experience working to transform local and state government systems to more equitably serve Washingtonians,” Gov. Jay Inslee said. “She has oriented her entire career around helping disadvantaged communities and instituting lasting systemic and institutional change for generations to come. I have every confidence that she will be an excellent, effective director. I am looking forward to working with her collaboratively to ensure that our state is one that supports all Washingtonians. The Office of Equity is an exciting opportunity to reframe how state government works.”

“Governor Inslee has boldly announced Washington’s historic commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion, and an-



ti-racism and I am excited to join his team at this time,” Johnson said. “We will work to develop a new state culture that centers equity in all of its work and provides all Washingtonians with an opportunity to enjoy life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.”

“The Office of Equity Task Force benefitted tremendously from the great experience and strong moral force that Dr. Johnson brought to the table,” said Sen. Manka Dhingra, who sponsored the Senate companion to the legislation creating the Office of Equity. “As director of the Office

of Equity, she will be a strong and inspirational champion for creating a future that we want our children to live in.” “After several years of community conversations and traveling across every corner of this beautiful state, I am so pleased that the Washington state Office of Equity will open with its new director, Dr. Karen Johnson,” said Rep. Mia Gregerson, prime sponsor of HB 1783. “The Office of Equity will increase access to state services and programs while also improving outcomes and opportunities for all Washingtonians. I am truly grateful for the people who stewarded this process and the thoughtfulness that has been taken in every part of this journey. It takes all of us to create a livelihood where everyone can fully participate and thrive with dignity. I am hopeful that this significant step forward will get us closer to realizing a healthier and prosperous Washington.”

“This is a giant leap forward and shows that Washington state is moving full steam ahead in how we address inclusion by dismantling racism,” said Rep. Melanie Morgan, who sat on the Office of Equity Task Force. “This isn’t just lip service; this is going to bring positive change throughout the state. I am overjoyed and proud to see the Office of Equity become a reality and appreciate the governor making all Washington residents a priority. Disparities in Black/African American, Native/Indigenous and communities of color exist. The Office of Equity shows we are serious about diversity, equity and inclusion.”

Johnson has served as adjunct faculty at The Evergreen State College, teaching courses in dismantling racism and identifying bias in public service settings for the master of public administration program. She holds both a PhD and Master of Public Administration from Old Dominion University, and earned her bachelor of science from Utica College of Syracuse University. She has also earned a Certified Diversity Executive certification.

The appointment became effective on March 8.

High Schooler Invents Color-Changing Sutures to Detect Infection

By Theresa Machemer

(Reprinted from Smithsonian Magazine, <https://www.smithsonian-mag.com>; photo Courtesy of Society for Science)

Dasia Taylor has juiced about three dozen beets in the last 18 months. The root vegetables, she’s found, provide the perfect dye for her invention: suture thread that changes color, from bright red to dark purple, when a surgical wound becomes infected.

The 17-year-old student at Iowa City West High School in Iowa City, Iowa, began working on the project in October 2019, after her chemistry teacher shared information about state-wide science fairs with the class. As she developed her sutures, she nabbed awards at several regional science fairs, before advancing to the national stage. This January, Taylor was named one of 40 finalists in the Regeneron Science Talent Search, the country’s oldest and most prestigious science and math competition for high school seniors.

Healthy human skin is naturally acidic, with a pH around five. But



when a wound becomes infected, its pH goes up to about nine. Changes in pH can be detected without electronics; many fruits and vegetables are natural indicators that change color at different pH levels.

“I found that beets changed color at the perfect pH point,” says Taylor. Bright red beet juice turns dark purple at a pH of nine. “That’s perfect for an infected wound. And so, I was like, ‘Oh, okay. So beets is where it’s at.’”

Next, Taylor had to find a suture thread that would hold onto the dye. She tested ten different materials, including standard suture thread, for how well they picked up and held the dye, whether the dye changed color when its pH changed, and how their thickness compared to standard suture thread. A cotton-polyester blend checked all the boxes. After five minutes under an infection-like pH, the cotton-polyester thread changes from bright red to dark purple. After three days, the purple fades to light gray.

Working with an eye on equity in global health, she hopes that the color-changing sutures will someday help patients detect surgical site infections as early as possible so that they can seek medical care when it has the most impact. Taylor plans to patent her invention. In the meantime, she’s waiting for her final college admissions results.

A senior at Iowa City West High School, After graduation, Taylor hopes to attend Howard University, study political science and eventually become a lawyer.

Seattle-King County BLM Chapter Welcomes Board Chair Deaunte Damper

SEATTLE— In January, the Black Lives Matter (BLM) Seattle-King County Chapter welcomed Deaunte Damper as the chapter’s incoming Board Chair.

“Deaunte’s breadth of experience and leadership skills are an excellent match for our active and growing chapter,” said Ebony Miranda, the outgoing chair who will now become chair emeritus. “His deep roots in the community are a huge asset for the continued fight for Black liberation.”

A native of Seattle, Damper has made a career of bringing HIV awareness and LGBTQIA+ affirming education to communities throughout the city. In 2019, he became the national NAACP’s first LGBTQIA Chair.

Over the years, Damper has worked as a transition specialist with the state Department of Corrections, and as the Black Student Union advisor for Rainier Beach High School. He is the founder of the support group, B.R.O.T.H.A. (Blacks Recovering Overcoming Trauma Health



and Awareness), and also serves on the steering committee for the Washington Black Lives Matter Alliance.

“We have a lot to do, from policy advocacy to direct action,” said Damper. “I’m grateful for, and humbled by the community trust to lead this work forward.”

Black Lives Matter Seattle-King County is a social advocacy organization fighting for the protection and liberation of Black Life through advocacy and direct action.

For more information visit: blacklivesseattle.org or find BLM Seattle online - Facebook @blmseattle, Twitter: @BLMSeattleKC, or Instagram: @BLMSKC

BLACK NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Local, State, National and Around the World

Vernon Jordan: Civil Rights Icon Dies at 85

By Bruce C.T. Wright

(Reprinted from *BlackPast.org*; Photo Courtesy DePauw University)

Vernon Eulion Jordan, civil rights leader, lawyer, and presidential advisor, was born in Atlanta, Georgia on August 15, 1935. Growing up in the segregated American South, Jordan attended David T. Howard High School, where he graduated with honors in 1953.

Upon graduation Jordan entered DePauw University in Greencastle, Indiana, where he was the only African American in his class. A gifted athlete, Jordan excelled at basketball until his graduation in 1957.

Jordan went on to law school at Howard University in Washington, D.C., where he obtained his J. D. in 1960. Jordan quickly began civil rights work, joining the firm of Donald Hollowell in Atlanta. In 1961, the firm won a lawsuit on behalf of Hamilton Holmes and Charlayne Hunter who became the first black students admitted to the University of Georgia.

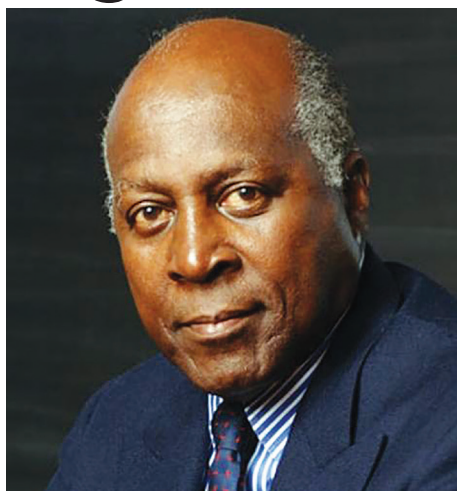
In 1961, Jordan was appointed field secretary for the Georgia chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Col-

ored People (NAACP). Jordan organized boycotts of local businesses that refused to hire African Americans, engaged in fund-raising campaigns, and led massive voter registration drives throughout the South.

In 1964, he was selected to be director for the Southern Regional Council's (SRC) Voter Education Project. As director, Jordan expanded his previous work in voter registration campaigns to eleven states. An emerging national civil rights figure, Jordan was hand-picked by President Lyndon B. Johnson for inclusion in his influential Civil Rights Conference.

In 1970, Jordan was appointed director of the United Negro College Fund, where he assisted in raising \$10,000,000 for disadvantaged African American youth. Then, from 1972 to 1981, Jordan served as president of the National Urban League, where in a nine-year period he tripled the organization's budget. In 1980, he launched the State of Black America Reports, a scholarly annual publication that statistically analyzed social and economic progress among Black Americans.

On May 29, 1980, Jordan was shot by a sniper's bullet while in Fort Wayne, Indi-



ana. White supremacist Joseph Paul Franklin was charged with the crime. Pleading not guilty, Franklin was acquitted, but later admitted to the assassination attempt as well as the murder of many other black Americans. While in the hospital, Jordan was visited by President Jimmy Carter, an event which became the first news story to ever appear on what was then the new Cable News Network (CNN).

After recovering Jordan resigned from the Urban League, taking a position as le-

gal counsel for the Washington, D.C. firm of Akin, Gump, Strauss, Hauer & Feld. While there Jordan had many prominent clients, including Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton. In 1992, Jordan was chosen by President-elect Clinton to lead his transition team. Jordan later served as an advisor for President Clinton, becoming one of his closest friends and political allies. In 1999, Jordan testified before Congress during President Clinton's impeachment trial regarding the Monica Lewinsky scandal.

Jordan authored two books—his autobiography *Vernon Can Read: A Memoir* (2001) and *Make It Plain: Standing Up and Speaking Out* (2008). His numerous awards included the Alexis de Tocqueville Award in 1977, the Barnard Medal of Distinction in 1983, and the NAACP's prestigious Spingarn Award in 2001. He was a life member of the Council on Foreign Relations and a member of both Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. and Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity.

Jordan resided in Washington, D.C. with his family, until his death at his home on March 1, 2021. His daughter Vickie Jordan confirmed his death. No cause was given. He was 85 years old.

United Negro College Fund Elects First Ever African American Board Chair in 70+ Year History

ATLANTA - (PRNewswire) Atlanta business and civic leader Milton H. Jones, Jr. has been elected Chair of the UNCF (United Negro College Fund) Board of Directors, becoming the first African American to hold that position.

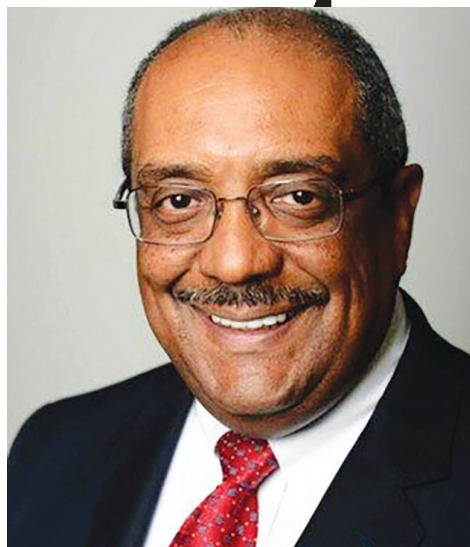
Jones succeeds William F. Stasior, Sr., retired Chairman and CEO of Booz Allen Hamilton, who served as UNCF's Chair for 11 years. Former Chairs of the UNCF board include: John D. Rockefeller, III; former Chairman and CEO of PepsiCo's International Food and Beverage Division Michael H. Jordan, and former Revlon President and CEO Jack Stahl.

"Since 1944, UNCF has played an integral role in changing the life trajectory for each student it has served, and I look forward to continuing that legacy," said Milton Jones. "Our member institutions and students remain the focus of our collective efforts. As we progress each year, we will grow our organization by building upon the strong foundation laid at UNCF's inception and strengthened throughout its history."

"All of us at UNCF are excited to have Milton become our new Board Chair," said UNCF President and CEO Michael L. Lomax, who has known and worked with Jones for more than four decades. "Milton brings a wealth of business knowledge and a thoughtful and collaborative leadership approach that will help us thrive and continue to drive UNCF's and our HBUCs' impact and growth."

In this role, Jones will work to grow the UNCF endowment, benefiting the 37 historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs) belonging to the UNCF network of member institutions.

Prior to his election as Board Chair, Jones served as Vice Chair of the Board and Chair



of the Finance Committee. He has been a member of the UNCF Board since 2005.

Jones is a founding member of Peachtree Providence Partners Holding Company, LLC. In this role, he advises and collaborates with CEOs in key sectors that include financial services, healthcare, technology, government, and higher education.

Jones is also vice chairman of the Meharry Medical College Board of Trustees; treasurer and a board member of 100 Black Men of America; co-chair of the Atlanta Chapter of the National Association of Corporate Directors and serves on the advisory boards of the Metro Atlanta YMCA, Boy Scouts and the Commerce Club. He is a member of the Downtown Atlanta Rotary Club and is a member and past chairman of The Atlanta Business League and of 100 Black Men of Atlanta.

The UNCF (United Negro College Fund) is the nation's largest and most effective minority education organization. UNCF supports students' education and development through scholarships and other programs. Learn more at UNCF.org.

First-Ever Black Virtual Art Exhibit Showcases the Work of 60 Internationally Renowned Black Artists and Galleries Thru July 31



New York, NY (blacknews.com) — The Harlem Fine Arts Show (HFAS), the largest, traveling Diasporic art show in the country, has opened its 2021 Virtual Art Show with over 60 artists and galleries from around the globe.

The show, which is free to the public and accessible 24/7, will feature interactive displays showcasing some of the world's preeminent Black artists with over 1,200 works available, valued at more than \$100M. The fair will run continuously from Monday, March 15 through Saturday, July 31, 2021.

The HFAS is pioneering a 21st century Harlem Renaissance with this groundbreaking show, facilitated through a partnership with Online Viewing Room, a virtual platform that produces digital shows for venues in Paris, the Hamptons, and other art hubs across the globe.

"We are pushing the envelope in support of African Diasporic artists during these



challenging times when they are not able to be in front of collectors," said Dion Clarke, founder of the Harlem Fine Arts Show (HFAS). "In our current climate, where awareness of the Black aesthetic is top of mind across the globe, it is imperative for us to reinvent the way we engage with multi-cultural artists utilizing today's technology."

Featured artists for the 2021 Harlem Fine Arts show include Ademola Olugebefola, Otto Neals, Roederick Vines, John Pinderhughes, Danny Simmons, Glenn Tunstull, and Frank Frazier. WaterKolors Gallery (Memphis), Soweto Fine Art Gallery (South Africa), and Spence Gallery (Canada) are among the galleries included in the virtual show.

To see the Preview visit: <https://vimeo.com/525543880>. For more information visit: www.hfas.org or call the HFAS Hotline at 800-376-2860.

Children’s Defense Fund Report:

State of America’s Children Reveals Children of Color are 71 Percent of Those That Live in Poverty

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Senior National Correspondent
@StacyBrownMedia

Part One of an ongoing series on this impactful and informative report.

The child population in America is the most diverse in history, but children remain the poorest age group in the country with youth of color suffering the highest poverty rates.

“While we reported on the 73 million children in the U.S. in 2019, which is 22 percent of the nation’s population, we also note that 2020 was the first year in American history that a majority of children are projected to be children of color,” said the Rev. Dr. Starsky Wilson, the president and CEO of the Children’s Defense Fund.

Dr. Wilson’s remarks come as the Marian Wright Edelman founded nonprofit released “The State of America’s Children 2021.”

The comprehensive report is eye-opening. It highlights how children remain the poorest age group in America, with children of color and young children suffering the highest poverty rates. For instance, of the more than 10.5 million poverty-stricken children in America in 2019, approximately 71 percent were those of color.

The stunning exposé revealed that income and wealth inequality are growing and harming children in low-income, Black and Brown families.

While the share of all wealth held by the top one percent of Americans grew from 30 percent to 37 percent, the share held by the bottom 90 percent fell from 33 percent to 23 percent between 1989 and 2019.

Today, a member of the top 10 percent of income earners makes about 39 times as much as the average earner in the bottom 90 percent.

The median family income of White households with children (\$95,700) was more than double that of Black (\$43,900), and Hispanic households with children (\$52,300).

Further, the report noted that the lack of affordable housing and federal rental assistance leaves millions of children homeless or at risk of homelessness.

More than 1.5 million children enrolled in public schools experienced homelessness during the 2017-2018 school year, and 74 percent of unhoused students during the 2017-2018 school year were living temporarily with family or friends.

Millions of children live in food-insecure households, lacking reliable access to



safe, sufficient, and nutritious food, and more than 1 in 7 children – 10.7 million – were food insecure, meaning they lived in households where not everyone had enough to eat.

Black and Hispanic children were twice as likely to live in food-insecure households as White children.

The report further found that America’s schools have continued to slip backwards into patterns of deep racial and socioeconomic segregation, perpetuating achievement gaps.

For instance, during the 2017-2018 public school year, 19 percent of Black, 21 percent of Hispanic, and more than 26 percent of American Indian/Alaska Native school students did not graduate on time compared with only 11 percent of White students.

More than 77 percent of Hispanic and more than 79 percent of Black fourth and eighth grade public school students were not proficient in reading or math in 2019, compared with less than 60 percent of White students.

“We find that in the course of the last year, we’ve come to the point where our conversations about child well-being and our dialogue and reckoning around racial justice has really met a point of intersection, and so we must consider child well-being in every conversation about racial justice and quite frankly you can only sustainably speak of racial justice if we’re talking about the state of our children,” Dr. Wilson observed.

Some more of the startling statistics found in the report include:

A White public school student is suspended every six seconds, while students of color and non-White students are suspended every two seconds.

Conditions leading to a person dropping out of high school occur with white students every 19 seconds, while it occurs every nine seconds for non-White and students of color.

A White child is arrested every 1 minute and 12 seconds, while students of color and non-whites are arrested every 45 seconds.

A White student in public school is corporally punished every two minutes, while students of color and non-Whites face such action every 49 seconds.

Dr. Wilson asserted that federal spending “reflects the nation’s skewed priorities.”

In the report, he notes that children are not receiving the investment they need to thrive, and despite making up such a large portion of the population, less than 7.5 percent of federal spending went towards children in fiscal year 2020.

Despite Congress raising statutory caps on discretionary spending in fiscal years 2018 to 2020, children did not receive their fair share of those increases and children’s share of total federal spending has continued to decline.

“Children continue to be the poorest segment of the population,” Dr. Wilson demanded. “We are headed into a dark place as it relates to poverty and inequity on the American landscape because our children become the canary in the coal mine.”

Dr. Wilson did note that the Children’s Defense Fund is pleased about President Joe Biden’s American Rescue Plan, which, among other things, makes it easier for parents to keep their jobs and provides a lifeline for disadvantaged children.

The \$1.9 trillion plan not only contained \$1,400 checks for individuals, it includes monthly allowances and other elements to help reduce child poverty.

The President’s plan expands home visitation programs that help at-risk parents from pregnancy through early childhood and is presents universal access to top-notch pre-K for 3- and 4-year-olds.

“The American Rescue Plan carried significant and powerful anti-poverty messages that will have remarkable benefits on the lives of children in America over the course of the next two years,” Dr. Wilson declared.

“The Children’s Defense Fund was quick to applaud the efforts of the President. We have worked with partners, including leading a child poverty coalition, to advance the ideas of that investment,” he continued.

“Most notably, the expansion of the child tax credit which has the impact of reducing poverty, lifting more than 50 percent of African American children out of poverty, 61 percent of Indigenous children, 45 percent of Hispanic children. It’s not only good policy, but it’s specifically good policy for Black and Brown children.”

To read or download the full report visit: <https://www.childrensdefense.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/The-State-of-Americas-Children-2021.pdf>



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Black Women and Sexual Assault

Written by Karen Boone

Sexual Assault Awareness Month is an annual designation observed in April. The mission of the month is to raise awareness about sexual violence around the world and to educate communities on how to prevent it. In April, and every month, people across the country are encouraged to embrace their voice to show support for survivors and to speak out if they have experienced sexual assault.

The Wikipedia dictionary defines sexual assault as “an act in which a person intentionally sexually touches another person without that person’s consent, or coerces or physically forces a person to engage in a sexual act against their will.” The term sexual assault can take on many forms including the following: rape, molestation, unwanted sexual contact of any form, sexual harassment, incest, child sexual assault, sexual violence even with an intimate partner, sexual exploitation, torture of a person in a sexual manner, human trafficking and voyeurism.

The National Sexual Violence Resource Center states: Rape is the most under-reported crime; 63% of sexual assaults are not reported. Only 5 out of 1,000 perpetrators will end up in prison.

While the impact of sexual assault crosses all social, economics and racial lines, there are barriers and concerns that are unique to communities of color. For Black women, sexual assault and violence are incredibly pervasive issues that routinely go unreported and un-addressed.

According to the National Center on Violence Against Women in the Black Community (PDF, 772KB): 1 in 4 Black girls are raped before the age of 18. And, 40 to 60% of Black women report having been subjected to coercive sexual contact before the age of 18.

The Institute for Women’s Policy Research reports that: 1 in 5 Black women are raped in their lifetime. In addition, 35% of Black women have experienced some form of contact sexual violence during their lifetime.

The majority of sexual assaults happen at or near the victim’s home, often by someone they know, and or trust. Rape victims’ stories tend to be true, only two to eight percent of rapes are falsely reported (the percentage is the same for other felonies). Research also shows that one in three women and one in six men experience some form of sexual violence in their lifetime. Of women who are raped, over half (51 percent) are raped by an intimate partner and 40 percent are raped by an acquaintance.

The National Sexual Violence Resource Center reports most rapists are repeat offenders: A survey of men whose self-reported sexual acts met legal definitions of rape or attempted rape, but whose actions went undetected by the criminal justice system, found over 60 percent were repeat offenders against multiple victims or the same victim. Eighty percent of respondents admitted to raping women who were intoxicated by alcohol or drugs.

Given the impact of historical trauma, racism, and oppression, often Black women will tell no one about the abuse. Just as there are a number of reasons why any victim of sexual assault does not report their abuse, for Black women and girls, there are unique barriers to both reporting their assault and seeking help.

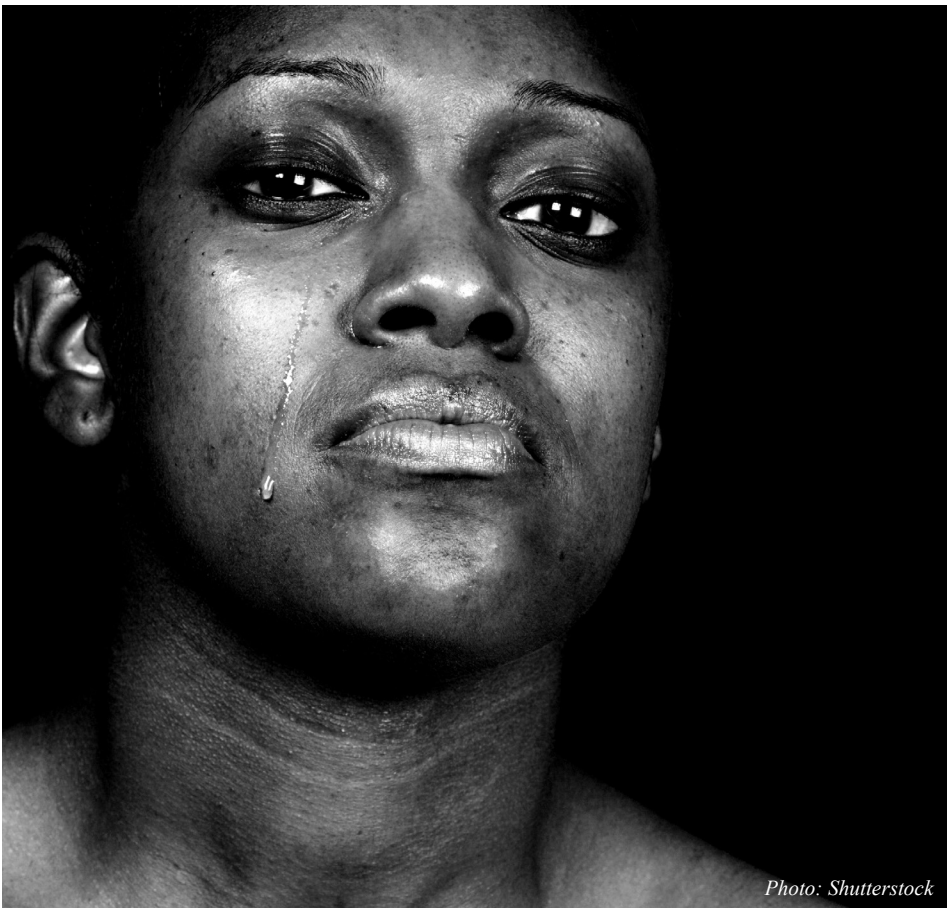


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More than 20% of Black women are raped during their lifetimes (a higher share than among women overall)

For every Black woman who reports her rape at least 15 Black women will not!

Since slavery, sexual violence and stereotypes have been used as tools of oppression and have devalued Black women in our society. White men routinely sexually assaulted Black women during and after slavery in the United States to engender fear in Black women and assert dominance over Black men. This institutionalized rape of Black women, coupled with demeaning stereotypes formed centuries ago that persist to this day, have made a lasting impression on our society as a whole. This legacy has led to the minimization or rationalization of sexual violence when it is perpetrated against Black women, especially when perpetrated by acquaintances.

In addition, Black women are stereotyped as promiscuous, even from a young age. A Georgetown Law Center on Poverty and Inequality study found that “adults often view Black girls as less innocent and more adult-like [than their white peers],” and that “negative stereotypes of Black women are mapped onto Black girls,” resulting in harsher treatment and a lack of empathy for Black girls.

“Because of African Americans’ unique history of racist and sexist victimization, the Black community has an even harder time with rape. This prevents survivors from getting help and our communities from addressing the issue effectively,” according to Lori Robin author of “I will Survive: The African-American Guide to Healing from Sexual Assault and Abuse.”

Institutionalized and internalized racism prevent Black women from reporting to authorities. For every Black woman who reports rape, at least 15 do not report. The complexities preventing Black women from disclosure to authorities include “racial loyalty, personal experiences of racism and oppression, a perception that racism is more threatening to the cultural group’s

wellbeing than sexism, and prior negative experiences with the legal system.”

Moreover, law enforcement has historically failed to protect Black women; for example, a 2016 report by the U.S. Department of Justice found that the Baltimore Police Department engages in biased, and potentially unlawful, discrimination against women victims of sexual assault in that majority Black city.

When sexual violence is perpetrated by Black men against Black women and girls, many factors — including the Black community’s fraught relationship with law enforcement and the criminal justice system — may make the victims hesitant to take any action that could potentially harm the perpetrator. In instances of sexual assault by an acquaintance, fear of retaliation by the perpetrator and the community they share with the victim also prevents disclosure.

Ongoing and even “friendly” contact with a perpetrator is common. Because most perpetrators of sexual violence are known to their victims, ongoing contact is often necessary. And, as was the case with Russell Simmons, who was accused of sexual assault by multiple women, an abuser or harasser may have had actual or perceived power over their victim, and therefore, the victim may adopt adaptive strategies, such as maintaining friendly contact, in order to avoid retaliation. This is especially likely when the abuser or harasser is an extremely powerful “rainmaker” with outsized influence over others so “the rules” generally do not apply.

The vast majority of sexual assaults are never reported to authorities: RAINN, the nation’s largest anti-sexual violence organization, estimates that out of every 1,000 sexual assault cases, only 230 are reported to the police. And for every Black woman who reports rape, at least

15 do not report. (However, two-thirds of survivors eventually disclose sexual assault to informal systems, usually family, friends, or romantic partners.)

Black women’s “culture of silence” around sexual assault is a rational response to a racist society. For centuries, rape of Black women was both widespread and institutionalized, and the legal system — itself often weaponized by white people — offered little protection for Black rape victims. In fact, through the 19th century, rape laws were “race specific” and did not recognize Black women as victims.

Even today, evidence shows there is a double standard regarding Black women’s perception and treatment as victims. For example, the penalties their assailants suffer are typically less severe than those of people who sexually assault white women. One recent study found prosecutors filed charges in 75 percent of the cases in which a white woman was attacked, but when the victim was a Black woman, prosecutors filed charges just 34 percent of the time.

In response to institutionalized racism and internalized racism, many Black women have developed a “culture of silence” to cope with their victimization. More specifically, some Black women adhere to the “Strong Black Woman” expectation, which requires them to display inner strength and minimize the impact of their rape. This cultural perception of strength impacts Black women’s ability to seek help, to have their adverse experiences taken seriously, and to take the time needed to heal and recover from sexual trauma.

The Institute for Women’s Policy Research reports that: More than 20% of Black women are raped during their lifetimes - a higher share than among women overall.

Few Black survivors of sexual violence seek mental health services, thus exacerbating the lasting health effects of trauma. Low rates of outpatient mental health use in general by Black Americans, combined with a general distrust of the mental health profession and concerns about “betraying” one’s race when the perpetrator is also black, contribute to a lower likelihood that Black women survivors will seek out treatment. This is especially the case in the immediate aftermath of an assault when processing trauma in a quality-care setting can promote greater resilience over time.

The Institute for Women’s Policy Research reports that: Black women also experience significantly higher rates of psychological abuse - including humiliation, insults, namecalling and coercive control - than do women over all.

Black women survivors are coping with gender-based and race-based trauma. For any survivor, the consequences of sexual trauma are serious. Large, epidemiological studies show that sexual traumas, in particular, are most frequently associated with PTSD, depression, substance misuse, suicide ideation and attempts, and other adverse health effects. And when a traumatic event such as sexual assault is perpetrated by someone close to the victim, that trauma has more severe mental health consequences as compared to trauma perpetrated by a stranger.

For black women, the combined and compounded effects of sexism and racism can heighten depressive and PTSD symptoms.

Continued on Page 30

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Racial Justice Includes Environmental Justice

By Malisea Gardner



When it comes to being environmentally conscious terms that generally come to mind are “recycle”, “solar energy”, and “pollution”. Simple terms that have floated into our world, but not planted themselves into our everyday lives. However, there are newer terms like “climate change”, “water conservation”, “fossil fuel”, and “environmental justice” that are critical and require that it becomes not only a part of our vocabulary but also requires our action as they will eventually impact our livelihood.

I get it, Environmental Justice (EJ) isn’t something we can afford to add to the plate of concerns for the black community. Collectively, we’re already fighting social justice issues like police reform, school to prison pipeline, affordable housing, voter suppression, a pandemic! Now we must worry about the environment, too? Yes! Frankly, we won’t have room to care about any of that if we don’t have earth to inhabit.

It’s not by coincidence that our water bills are higher. That means we need water conservation.

It’s not by coincidence Black Americans suffer more from asthma and cardiovascular diseases. A result of inhaling toxic fossil fuels.

It’s not by coincidence that our winters seem colder and our summers hotter. That is a result of climate change.

Environmental hazards are happening to our planet, so everyone should care, right? Correct!

However, due to structural racism in urban planning and design, black and brown communities in our county have fallen victim to environmental hazards that seemingly no one is talking about until now. It shouldn’t be a surprise that we’ve



Photo: Shutterstock

fallen victims to systemic racism and the roots of the inequitable distribution of environmental burdens and benefits. Low income communities (that are mostly communities of color) have not been considered or offered a seat at the table when it comes to environmental decision-making.

Unlike other social issues that plague the Black Community, environmental issues are invisible issues that are wreaking havoc right in front of us. In larger cities, affordable housing units, schools, and playgrounds are built near high traffic areas, where communities of color have higher health disparities such as asthma and cancer as a result of breathing in fossil fuel emissions, drinking contaminated water generation after generation, resulting in hereditary health problems. We breathe in the toxic gases from busses, cars, and industrial facilities while driving to work, walking to school, or while simply sleeping with the window open at night. Invisible dangers. However, because we’re not vocal about this, we’ve been taken advantage of our lack of knowledge.

So, what does it all mean for us in Spokane?

While we do not see a huge issue with fossil fuels, it doesn’t mean we’re not exempt from it happening in our city or region. Our local tribes have been severely impacted the most in our region with little to no repair. We take advantage of the Spokane River, and we must be cognizant of our overall water usage.

What does it mean for us to conserve water? It requires more than turning the water off when brushing your teeth. It means making a conscious effort to reduce our water use. Cities like Los Angeles suffer droughts, but they also have regulated water use, and if we’re not prepared or educated on conserving our water, we will suffer higher water usage rates that will result in regulated water.

Environmental issues are multilayered and could potentially take up an entire issue of the Black Lens, but my goal today was to bring light to the fact that we can no longer ignore or take advantage of our environment. Running out and buying an electric vehicle isn’t the immediate solution, we must be aware of the disparities in lower-income neighborhoods that cannot protect themselves from the environmental hazards that plague their communities or the uneven distribution of resources to protect those communities.

As good stewards of our neighbors, we must protect each other and the earth we inhabit. For too long, communities of color have been in the dark about structural designs, unregulated industrial facilities emitting gasses into the air we breathe, climate change issues, the potential water shortage and overall conversation of the environment. It’s time to have a seat at the table.

Mother Earth needs all our love and respect, let us give her the honor of our ancestors before us and the future that is in front of us.

For more information visit: National Black Environmental Justice Network: <https://www.nbejn.com>



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Tongues of Fire

By Beverly Spears

Cursed

Race and racism; old as time and always about skin color and physical features, right? Not so. The word race itself only came into use about five hundred years ago and physical appearance was not the definitive characteristic. In the western world, in the early 1600s it simply referred to grouping or types of people. In Shakespeare’s time you might hear of a race of saints, or a race of bishops. The word then morphed into categorizing geographical areas and nationalities. There could be a race of Italians, or Prussians, or Englishmen as easily as there could be a race of Africans.

I’m reading Isabel Wilkerson’s book, *Caste*. Wilkerson explains that racism is just one part of a caste system that exists in virtually all societies. “A caste system is an artificial construct... that sets the presumed supremacy of one group against the presumed inferiority of another. In the American caste system, race, the division of humans on the basis of their physical appearances, is the primary tool [in determining] caste.”

Ancient caste systems were ranked according to wealth, influence and power: upper class, middle class, lower class (often freed-people), and slave class. Until modern history, skin color had nothing to do with class or race.

A person’s race, as defined by skin color and physical appearance, was an invention of white historians, sociologists anthropologist in the late 18th, early 19th century. Unfortunately, and predictably religion, especially Judaism and Christianity, played a significant role in assigning inferiority to darker skin. Christian, Jewish and Islamic writers made dark skin not just an undesirable trait, but a curse, and they convinced people that it said so in the Bible.

In the Hebrew Bible/Christian Old Testament Book of Genesis, Noah’s son Ham finds his father drunk, naked and passed

out. Instead of averting his eyes and covering Noah up, Ham goes out and gossips about the sorry state in which he found his father. For this Father Noah curses Ham’s fourth son, Canaan and all Canaan’s descendants (Canaanites) by making them forever lower-class servants to the descendants of Noah’s other two sons. Even though the Biblical passages say absolutely nothing of the sort, these 18th century scholars decided that Noah curses Ham’s descendants not only with second class citizenship, but with black skin, thereby making Ham the Father of Black African peoples.

This was 18th century gaslighting! There is no biblical evidence anyone cursed anyone with Black skin, and no evidence that Ham was ever called the father of African peoples. But these teachings helped to justify centuries of African enslavement. When kidnapped and enslaved Africans were converted to Christianity in America, this is what they were taught.

When Africans were converted to Christianity by Europeans who colonized their counties, the curse of Ham truly became a curse. Rwanda is one of the most Christian evangelized nations of Africa. Beginning Easter week in the spring of 1994, 800,000 Rwandan Tutsi and Hutu massacred one another for the next 100 days. Entire families—men, women, and children were butchered with machetes by people who were their neighbors. They murdered each other in the pews of churches where they worshiped together. The reasons for the massacre are complex, but Christian evangelism plays a foundational role.

Hutu and Tutsi existed in precolonial Rwanda as two separate peer groups in one larger culture. While each group maintained their autonomy, the two groups came together to build a healthy society in which they co-existed. They created a common language and shared a culture

rich in art and music and dance. Then the colonizers came and brought Christianity. Both groups eventually adopted the Christian Faith.

When German and Belgian colonizers arrived, the mutuality and cultural commonalities between the two groups were completely ignored. The Europeans instead insisted on their differences. They ascribed the story of the curse of Ham to explain differences in physical appearance and therefore status. They declared that the more African looking Hutu majority were descendants of the cursed Ham, and his son Canaan. They ascribed the Tutsi minority as descendants of the sons of Abraham that had not been cursed. They declared the Tutsi minority superior to the Hutu majority by reason of physical features that were more middle-eastern.

Darker-skin became inferior to lighter-skin and finer physical features in a society of dark-skinned people who had never made physical appearance a mark of their identity. The separation of the two groups into a superior/inferior race and class system created deep hatred and resentments that had never before existed. A century later, mutually imposed genocide was the result.

Race as determined by skin color may be a made-up thing, but “racism” is real. We can talk all we want about social constructs, but that doesn’t address the deep psychological and emotional consequences of Black people being on the lowest rung of the societal hierarchy for centuries. It doesn’t speak to the internalized inferiority and even self-hatred that is born when ones’ skin color and appearance is considered undesirable. It doesn’t speak to the internal caste system that rose up within the Black community in America around skin hue.

When being white is synonymous with money power and influence, then looking as white as you can becomes a prerequisite for success. When the ideal of attractiveness and beauty is light skin and fine features, then darker hues of skin, tight curly hair, full lips and wide noses become undesirable.

In America, it began as a way for Black women to protect their children. Slave women raped by their masters realized that the light-skinned children they bore fared better than their dark-skinned children. The children sired by the masters were treated better, they were less likely to be sold and more likely to be freed than their darker siblings. But all things evolve for better or for worse.

It didn’t take long for whiteness to become the ideal standard for many Blacks. We “fried,” permed and “conked” our hair. We used bleaching creams to make us whiter. We adopted the white American imitation of European aristocracy, and created a Black high society, complete with cotillions and coming-out balls. “A better class of colored people.” We told our kids to behave when they went anywhere there might be white people saying things like, “Don’t go out there showing your color.”

I grew up hearing, “if you’re white, you’re all right. If you’re brown, stick around. If you’re black, get back.” That little ditty didn’t come from white people, it was



an expression by Black people directed toward other Black people. Light-skinned Blacks hung together, even in their churches. It was rumored that my paternal Grandmother’s Black Baptist church would make folks pass “the comb test.” You had to be able to run a fine-toothed comb through your hair without it getting stuck. There were Black social clubs that had an unwritten rule about membership; light-skinned people only. There were night clubs that made people pass a “paper bag test” before you could enter. If a Black person was darker than a paper bag, they didn’t get in. Light-skinned Black people married other light-skinned black people to “keep the color right.”

Alice Walker called skin discrimination among people of color, Colorism. Many cultures place a high value on light skin tone as a sign of social status. Colorism is prominent today in Asian, Latinx, Middle-Eastern and African societies. Colorism within the Black community is not as prevalent as it once was, but it’s still there.

The 1960s and 70s movement that declared “Black is Beautiful” liberated a nation of young Black folks in particular. “Say it loud! I’m Black and I’m proud!” For the first time, light-skinned Black people were not the ideal. I’m a light-skinned Black person, and I know that has opened doors for me that might not have opened if I were darker. I’ve had darker-skinned people tell me to my face in no uncertain terms that they resent me, and that I only got ahead because I was light.

My skin is not light by virtue of a recent mixed-race union, my skin is light because my foremother, a slave woman was raped by her master 200 years ago. There’s nothing I can or want to do about the hue of my skin. We come in all shades. As the saying goes, we are “light, bright and damn near white.” There are more Black mixed-race people in America than ever before. This diversity makes us strong. It’s something to celebrate.

We will be victims of the American caste system as long as we let it define who we are. We will be victims of the American caste system as long as we let it play one of us against the other. We will be victims of the American caste system as long as the current dominant culture is something to which we aspire. We will be victims of the American caste system if we claim either inferiority or superiority over other cultures.

The only curse is the one we inflict on ourselves.

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

Spokane Faith & Values

SpokaneFāVS informs and builds faith and non-faith communities through digital journalism, online and offline engagement opportunities.

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“Butterfly”

A Poem by Bethany 'B.Lyte' Montgomery

Founder & President of Power 2 The Poetry

Who did I help?
What did I learn?

Who did I help?
What did I learn?

Life can get crazy
Don't let it distract you
Embrace the positive
Let the negative move past you

Peace positivity and light
Is what I consume to nourish
my insides

Peace positivity and light
Is what I consume to nourish
my insides

Beautiful butterfly
come out your cocoon
Spread your wings
and fly to the moon
The possibilities are endless
this universe is infinite
Emerge from the shadows
and be magnificent

This is my evolution
My revolution
My exclamation
My proclamation
My explanation

For ignoring your expectations
On the road to greatness

Lord knows I'm patient
Embrace the haters
No instigating
No accepting failure
Never say never
In it to win it
go out and get it
Listen to my heart
and follow my intuition

Not worried about likes
or mentions
Don't need THAT attention
Just need you to listen

Experience the experiment
Embrace the brilliance
Always buy clearance
Face your villains
Make a difference
Then make a million
Ignore opinions
Acknowledge your
own existence
Find equilibrium
Keep on persisting
You have dominion
Fight the system

No pain
No gain
Beauty in the struggle
Don't let it bring you under
Be resilient
And rise above it
Take a chance
Live life in abundance

Impossible
I'm possible
Unstoppable
I AM

Impossible
I'm
possible
Un-
stoppable
I AM

Every day
is a chance
to discover
self love
Always
remember
the people
you love
I know life's tough
it gets hard enough
But please don't give up

You can't be winning
If you don't be playing
You get what I'm saying

You can't be winning
If you don't be playing
You get what I'm saying
So don't quit kid
Keep it pushing

Always looking forward
Toward the optimistic
side of things
Glass half full never half empty
All just energy on
different frequencies
Channel our inner being
use our third eye for seeing
Stop disagreeing
learn how to reason
This lyfe has
way too much meaning
Stop all the beating
promote healing and balance
Focus on our talents
eliminate all the malice

All the ego
All the evil
And let us all just be good people

Transformation hurts
but it is necessary
You must consciously intend
to let go
Of all that holds you back
And all that doesn't serve you
Because if not it will
only serve to hurt you

There are already many obstacles
and barriers you must overcome
So don't quit kid

Beautiful butterfly
come out your cocoon
Spread your wings
and fly to the moon
The possibilities are endless
this universe is infinite
Emerge from the shadows
and be magnificent

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Pastor James &
First Lady Shawn
Watkins

Raze: Black American Focused Early Learning

New Spokane Program in Development to Address Pre-School to Prison Pipeline

By Kerra Bower

In 2019 the Washington State Chamber of Commerce conducted a study that found that Black American students in Spokane were some of the most underserved in Washington, as it pertains to early childhood education.

As a result, a committee of community members, which included pastors, small business childcare center owners, and administrators, set out to better understand why this issue is occurring and how to meet the need here in Spokane. The result, we believe, is the key to eradicating biases driven by stereotypes that perpetuate the preschool to prison pipeline.

According to Cabrini University, the pre-school to prison pipeline’s primary contributors are outlined as follows:



Implicit Bias -the act of unknowingly projecting bias onto another. This fact was supported by Yale University in a 2016 study from the Yale Child Study Center that found that teachers despite ethnicity were more likely to look at Black boys when behavioral issues are expected in the classroom. According to the US Department of Education’s office for Civil Rights, Black students are suspended, at rates of 3-4 times more often than their white peers. The Center for American Progress estimates that there are approximately 250 preschoolers suspended or expelled each day nationally, with Blacks twice as likely to receive a suspension or expulsion.

Zero-Tolerance Policies do not take into consideration extenuating circumstances

such as basic needs being met to allow for self-regulation. Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs tells us that a child cannot even begin to be taught if their basic needs are not met. By creating zero-tolerance policies that don’t recognize this hierarchy, we are negating the very foundation needed to teach our students and instead providing punitive consequences to an often broken child, unable to learn or implement basic social emotional skills.

School Resource Officers can be highly effective in quashing violence in schools, especially considering the current climate of gun violence in schools. However, several organizations, including Justice Quarterly, Washington University Law Review and Justice policy have reported that ad-

ministrators still refer to law enforcement even if there is a resource officer on campus. Thus, diverting much needed funding to resources that could be used elsewhere like to offset the **Lack of School Mental Health Staff**.

The American Civil Liberties Union reported that there are 14 million students in schools with police but have no access to mental health staff such as counselors, nurse, psychologist, or social worker.

A few issues that we see effecting Black students, specifically in Spokane, are:

- Overrepresentation in suspensions and expulsions rates pre-k-3rd grade.
- Lack of non-standard business hours at Childcare centers to meet the need

- of families that are working multiple jobs or swing shifts.
- Lack of recognition and acceptance of child rearing beliefs. Many of the child rearing strategies of typical Black American families are taught to be taboo and neglectful in mainstream media and education practices, which undermines the authority of Black parents and causes distrust and lack of respect within the education system.
 - Lack of positive male role models. Representation matters! If a child doesn’t see people like themselves doing positive things and achieving it teaches them that those positive and achieving things aren’t things that they do. Lack of fathers in the home and/or positive Black role models within the community has created a void for students to replicate.

A quality preschool experience lays the foundation for many short term and long term advantages for students who are fortunate enough to experience it. Early learning positively affects brain structure. Research shows that brain plasticity is highest in ages birth-four years.

This means that our greatest opportunities to learn and retain information happens in the toddler and preschool years. By attending a quality preschool program, students receive an early introduction to letters and numbers which improves foundational reading and math skills, respectively, both of which affect later academic success and ensuring kindergarten readiness.

Continued on Page 31

The SCC Science Scholars Program

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The SCC Science Scholars Program provides students with:

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- Opportunities for field experiences and undergraduate research
- Academic Support and Mentoring

Students will be selected for this program on the basis of academic potential and financial need.

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visit: scc.spokane.edu and search for “Science Scholars”

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Black America Needs Bitcoin

By Pastor Otis Manning

In the Bible Passage of Matthew 13:45 & 46 it says: The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: Who, when he had found one pearl of Great Price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it. This is the Parable of the Pearl of Great Price quoted by Jesus.

He is talking about the Great Value of the Kingdom of Heaven. From a standpoint of Eternity this is certainly true. However, in this article I am going to relate this Parable to Financial Freedom for Black America!

It is common knowledge that Black America has suffered from Slavery, Jim Crow, Systemic Racism, Redlining and all the Oppression that comes from these evils. These are the reasons for the large financial inequalities between Black and White Americans today.

How can we right these wrongs? How can this enormous gap be closed? I would not recommend that we wait for Reparations which may never happen. What can we do to be proactive that could be a solution to this age old issue?

Bitcoin is the world's first cryptocurrency and blockchain. Bitcoin is the leading Digital Currency in which a record of transactions is maintained and new units of currency are generated by the computational solution of mathematical problems and which operates independently of banks.

Bitcoin was first described in a white paper published by Satoshi Nakamoto in October 2008. Nakamoto is believed to be the individual or group responsible for Bitcoin. There is no record of a computer scientist by this name prior to the launch of Bitcoin in 2009.

Bitcoin has become the BEST PERFORMING INVESTMENT OF ALL TIME! Over the last decade some of the highest performing Stocks have been as follows:



Photo: Shutterstock

Netflix 4,177%, Amazon 1,787%, Mastercard 1,125%, Apple 966%, Visa 824%, Starbucks 800%, Salesforce 792%, Adobe 790%, Nike 587%, Microsoft 556%, Costco 542%, Disney 423%, Google 335%, McDonalds 325%.

Bitcoin has surpassed them ALL!

Another way of looking at it is how long did it take the following companies to reach a One Trillion Dollar Market Cap? Microsoft 44 years, Apple 42 years, Amazon 24 years, Google 21 years, however Bitcoin it only took 12 years!

Since Bitcoin is on the Bitcoin Blockchain it is de-centralized. This means there is no Bitcoin headquarters. It operates world wide through miners that produce more Bitcoin therefore it is beyond Government confiscation. Governments cannot shut it down or stop it.

The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) has ruled that Bitcoin is not a security. The Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA) defines Bitcoin as a Digital Store of Value secured through Cryptography. The Internal Revenue Ser-

vice (IRS) defines Bitcoin as a Virtual Currency and a Capital Asset that will be taxed as property.

Other than taxes that are due upon withdrawals for the gains you make, Bitcoin is outside of the Governments control. Therefore the Systemic Racism that has held Black America back since the inception of this nation cannot hold back our Prosperity through our Bitcoin Investments. This is the reason Black America needs Bitcoin. Bitcoin provides a channel for Black America to grow wealth outside of the Systemic Racist System. No other Investment offers this freedom.

Wall Street Insiders are predicting that Bitcoin will be valued at One Million Dollars within 5 years! Wealthy Individuals, Corporations and other Organizations are investing Billions into Bitcoin. Some of the Financial Elite are predicting Bitcoin will eventually become the Worldwide Currency.

Bitcoin has a fixed supply built into the code and there will never be more than 21 Million Bitcoins produced. So with mas-

sive demand and little supply the value will continue to go up!

How Powerful is Bitcoin?

APPLE digitized your **Camera** so now you do not need to use a separate Camera because it is built into your Cell Phone.

FACEBOOK digitized your **Photos** so now you can share your Photos on Facebook with family, friends and anyone.

GOOGLE digitized your **Library** so now it is not necessary to go to a Library to research information. You can just Google it.

THE INTERNET has digitized your **Music** so now it is not necessary to buy Albums, Records and CD's. You can just download Music on your Computer, Phone or any other mobile device.

BITCOIN IS THE DIGITIZATION OF YOUR MONEY!

Many Nations of the World are moving towards a Cashless Society. The Global Monetary System is changing and you have the opportunity to invest in it in the early stages of development!

Conclusion:

The writing is on the wall and the Financial Elite are telling us that all Financial Roads are leading to Bitcoin. What are we going to do about it?

Black America was shut out of the economy for years through Slavery and the Jim Crow era. We have been limited through Systemic Racism in it's many forms. Redlining has affected our property ownership.

However, with Bitcoin you have an Investment Channel that is outside of the Financial Systemic Racist System. The Global Monetary System is changing and you have the opportunity to invest in it in the early stages.

Continued on Page 27

Killer Mike's Greenwood Digital Banking Platform Raises \$40 Million in Funding

By Derek Major

(Reprinted from blackenterprise.com) Atlanta Rapper Michael 'Killer Mike' Render and co-founder Ryan Glover introduced their digital banking platform Greenwood last year and some big names in finance have jumped on board.

The fintech startup named after the Tulsa, Oklahoma, district known as Black Wall Street, raised around \$40 million in Series A funding since its launch in October. Truist, Bank of America, and JPMorgan Chase headline a list of major financial institutions that have invested in Greenwood.

The digital bank was forced to delay its January launch due to its overwhelming demand. More than 500,000 people have signed up for an account with Greenwood. Other major investors in Greenwood include Mastercard, Wells Fargo, SoftBank, PNC, and Banco Popular.

Vanessa Vreeland, who heads Truist's capital division said the bank believes in Greenwood's mission of financial freedom, empowerment, and closing the racial wealth gap. "We are trying to solve this problem in a number of different ways, but we hadn't seen anyone trying to solve it from this type of angle," Vreeland told CNN Business.

Glover and Render have big plans for Greenwood's future, including increasing the number of its employees, but expanding won't change the bank's mission or focus to work through Minority Depository Institutions (MDIs) and Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs).

Render became a huge voice in the resurgence of the Black Lives Matter movement and in the Georgia political scene in the run-up to the 2020 presidential election. Render held several events with Sen. Bernie Sanders who he endorsed for the election.



According to the Brookings Institute, the wealth gap between Black and white Americans has only grown due to the coronavirus pandemic. Factors such as education, industry, and the ability to telecommute during the pandemic only made the wealth gap larger.

"The net worth of a typical white family is nearly ten times greater than that of a Black family and eight times greater than that of a Latino family. This wealth gap is a curable injustice that requires collaboration," Glover said in a statement to TechCrunch. "The backing of six of the top seven banks and the two largest payment technology companies is a testament to the contemporary influence of the Black and Latino community. We now are even better positioned to deliver the world-class services our customers deserve."

For information visit: <https://bankgreenwood.com>



Should You Worry About COIVD-19 Mutations?

By Glenn Ellis

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - The newest mutations of COIVD-19 showing up in the United States may bring with it, over the next three or four weeks, some of the most difficult days of the pandemic we have seen so far. Studies in laboratories show that a mutation makes a person's antibodies less effective at killing the virus. Viral mutations help a virus to disguise parts of its recognizable traits, so the pathogen might have an easier time slipping past immune protection. These mutations can also tell us what we don't know...what lies ahead, in terms of other mutations and/or future pandemics.

The job for all of us now is to, first and foremost, survive; stay alive; and be as healthy as possible. Our second "job" is to learn and educate ourselves as much as we can; empowering ourselves with better understandings on how to ask the "right" questions; where to go for credible; factual information that we can trust; and to "personalize" the pandemic, by learning exactly what is necessary for us and our family to be safe and protected during this, and future pandemics...rest assured, there will be others. None of the experts can predict when; but they all agree that it's not if, but when. Among the many options this pandemic is providing for us to "learn", we are being introduced to a range of new questions, as a result of the introductions of mutant variants.

Mutations in viruses -including COVID-19 - are not new, nor were they unexpected. All RNA viruses mutate over time, some more than others. We are all familiar with how flu viruses change often, which is why you get a new flu vaccine every year.

When viruses mutate, generally, they either kill the virus (a type of "virus-suicide") or they can have no effect whatsoever on the normal behavior of the virus. To date, we are seeing variants (or mutant strains) from the United Kingdom; South Africa; and Brazil, all hitting the United States at the same time while we're battling furiously against the rage of the initial version of COVID-19. Now, there are technically four different strains of a deadly virus circulating. Scientists initially felt there was no cause for concern about the vaccines being distributed not being effective against emerging mutations after hearing of a mutant strain being reported in United Kingdom. South African officials noticed, however, that their mutant strain not only appeared to make the virus more able to spread (or transmit), and more capable of evading the immune system's response; alarms bells sounded when the antibodies produced in people who had previously recovered from COVID did not completely neutralize a variant.

This mutation phenomena became even more concerning when, contrary to all prior global clinical experience with the virus to date, researchers reported, for the first time that the mutant strain shows initial indications that it has the ability to evade the vaccine.

News of this has caused mixed reactions from different stakeholders.

You see, when this thing first made its' appearance, public health experts and scientist knew it would be bad, but they felt that at least it would be stable. As it turns out, they were only half right; it is bad, but it is anything but stable.

Pfizer and Moderna, have been reluctant to support any changes to their respective vaccination schedules. On the face of it, this position seems sensible; yet under current circumstances, it is dangerously overcautious. Some researchers and scientists think more lives would be saved by providing just one dose of the vaccine as soon as possible, or as others think, maybe we should provide just one dose of the vaccine to all people who face the highest risk of dying from Covid-19, whoever they are, for whatever the reason.

With all of the uncertainty surrounding mutations of COVID-19, the last thing we need to do is to minimize the potential of the vaccines to control this pandemic. We don't have to worry that the mutation will make the existing vaccines available useless. The vaccines available now have what's known as a polyclonal response, causing armies of antibodies to attack different parts of the virus. When the virus starts to mutate, causing changes to any of those target sites, however, this increases the potential for the vaccine to be less effective, or not work at all. There is growing concern among scientists who think the coronavirus could eventually change so much that the vaccines could reach a pint of providing no immunity.

The more that people are protected from the virus - either through vaccination or infection - the more evolutionary pressure that puts on the virus to survive by mutating. Even though it would take years to reach that point of evolutionary mutation, vaccine makers are confident that they can modify their formulas to match a newer variant.



In the spirit of empowering the community with adequate information to make informed decisions, keep in mind that we are not helpless, we could wipe COIVD-19 out, if everyone wore a mask for 4 weeks.

Remember, I'm not a doctor. I just sound like one! Take good care of yourself and live the best life possible!

Glenn Ellis, MPH is a Visiting Scholar at The National Bioethics Center at Tuskegee University and a Harvard Medical School Bioethics Fellow. He is author of *Which Doctor?* and *Information is the Best Medicine*. Ellis is an active media contributor on Health Equity and Medical Ethics. For more good health information visit: www.glennellis.com

The information included in this column is for educational purposes only. I do not dispense medical advice or prescribe the use of any technique as a replacement form of treatment for physical, mental or medical problems by your doctor either directly or indirectly.

Are You a Young Person Worried About Your Housing?

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

Benefits Include:

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

Am I Eligible for Centralized Diversion Fund?

To request CDF, you must be:

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

For More Info, Contact:

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



COVID-19 Resources & Information

COVID Vaccine Location - Washington

<https://vaccinelocator.doh.wa.gov>

QUESTIONS ABOUT COVID-19?

CALL THE WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH:

1.800.525.0127

press #

or visit srhd.org/covid19

HEALTH DISTRICT

Covid-19 Small Business and Nonprofit Legal Clinic

Communities Rise offers free 60-minute legal clinic consultations by phone or video conference for small businesses and nonprofits with 50 or less employees who have been negatively impacted by Covid-19.

We will only be giving general legal advice and will not be filling out application forms for Covid-19 relief programs.

Intake form: <https://communities-rise.org/covid-19-resources/legal-inquiry>

Free resources: <https://www.smallbizhelpwa.com/resources>

REIMBURSEMENT FOR COVID FUNERAL EXPENSES

FEMA is reimbursing up to \$7,000.00 for COVID-19 funeral expenses incurred after January 20, 2020. FEMA will begin accepting applications in April.

If you know anyone who paid for a funeral due to COVID-19, please pass this information to them and advise them to keep their funeral documentation.

For more information, please visit this website: COVID-19 Funeral Assistance: <https://www.fema.gov/disasters/coronavirus/economic/funeral-assistance>

Are you a tenant facing eviction, or a property owner dealing with non-payment of rent?

If you live in Clark, King, Pierce, Snohomish, Spokane, or Thurston County, find out how the Eviction Resolution Program can help you.

About the Program

The "Eviction Resolution Program" (ERP) allows tenants and landlords to meet with an impartial mediator before an eviction lawsuit is filed. The ERP is free to the tenant and landlord.

Participating in the Program

After the state eviction moratorium ends:

- Landlords must give tenants the option to participate in the ERP before the landlord can file an eviction lawsuit in court.
- Tenants may choose whether or not to participate in the ERP.
- If a tenant chooses to participate, the landlord must participate.
- The tenant has a right to be represented by a lawyer. A lawyer may be provided free of charge.

About the Process

- A neutral third party early resolution specialist (ERS) with a Dispute Resolution Center (DRC) facilitates the ERP process.
- The ERS will try to connect tenants to any available rental assistance.
- If the tenant does not participate in the ERP, or if the ERP is unsuccessful, the landlord may file an eviction lawsuit. The tenant may ask a lawyer for help defending them in an eviction lawsuit. There are free Eviction Defense Clinics and Housing Justice Projects in each of these counties.

WASHINGTON COURTS

For more information www.courts.wa.gov/EvictionResolutionProgram



COVID-19 VACCINE ELIGIBILITY AND LOCATION OPTIONS

Am I eligible?

Find out by visiting the Washington state PhaseFinder at findyourphasewa.org

NO

YES

Not eligible yet?

Have patience, we will all get our turn.

Print your eligibility verification form from findyourphasewa.org (screenshots are acceptable)

Call your healthcare provider to schedule an appointment. Unable to get an appointment or do not have a provider? Go to next step.

Go to doh.wa.gov and click on "Vaccine Locations". Or call 800.525.0127. Unable to get through? Call an alternate line at 888.856.5816. Still unable to get an appointment? Go to next step.

Go to chas.org/covidvaccine. This is the scheduling web site for the Spokane Arena mass vaccination clinic.

Still unable to get an appointment? Please be patient and continue to try the options above.

DON'T FORGET, WE ALL STILL MUST:

Wear our masks

6 Feet

Keep our distance

Wash our hands

SPokane REGIONAL HEALTH DISTRICT

covid.srhd.org/vaccination

Spokane Regional Health District assures non-discrimination in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. To file a complaint or to request more information, reasonable accommodations, or language translations, contact 509.324.1501 (TDD 509.324.1464) or visit srhd.org.

FACING EVICTION?

Apply for the SCBA Volunteer Lawyers Program's



EVICTON DEFENSE PROJECT

"The pandemic has been tough, especially for black and brown communities who have been hit especially hard by unemployment and health issues. If you are facing eviction, please contact the VLP for help today!"

- Natasha Hill, Spokane Attorney

APPLY NOW

www.SpokaneVLP.org

509.477.2674

1116 W Broadway, 4th Floor Annex

ANEW uses RISE Up Program to Help Shift Construction Culture to be More Inclusive

SEATTLE – As the construction workforce becomes more diverse, companies are challenged to create a working environment that fosters tangible safety, cooperation and trust between all workers, which makes employees more productive in the process.

ANEW has stepped up to meet that challenge and effect change by creating the RISE Up Program, which is a Respectful Workplace campaign designed to shift the culture of construction to be more inclusive for a diverse workforce.

“As an organization with a mission to place more women, LGBTQIA+ and BI-POC into the construction trades, we found it disheartening to acknowledge that these individuals faced challenges to success,” said Karen Dove, ANEW’s Executive Director. “In an effort to change this trend, RISE Up was created to change the number one reason people leave the industry – the culture.”

In a recent survey conducted in Seattle, 72 percent of workers stated they had seen or experienced harassment, hazing or bullying on their job site in the past year.

“In 2020, nearly 20 reported incidents of flagrant racism took place on construction jobsites throughout North America, from nooses hung where workers of color would find them, to racist screeds of graffiti spewing hate,” according to a Construction Dive magazine article published Oct. 23, 2020. Harassment, hazing and bullying is happening across the country.

RISE Up – Respect, Inclusion, Safety and Equity in the Construction Trades – was created in an effort to shift the culture of construction to one that is more inclusive to a diverse workforce. It was created specifically for the construction industry and is based on the values of safety, productivity and workforce retention.

Bottom line, the industry is changing, and jobsite culture needs to change, too.

Best practices show that, to shift the culture, there needs to be an intentional and ongoing internal commitment to educate



leadership, form a diversity and inclusion committee, train the team, listen to employees, provide mentorship and leadership opportunities and measure the results.

RISE Up can help support an organization’s commitment to an inclusive workplace. ANEW, and affiliate organizations, provide support throughout the process – from technical assistance and training, to employee surveys and educational materials – the team at RISE Up works to support an organization's goals through a customized plan.

Organizations are encouraged to begin their journey today- training managers and staff, creating a mentorship program, or starting a diversity and inclusion committee. Whatever they do, organizations are encouraged to something. It is time we all RISE Up.

For more information on RISE Up, contact riseup4equity@anewaop.org. For more information on ANEW visit: anewaop.org.

HEAD START TO THE CONSTRUCTION TRADES

ARE YOU SICK OF LIVING PAYCHECK-PAYCHECK?
ARE YOU READY TO TAKE CONTROL OF YOUR LIFE?
HERE IS THE ANSWER YOU'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR!

HCT offers **FREE** training that can help you obtain a living-wage career.

- Each six-week training consists of:
- Hands-on construction training
 - Life skills
 - Employment skills
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CLASSES ARE ONGOING
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MONDAY-FRIDAY, 9AM-3PM



SPOKANE, WA AREA RESIDENTS ONLY

VIEW UPCOMING TRAININGS & SUBMIT
AN ONLINE APPLICATION AT:
WWW.HEADSTARTTOCONSTRUCTION.ORG
Please email thawkins@nwagc.org with any questions.

Spokane Black Business Directory



- ▶ **Search.**
- ▶ **Find.**
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Welcome to:
BlackSpokane.com

The Carl Maxey Center is excited to share Spokane's Black Business Directory at www.BlackSpokane.com. The businesses are listed in alphabetical order and searchable by category.

This is just the beginning. Our goal is to eventually make this a comprehensive snapshot of Black Spokane, including Black businesses, organizations, professionals, churches and events.

If you are an African American professional or a business that is at least 51% Black owned and would like to be included in the directory, please contact the Carl Maxey Center at carlmaxeycenter@gmail.com.

To add your business call 509-795-1886.

Spokane Falls Community College's Audio Engineering Program

Bringing sound, music and passion to the Spokane area for over 15 years

By Jonathan Glover

Daniel Gephart, like most people his age, loves music – pretty much anything but opera. Extra kudos if it's hip hop, rap, country or EDM (electronic dance music).

But even more so, the second-year Spokane Falls Community College student – who will soon graduate with an Associate of Applied Science in audio engineering – has learned that he loves sounds. Big sounds, small sounds. Electronic sounds. All of them.

"I've learned a lot about the gear and equipment," said Gephart. "And I've learned a lot of mixing techniques and song making techniques."

Since 2006, the Falls campus has graduated hundreds of audio engineering students, all of them proving a mastery of recording, editing and mixing music, says Steve Gamberoni, an audio engineering instructor. Many of those have transferred to universities for more education; others have transitioned into the field post-graduation.



"Sounds just make me happy," the 21-year-old said. "I like them. They're interesting."

That revelation was one of many Gephart made at the Falls over the past two years while studying the technologies and intricacies of aural experiences, in a two-year program that's one-of-a-kind in Eastern Washington.

Fresh out of high school, he could tell you that he liked a certain song or genre of music, but the description may have ended there. Now he can say exactly why, and he can tell you how it's made.

According to the Bureau of Labor and Statistics (BLS) employment predictions, jobs for sound engineering technicians will increase by about 9 percent, about as fast as average for all occupations, from 2012-2022.

Potential positions include: studio recording/mix engineer, editor, live sound engineer, AV technician, Foley mixer, MIDI programmer and more.

Gamberoni says income can vary within the industry, with starting hourly wages ranging from \$10 to \$22, while successful audio engineers and producers can earn well over \$100,000 a year.

"If it's something you like to do, here's a way to get paid to do it," Gamberoni said. "This has been pretty consistently popular."

What's more, the Falls has a matriculation agreement with Eastern Washington University. Students who get at two-year degree can transfer into the Bachelor of Arts program in music technology and entrepreneurship.

For many students, that's a logical and likely next step. For Gephart, that's a maybe. While he's enjoyed his time

in education – and with just a quarter ahead of him before graduation – he's not quite sure what's next after the Falls.

It could be more school. It could be a job. Regardless, the lessons he's learned – not to mention the software he's soon to be certified in – will be a helpful stepping stone no matter where the road takes him.

"It's been interesting. That's for sure," he said. "It's certainly been worth it."

Learn more at Spokane.edu



Canopy Credit Union Launches Justice Roast Fundraiser!

Canopy Credit Union and Ladder Coffee have formed a new coffee collaboration, the Canopy Credit Union Justice Roast!

Proceeds from sales of the Justice Roast will go to support non-profit organizations in Spokane. The Carl Maxey Center, located in Spokane's East Central neighborhood, will be the first recipient of profits.



Both Canopy Credit Union and Ladder Coffee care deeply about supporting non-profits that are engaging in social justice work.

Through their two shared locations in Spokane Valley and North Spokane, Canopy & Ladder aim to provide an approachable and welcoming place for EVERYONE in the community.

Stop by and buy a bag of the Canopy Credit Union Justice Roast at any Ladder Coffee location between April 1st – June 30th and 30% of the proceeds will go directly to the Carl Maxey Center!

30% goes to support the Carl Maxey Center from April 1 - June 30!



Build a Community Where All

Children are Valued, Nurtured, and Protected

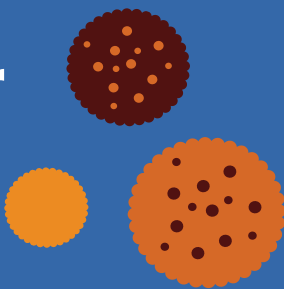
Five small acts that can add up to big change:



1. Surprise a New Parent

Place diapers or a homemade goodie on their porch!

2. Get to Know Your Neighbors



3. Vote

Educate yourself about proposed policies and bills that will impact children and families. Talk to your representatives from city, county, state and federal offices.



4. Offer to Help Watch Someone Else’s Kids

If/when you can and only if you feel safe.

5. Learn and Share the “Ages & Stages”

The two-year-old having a meltdown – yep, that’s normal. Offer a smile to the parent and comforting words to the child. Remember, learning to control emotions is a skill that is learned over time.



Find out more about Child Abuse and Neglect at srhd.org/projectpinwheel

Spokane Regional Health District assures nondiscrimination in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. To file a complaint or to request more information, reasonable accommodations, or language translations, contact 509.324.1501 (TDD 509.324.1464) or visit srhd.org. // Created March 2021

Black Press Week Shows Power of African American Newspapers

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Newswire Senior National Correspondent @StacyBrownMedia

(Blackpressusa.com) The National Newspaper Publishers Association Fund's (NNPAF) first virtual Black Press Week presentation proved an excellent elixir for those seeking valuable information as the coronavirus pandemic continues.

With the theme, “Black Business Challenges Responsibilities and Opportunities Amidst COVID-19 Pandemic,” Black Press publishers, readers, viewers, sponsors, partners, and anyone else tuning in were enlightened about overcoming adversities on many levels.

“We will have informative workshops,” promised Pluria Marshall Jr., the NNPAF Chair and CEO of Marshall Broadcasting Group. Marshall and his colleagues delivered.

In the opening workshop titled, “Business, Politics and Public Policy: Implications for Black-owned Businesses and the Black Press,” House Majority Whip James Clyburn (D-S.C.) and Congressman Dwight Evans (D-Penn.) declared the value of small businesses and members of the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA).

“Small businesses, particularly Black-owned, are the backbone of the economy,” Evans declared.

“The American Rescue Plan recognizes that and makes grants and loans available to small businesses, including the Black Press, and that is a major step. President

Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris have shown the kind of leadership and understanding the needs of getting this economy back – if not better.”

Clyburn admonished viewers about the value of COVID vaccines in the African American community.

“Protect your children and your grandchildren, protect those who you come in contact with,” he stated in discussion with Real Times Media President and CEO Hiram Jackson.

He noted that some would experience side effects of some sort, but each of the three vaccines offers a 95 percent rate of effectiveness.

“If you have a 95 percent chance – I would play the lottery every day if I had a 95 percent chance of winning,” exclaimed Clyburn, who received the NNPAF’s Newsmaker of the Year Award.

The family of George Floyd also appeared to accept a special NNPAF award.

“I want to thank the NNPAF and all the publishers of the Black Press for helping people across the nation and the world to keep the spirit and legacy of George Floyd alive,” said Philonise Floyd, who was flanked by a younger brother, Rodney, and nephew Brandon Williams.

Black Press Week partners included General Motors, Pfizer Rare Disease, RAI Services Company, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Sponsors included Wells Fargo, AARP, the American Petroleum Institute, Zillow, the



U.S. Census, and the Facebook Journalism Project.

A Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation-sponsored education forum included John B. King, the former U.S. Education Secretary, and current president and CEO of the Education Trust.

“The education gap has widened during the pandemic, which already disproportionately has affected communities of color,” King uttered during a conversation about education equity with NNPA President and CEO Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr.

“Education saves lives. If not for the phenomenal New York City school teachers who gave me hope and purpose, I would be dead or in jail,” King declared.

Darrell Green, the SVP of Southeast Small Business Development for Wells Fargo Bank, provided insights that could help businesses overcome challenges during and after the pandemic.

Atlanta Voice publisher Janis Ware hosted an “Alternative Funding for Black Press Publishers” forum with Lea Trusty, Lasharrah S. Bunting, and Vincent Stehl.

The NNPAF also paid tribute to one of the legends of the Black Press – celebrating the legacy of and inducting the late Carter Walter Wesley into the Black Press Archives and Gallery of Distinguished Black Publishers. The Archives and Gallery are housed at the Moreland Spingarn Research Center at Howard University.

“We acknowledge and salute the historic contributions to the Black Press of America by Carter Walter Wesley,” Marshall, the NNPAF Chair, exclaimed during the virtual ceremony.

“We will always hold dear in our hearts not only our memories of the outstanding contributions of Carter Walter Wesley. We also know that today, it is important to remain vigilant and committed to his example of leadership and courage to be the trusted voice of Black America,” Marshall proclaimed.

“We are honored to install Carter Walter Wesley into the Black Press Archives and Gallery of Distinguished Black Publishers.”

Wesley, who pushed for voting rights and weighed a campaign against systemic racism, married Dorris Wooten, and the couple reared three children. Wesley died in 1969 at the age of 87. The ceremony included a touching video about Wesley’s inspiring life and career.

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ARE YOU PREPARING FOR THE ECONOMY TO RECOVER?

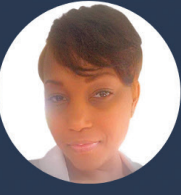
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BLACK-OWNED BUSINESS Excellence

Black-Owned Business Excellence is a collaboration of more than a dozen organizations coming together to support, promote, educate and elevate businesses that are owned by underserved business owners. We have organized a collective calendar of events focused on the advancement of BIPOC businesses.

April 6, 2021 - **Building Financial Strength in Your Business** - Learn about business tools, resources, and financing opportunities that strengthen Black-Owned businesses in Washington state.

May 4, 2021 - **Upgrading your Business Entity** - Come and learn the benefits of each business entity and get armed with information that will help you ascertain if your business structure is right for you. Ensure your business is legitimate with the proper business licenses and registrations for contracts, certifications, and even grants.

August 3, 2021 - **Fund Your Business Growth** - Come and identify ways to maximize your cash flow and ensure you have the necessary working capital to continue operations. Learn about business credit and other sources of financing to expand, start and maximize your business development.

November 9, 2021 - **Stimulate Your Marketing Strategy** - Focus your marketing, branding, and advertising to reach your target audience. Enhance your marketing strategy to be prepared for holiday shopping and the new year with multiple channels and delivery methods.

February 1, 2022 - **3rd Annual Black-Owned Business Excellence Symposium**

For more information or to register visit:
<https://sites.google.com/wsbdc.org/wsobe/home>

Study Finds That Black Women Who “Hunker Down” in High Violence Areas Have Altered Genes in Immune Cells

Reprinted from the *Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* (jbhe.com)

The chronic stress of living in neighborhoods with high rates of violence and poverty alters gene activity in immune cells, according to a new study of low-income single Black mothers on the South Side of Chicago conducted by researchers at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, the University of Kentucky and the University of California, Los Angeles.

The changes in stress-related gene expression reflect the body’s “hunker down” response to long-term threat, a physiological strategy for lying low and considering new actions rather than launching an immediate “fight-or-flight” response. This has implications for health outcomes in communities of color and other marginalized populations.

“The question we asked is, how does stress get under the skin to affect health and wellness? We wanted to hear the stories of low-income single Black mothers on the South Side of Chicago and really try to understand what it’s like to live in neighborhoods with high levels of violence and how it affects these women,” said co-author Ruby Mendenhall a professor of African American studies and sociology, and the assistant dean for diversity and democratization of health innovation the College of Medicine at the University of Illinois.

Researchers surveyed and interviewed women from high-violence neighborhoods. They shared stories, filled out stress assessments and gave blood samples. From the women’s accounts and



surveys, as well as from police records of violent crime, the researchers measured levels of stress related to racism, poverty, and neighborhood violence. Then, the researchers studied how genes related to stress and immunity were expressed in white blood cells, called leukocytes, found in the participants’ blood samples.

“Leukocytes are part of the immune system. They become activated to help fight disease and infection, and also respond to certain stress hormones, and that means their genes are good indicators for the effects of stress on health and well-being,” said study co-author Gene Robinson, a professor of entomology at the University of Illinois.

The study, “Transcriptomic Analyses of Black Women in Neighborhoods With High Levels of Violence,” was published in the journal *Psychoneuroendocrinology*. To access the study visit: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0306453021000482>

Happy Birthday Mrs. Noble!

On this special day that God has allowed you to see, may you know that you are Loved beyond measure by many. Your labor throughout the years through nursing, church ministry, senior program at the center and family and friends to many is appreciated. Most of all we your children thank you for all that you have done for us. When God made your mold, the mold was broken and there will never be another you.

Happy Birthday

Love Robert, Rhonda and Sherri

WE'RE READY TO SEE YOU NOW.

PLEASE CALL US TO SCHEDULE YOUR ANNUAL SCREENING MAMMOGRAM.

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way we work. We've adapted to minimize health risks to our patients and staff and ensured our teams have the personal protective equipment they need to perform your exam in the safest most effective way possible. Ask us about evening and weekend appointments. Call 509.455.4455, or visit inlandimaging.com/schedule.

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Michael P Anderson Scholarship Applications Due April 10

Lieutenant Colonel Michael P. Anderson was born on December 25, 1959 in Plattsburgh, New York to Barbara and Bobby Anderson, but he always considered Spokane, Washington his hometown. He graduated from Cheney High School in Cheney, Washington in 1977 and went on to earn a Bachelor of Science degree in physics and astronomy from University of Washington in 1981.

After graduation, Mr. Anderson was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the United States Air Force. In 1986, Lt. Anderson was selected to attend Pilot Training. He earned a Master of Science Degree in Physics from Creighton University in 1990.

In December of 1994, Lt. Anderson was selected by NASA, and later reported to the Johnson Space Center in March of 1995. During his year of training and evaluation, Lt. Anderson qualified as a Mission Specialist for flight crew assignment and logged over 539 hours in space.

Lt. Colonel Michael P. Anderson died on February 1, 2003 when the entire crew of the Space Shuttle Columbia perished during re-entry, 16 minutes prior to landing. Lt. Colonel Anderson is survived by his wife Sandra Hawkins and two daughters who now live in Houston, Texas.

Spokane's tribute to Lt. Colonel Michael P. Anderson is an 8-foot, 600-pound bronze sculpture by Dorothy Fowler that was unveiled during a dedication ceremony on June 12, 2005. Anderson is kneeling in his space uniform with his helmet on his knee and a dove in his hand. There are three significant meanings to Anderson's pose. The kneeling position represents humility; the uplifting arm and heavenward gaze is faith; and releasing a dove of peace is inspiration.

A mantra of Lt. Colonel Anderson was, "If you apply yourself, work hard to be persistent, and don't give up, you can achieve anything you want to achieve."



Lieutenant Colonel Michael P. Anderson Spring 2021 Scholarship Requirements:

The NAACP is accepting applications for this year's second round of Lt. Colonel Michael P. Anderson Scholarship awards. This year's scholarship recipients will be selected from students planning to enroll in the fall of 2021 in a post-secondary two-year or four-year college, university, vocational or technical schools, or in an apprenticeship program. There will be two (2) \$2,000.00 scholarships that will be awarded on or before May 1.

The application requirements are listed below, and the information must be typed.

A cover letter should be submitted with your full name, age, address, parent(s) names, address and phone numbers. Additional information may be added on awards, accomplishments, honors, outstanding achievements, organizations, etc. Please include information on community service.

Lt. Col. Anderson's mantra as stated above was, "If you apply yourself, work hard to be persistent, and don't give up,

you can achieve anything you want to achieve." Please write how his mantra is reflected in your life, by identifying your dream, how you plan to achieve it, and how it will positively impact others. **The essay must be typed, 12-point font, double-spaced, and written in 500 words or less.**

Student must hold a cumulative GPA of 3.00 or higher or have received their GED. Student must submit documentation of the cumulative GPA, an apprenticeship/technical program**, and/or a college transcript. An unofficial copy of the high school transcripts must be included with the application, however, if your application is chosen to receive the scholarship, an official sealed transcript must be submitted within one calendar year of award in order to receive scholarship funds.

** For those who are a part of an apprenticeship or technical program, please submit documentation of enrollment, description of the program, and if already enrolled verification of progress to this date.

Two (2) letters of recommendations must accompany the application. One letter must come from a school administrator, teacher, or school counselor. The second letter may come from a minister from your religious establishment, volunteer organization or a similarly qualified individual who knows the applicant.

All materials should be received by Saturday, April 10, 2021.

Emailed applications are encouraged. For mailed applications, allow for delayed delivery.

Mail to: Spokane NAACP Branch #1137
ATTN: Scholarship Committee
25 W. Main Ave. Suite 239
Spokane, WA 99201

Email to: SpokaneNAACP@gmail.com

Incomplete applications and materials received after Saturday, April 10 will not be considered for the scholarships. Contact: Amy McColm at educationspokaneaap@gmail.com.

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The 53rd Time Philando Castile was Pulled Over:

The math of police brutality and American racism.

By Shaun King
(Reprinted from thenorthstar.com)

This is Part Four in my new weekly series called ABOLITION where I unpack and explain how we deconstruct and abolish America's criminal, legal, and justice systems - piece by piece.

The United States is a deeply racist place. Racism, bigotry, inequality, discrimination, and hate are features here, not bugs. Racism informs almost every fact of American life - most of all policing, prosecution, and the many systems and structures of mass incarceration. Theoretically, if we drastically reduce racism in all of its forms, we should see some semblance of parity and fairness with the justice system, but here's the problem - racism and bigotry are actually on the rise in this nation.

We are living in one of the most hateful times in modern American history. So, we simply can't count on the reduction of racism to be the way we bring fairness and equality to our justice system. This isn't about me being pessimistic - it's just an honest assessment of where we are right now. So let me tell you why I think we should approach abolition as a math problem.

Philando Castile was a beautiful brother and a peaceful soul. After he graduated from St. Paul Central High School in Minnesota in 2001, he worked for the school district until the day he died. At J.J. Hill Montessori Magnet School, he was a legend. Mr. Phil, as students lovingly called him, was not only their "lunch man," but



The fatal police shooting of Philando Castile

had memorized the names and food allergies of hundreds of students. He would high-five and call them by name each and every day. Kids would enter the school as precocious kindergartners and he would watch them grow up.

But Philando had a painful secret that none of the children or their families ever knew. He had been stopped by local police at least 52 times as he would drive to and from the school and across town. Because some of the police stations didn't even keep accu-

rate data, it's expected that he was actually pulled over by police even more often than that. The final time that police pulled Philando Castile over, let's call it his 53rd known time, would be his last. He was 32 years old.

Let me blunt for a moment. How many times did the police pull you over before your 32nd birthday? If it's anywhere near 53 times, I can all but guarantee that you are not white.

It's not just that America is woefully over-policed - it is - but nobody is policed, prosecuted, surveilled, and jailed more than African Americans. The American numbers are altogether swollen, but the root of the infection is the gross over-policing of African Americans. And while we sadly can't simply extract racism from these systems, what we can do is something almost as powerful - we can make the systems drastically smaller.

Imagine, for instance, that Philando Castile had only been pulled over twice instead of 53 times. My educated guess is that he'd be alive right now. In fact, many Black victims of police violence in America had been harassed by police to the point of exhaustion before their final encounters finally became their last. Eric Garner comes to mind. In the frame below, Eric is unarmed and non-violent. He committed no crime that warranted an arrest and certainly committed no crime that warranted police to do anything close to what they did to him.

But if you've watched the whole video, what you'll remember is that Eric Garner was just devastated by the fact that the NYPD continued to harass him day in and day out. They had been called to the scene for a fight in which he was actually the peacemaker. He told them as much. With his voice trembling he asked them so earnestly why they continued to come after him so often. In fact, seven years before they murdered him, Garner sued the NYPD for their brutality and harassment. It is unrelenting and humiliating.

Continued on Page 27

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Philando Castile

Continued from Page 26



Eric Garner confronted by police

The United States not only incarcerates more people than any country in the world - it incarcerates more people than any country in the history of the world. It arrests more people, monitors and surveils more people, its police pull over more people than any country in the world. We're talking about tens of millions of stops and forced interactions with police per year.

And the single most impactful way to reduce police brutality and mass incarceration across the country is by drastically reducing the number of initial interactions in the first place. It's a math problem.

Over the next few weeks, I'll begin to unpack and explain which stops and interactions can be reduced and give you some practical examples where this is already happening.

About Shaun King

Shaun King is an American writer and civil rights activist who extensively uses social media to support social justice causes. He is co-founder of Real Justice PAC and launched a media site 'The North Star' named after the 19th century anti-slavery newspaper by Frederick Douglass. The site publishes articles, podcast episodes, and videos. Shaun King hosts two podcasts, 'The Breakdown with Shaun King' and 'Married to the Movement' on the site.

About The North Star?

Originally founded in 1847 by Frederick Douglass and Martin Delany to courageously confront the scourge of slavery head-on, The North Star was relaunched in 2018 by Shaun King with the blessing of the family and estate of Frederick Douglass. 174 years after The North Star was first birthed, the mission continues in the tradition of an unapologetic fight for freedom. The weapon of choice? A media outlet that centers the experiences, struggles, and stories of those who exist outside the margins.

The North Start is an independent, Black-owned and operated grassroots media platform for liberation-journalism focused on politics, power, equity, race, policing, mass incarceration, organizing change, and more. The stories are of beauty and pain, success and struggle, written and spoken with uncompromising candor, context, emotion, and culture.

Since relaunching, The North Star brand has produced over 2,000 original articles and 6 original podcast series with over 500 episodes. Subscriptions include full access to Shaun King's daily column, every episode of King's popular daily news podcast, The Breakdown, and every article, commentary, and podcast episode from the North Star team.

For more information about the North Star or to subscribe visit: thenorthstar.com

Bitcoin Continued From Page 27

Bitcoin is a Call Option on the Future Monetary System. It has a Global Network Effect with the Millions that are investing in it and using it and it is a reliable Store of Value. Never before has there been an investment with all 3 of these attributes.

Bitcoin is the Seed of the Future Monetary System and it is ready for Prime Time. Bitcoin is Pioneering a Revolutionary Technology which is breaking the mold and is Disrupting the Status Quo. Bitcoin is the Highest Performing Asset in the History of the Wodd!

My purpose in writing this article is we never received our 40 Acres and Mule and I want to see Black America Prosper and this is an Opportunity of a Lifetime that we have never seen before and I don't want us to miss it.

For all the reasons stated in this article I truly believe "Black America needs Bitcoin".

However, the next step is up to you. Invest whatever you can.

Dollar Cost Averaging (DCA) is an investment strategy of investing on a consistent basis over a period of time.

You can invest in Bitcoin for as little as \$1.00 at a time or as much as you want through an Exchange such as Gemini.com. You can go to: <https://gemini.com/share/nvftas> and set up an account.

To a Profitable Future,
Pastor Otis Manning

PS

Any questions about this article can be directed to: wordoffaith13@aol.com

Disclaimer: This article is not intended to provide Tax, Legal or Investment Advice. This is general information. You should do your own research and consult with your own Advisor before investing.

GRANTS FOR
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Virginia Governor Restores Voting Rights

Continued From Page 1

Gov. Northam's order follows the Democratic-controlled General Assembly's passage for the first time of a constitutional amendment to overhaul the provision that bars felons from voting without the governor's action to restore their rights.

The amendment that would provide for automatic restoration of rights after release from prison must be passed again in the 2022 session and then win majority approval from Virginia's voters to be enshrined in the state's Constitution.

Like his predecessor and would-be successor, Terry McAuliffe, Gov. Northam got around a 2016 Virginia Supreme Court ruling by applying his order to 69,045 felons identified through state Department of Corrections' records rather than creating a blanket order.

Five years ago, the state's highest court struck down as unconstitutional then-Gov. McAuliffe's initial attempt to use a blanket approach to restoring felons' rights. Republicans who controlled both the state Senate and House of Delegates at the time sued to block Gov. McAuliffe's blanket order.

The Republican effort failed after Gov. McAuliffe and his staff simply switched gears and provided restoration of rights individually. Ultimately, Gov. McAuliffe restored the rights of at least 173,000 people before his term ended in January 2018.

Using that individual approach, Gov. Northam, who is in his final year of office and is barred from seeking an immediate second term, went further than former Gov. McAuliffe dared in applying it to felons still under supervision.

Gov. Northam described it as "unfair" to deprive former inmates of their rights once they have served their time.

"Probationary periods can last for years. But that's also time in which a person is living in the community, rebuilding their lives," he stated. "They should be able to exercise those civil rights, even if they are still under supervision."

"Letting these folks vote or exercise other civil rights isn't a threat to public safety," Gov. Northam said in seeking to deflect expected criticism from Republicans and others who consider the action bad policy.

Now running to serve as the state's chief executive again, Mr. McAuliffe was quick to commend Gov. Northam for taking action to rid the state of the felon voting ban that he stated was put in place to "disfranchise Black Virginians."

Mr. McAuliffe, who has said he is proudest of his work to restore voting rights while governor, called restoration "a moral and civil rights issue that speaks to the core of who we are as Democrats and Virginians."

Both of the candidates for attorney general, incumbent Mark R. Herring and Norfolk Delegate Jay Jones, also praised the action.

Kelly Thomasson, state secretary of the Commonwealth who led the identification process of those qualifying for restoration, called the action "a kind of technical change that has a big impact."

Thomasson, who also served in the post during the McAuliffe administration after Richmond Mayor Levar M. Stoney resigned to run for the city office, said that the new order is "about treating people fairly and equally."

Gov. Northam went to OAR of Richmond, a re-entry program based in Scott's Addition, to announce his plan.

Sara Dimick, OAR executive director, is thrilled.

"This change will have a tremendous impact on the people we serve," she stated. "OAR is committed to removing barriers for those who seek to be contributing members of their communities, and we look forward to working with newly eligible individuals to ensure they can and do exercise their restored civil rights."

Across the country, an estimated 5.2 million Americans are barred from voting because of a felony record, according to The Sentencing Project. The nonprofit has found that 1 in 16 Black men and women have lost their rights, or four times the number of white adults.

Gov. Northam's action allows Virginia to join 18 other states that allow felons to vote after release from prison, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures. Nineteen other states require convicts to complete probation or parole before regaining their rights.

Only two states, Maine and Vermont, and the District of Columbia never remove the voting rights of those convicted of felonies. In those jurisdictions, prisoners are allowed to vote.

Virginia previously was among a group of 11 states that either ban felons from voting unless the governor restores their rights or simply remove felons' rights for certain crimes, such as murder.



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Black Women and Sexual Assault

Continued from Page 10

Additionally, there is evidence that sexual trauma experienced by adult Black women can result in more symptoms of PTSD with a greater severity of symptoms than when the trauma happens in childhood.

It often takes time for survivors to report to anyone, let alone to the authorities. There are many reasons why survivors do not disclose traumatic events until long after they occur.

Failure to disclose sexual assault immediately after the event does not mean it never happened. Because of the complex ways in which sexual assault and related coercion and abuse exploit power and control — and, thus, undermine victims’ self-confidence and self-esteem — many victims struggle to disclose an assault, and may even have trouble admitting to themselves that it happened. Victims often blame themselves for the encounter and convince themselves — or are convinced by the abuser — that an assault was not what they thought it was.

Sexual assault is a crime and is not something that should be taken lightly. If you, or anyone you know is experiencing issues or is experiencing any form of sexual violence now, has experienced it in the past, or experiences violence in the future, call the police for help and or reach out to your local sexual assault center for assistance.

Do not be afraid to speak out if this happens to you.

Here are some resources for survivors to care for themselves:

- Call 911 if in need of Emergency Help
- RAINN: Nationally Sexual Assault Hotline: 1-800-656-463, rainn.org
- Women United Against Sexual Molestation: 904-803-3705
- Sexual Assault and Family Trauma (SAFeT) Response Center: 1-509-624-7273, lcsn.org (Spokane)

As a society, we must work together to help ensure that Black women and girls are able to receive the help they need if they are sexually assaulted - regardless of whether they chose to report their abuse.

Organizations that specifically focus on sexual violence within the Black community:

- Black Women’s Blueprint: blackwomensblueprint.org
- Sisters of Color Ending Sexual Assault: sisterslead.org
- Girls for Gender Equity: ggenyc.org

To learn more about the subject read:

- At the Dark End of the Street: Black Women, Rape, and Resistance by Danielle McGuire
- Invisible No More: Police Violence Against Black Women and Women of Color by Andrea Ritchie
- The Historical Roots of the Sexualization of Black Women and Girls: blackburncenter.org

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RAZE: Black American Focused Early Learning

Continued From Page 16

Short-term advantages to quality preschool include students learning that discipline and structure balance with fun. Studies have found that that the number one reason given for preschool expulsion and suspension is that Black students have higher disruptive behavior patterns. Preschool can also assist with improving self-esteem. Praise in early life accomplishments builds positive self-worth.

Many of our students in Spokane are entering an environment where they are typically the only ones who look like them at their schools when compared to both their peers and the school administration. Building self-esteem in our students is vital to not only their educational success but also to preserving our culture.

While quality preschool is a benefit to all, those that benefit the most according to many studies seem to be those that come from low-income families according to the early childhood education zone. Low-income students who do not experience quality pre-school programming are 25% more likely to drop out of high school , 40% more likely to become a teen parent, 60% more likely to not go to college, and 70% more likely to be arrested for a violent crime. By attending a quality preschool program, these same students are more likely to go to college, graduate high school, earn a higher living wage, as well as own a home.

It is our responsibility to provide a firm foundation for our children. We so often talk about leaving a better world for them, but what are we all doing to truly do that. What are we doing to set our students up to not just survive but thrive and lead in the world we will leave to them?

So what is the solution? The solution to this achievement gap and dismantling the pre-school to prison pipeline in Spokane is an early learning programing for us by us. We are petitioning the Washington chamber of commerce to fund three new facilities with a Black American focus. Two early learning and Development facilities and one music and financial literacy school age facility:

Raze- Early Learning and Development Center

Hours: Mon-Fri 5:00a-11:30p

Ages: 4wks-12yrs

Location: TBA

Raze-Early Learning and Development Center-Shadle

Hours: 4wks-5yrs

Location: Morning Star Baptist Church

Music and Financial Literacy After School Program

Hours: Mon-Fri 2pm-6pm

Sat 10am-4:30pm (parent classes)

Ages: 6yrs-17years

Location: TBA

Throughout these programs we will offer curriculum and class environments that infuse a holistic Black American History to the students that attend. We will use culturally responsive teaching strategies that validate and affirm Black culture within the program. While maintaining the belief that the parent is the first and most important teacher, we will commit to honor and incorporate individual parenting values into the child’s day where possible. We will create a culture of futuristic dialogue and experiences as it pertains to higher education, wealth building, career placement and healthy living. We will create an anti-racist culture at these facilities addressing bias and setting high expectations for our students in preparation for kindergarten. Our music and financial literacy program will provide school age care that is culturally engaging and provides real life value and application. Lastly, we will offer male mentor opportunities for Black males by Black males.

How will we achieve this? We need your help!

As we wrap up our data collection, we are still asking the community to complete the survey that can be found at : <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SpokaneCC>. This survey will help us show the need for a center such as Raze in Spokane. Let us know what your experiences have been in Spokane as it pertains to early childhood education and culturally relevant opportunities. Also find us on facebook @Razespokane, share and like the page as well as post any stories that you have that you feel would be beneficial to this cause.

Lastly, we need funding. While we are petitioning for the chamber of commerce to fund this project, we know that as a community we NEED this project. Spokane just posted its report card and kindergarten readiness for Black students entering kindergarten was 40%. Four out of ten of our students are entering kindergarten prepared. WE CAN DO BETTER! Please consider donating to this worthy cause. **Contact Kerra Bower @ kbower@littlescholarselc.com for more information on how to financially support this movement.**

Raze (verb(reyz) to tear down; demolish) is not your typical childcare center. Raze is a call to action! Let’s raze the stereotypes of Black students. Let’s raze the bias that feeds the suppression of quality early education for our children. Raze the narrative of teachers and student peers of differing ethnicities by involving everyone in the movement so that we can RAISE- or lift up the outcomes for our Black students.

Raze is a Black American focused early learning, development center and before and after school program for us by us. This program will not only build the black community but by being inclusive to all people we will build a stronger, more anti-racist, culturally aware Spokane community. Answer the call!

For more information about RAZE contact Kerra Bower at kbower@littlescholarselc.com.



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OUR VOICES

Georgia Businesses Must Stand Against New State Law Suppressing the Right to Vote

By Jesse Jackson

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - In Georgia, Donald Trump’s big lie that the election was stolen has now been turned into bad law — an election law designed to make it harder for minorities and the young to vote. This is, as President Joe Biden stated, the new Jim Crow, a blatant attempt by Republicans to suppress votes so they can hold onto power. This bad law drives a stake into democracy in Georgia. It must be reversed.

The Justice Department is considering going to court. Civil rights groups in Georgia have filed suit. The U.S. House of Representatives has passed the For the People Act that would set national standards for fair elections. Now, businesses and associations must weigh in. When apartheid South Africa suppressed the votes of blacks, an international movement arose to make South Africa a pariah state. Athletic teams refused to travel to South Africa. Companies disinvested. Celebrities refused to perform. Countries enforced sanctions. Eventually, apartheid fell in a peaceful transition to democracy. Georgia’s misguided leadership must feel similar pressure. I have called on Major League Baseball to move the All-Star game from Atlanta. Companies like CNN, Delta, UPS and others with headquarters in Georgia must make their opposition clear.

Celebrities should begin to postpone appearances in Georgia until the law is changed. The WNBA, which played a major role in standing with the Black Lives Matter mobilizations, should join with the NBA and the MLB players’ association to demand the law be reversed. This mobilization is vital because this law is a direct affront to democracy.

Let’s be clear about what is going down. Trump’s big lie was refuted by official recounts, by Georgia’s secretary of state and election officials, and by Trump’s own attorney general. Despite Trump’s direct intimidation, the Republican secretary of state stated the truth: There was no ev-



idence of fraud. The election — and later Senate run-off elections — featured a dramatic increase in turnout with the votes cast and counted fairly.

Led by the governor, state Republicans then claimed that election law changes were needed to “restore confidence,” a confidence allegedly weakened by Trump’s big lie. They then passed a law designed to suppress the votes of those likely to vote against them. Among other things, the law makes it a crime to give water or food to people in line to vote. It ensures that those lines will be long by slashing the availability of drop boxes, limiting early voting and imposing new ID requirements on mail-in voting.

After Democrats won the runoff elections in two Senate seats, Republicans voted to reduce the time for the runoff from nine weeks to four with no clear provision for early

voting, which African Americans use disproportionately. This attack on the right to vote is direct and blatant. Propelled by a massive increase in African American and young voters, Democrats flipped Georgia in 2020, winning the presidential race and taking two Senate seats, including the historic election of the first African American to a Senate seat.

In response, Republicans chose not to broaden their appeal, alter their policies to attract votes from minorities and the young. Instead, they chose to pass a law to make it harder for their opponents to vote. In addition, they punished the secretary of state who stood up to Trump, stripping the power to run Georgia elections from his office and from local counties, transferring it to a state board that will be dominated by Republicans. Instead of celebrating the increase of participation in Georgia, Republicans are intent on suppressing it to keep control.

A former Confederate state, Georgia has a long and shameful history of repressing the Black vote. And now Georgia is just the tip of the Republican spear, with Republican legislators introducing some 253 laws in 43 states to make it harder to vote. This new Jim Crow cannot stand if America’s democracy is to survive.

The U.S. Senate should overcome the threatened Republican filibuster and pass the For the People Act that would provide national standards for fair elections. In Georgia, a massive mobilization is needed to overcome the new obstacles and show that the emerging majority will not allow itself to be suppressed. Major League Baseball and other businesses cannot stay neutral, for that would essentially support the law, voter suppression and the new Jim Crow.

Joining a demonstration against the law, the newly elected Sen. Rafael Warnock stated the simple truth: “Today is a very sad day for the State of Georgia. What we have witnessed today is a desperate attempt to lock out and squeeze the people out of their own democracy.” Now it is time to stand up and make it clear that this cannot stand.

Back to Normal? What's Normal?

By Julianne Malveaux

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - I got my first COVID vaccination last week. No big deal, an achy arm, but otherwise, just like a flu shot. The young lady who administered the shot smiled and said, “after you get your second shot, you can get back to normal.” I wanted to ask her what was normal, but the man in line behind me seemed impatient, so I smiled and made my way out of the store.

I thought about it all the way home, though. What’s normal? I don’t think crowding thirty or forty young people into a classroom is normal. I don’t believe that food lines snaking for blocks is normal. I don’t think that high Black unemployment rates are normal. I don’t think the wealth gap is normal.

I don’t think that more than 400,000 people dead is normal. The inability to formally mourn our departed loved ones isn’t normal. Crazy white people storming the Capitol surely isn’t normal. And conspiracy theorist Marjorie Taylor Green is so far away from normal that she is on the insanity spectrum.

In the ten months since the pandemic hit, we have seen changes in our communications, our employment, our economy, and more. Many of us, reasonably, yearn for the “normal” days when we could sit at a restaurant and have a meal, go to a play or a concert, invite a bunch of folks over to gather. But we should ask ourselves what was normal about our normal. In other words, were we so comfortable



in our world that we didn't look outside our world? We can't miss the food lines now, but there were food lines, too, a year ago. We are focused on disparities now, but those disparities aren't new. Does back to normal mean accepting the inequities and absurdities of life as it was? Somebody tweeted that "Rona was a disruption, and she is an opportunity." I embrace that sentiment (though I had to

do a double-take at "Rona" and pray that nobody chooses to name their child after this virus). This virus is an opportunity for us to scrutinize what we consider normal and how we need to change it.

Let’s start with education and the achievement gap. Students who come from low-income families don’t have the same academic support that others do. They often don't have the technology to do virtual learning or the support to work through their assignments. Too often, their parents are essential workers—nurses, bus drivers, grocery store workers. Do we ever take a look at the people who serve us and notice that they are disproportionately Black and Brown? When we see them do we wonder about their facts of life, about their challenges, or do we know the status quo as "normal"?

Is it normal for teacher's unions and mayors to be so far apart? If we want students back in their classrooms, why can't we vaccinate every teacher and school worker? But the conflict between teachers and elected officials, especially in Chicago, calls for a national conversation with educators, students, and parents. We've heard from everyone but students in this conversation. What are they thinking and feeling? Is any of this normal?

We never saw mask-wearing as standard, and even now, with more than 400,000 dead, some fools refuse to wear them. But here's the real deal –vaccine or not, I'll likely be wearing double masks until the end of the year, and so should you.

Continued on Page 33

OUR VOICES

Black Trauma: America Must Move From Racial Reckoning to an All Out War on White Supremacy

David A. Love, JD

(Blackcommentator.com) If 2020 was the year that White America discovered that institutional racism is a problem permeating society, 2021 must be the year in which the nation begins in earnest to dismantle white supremacy and address the systems of oppression, the unjust laws, policies and practices, and the microaggressions eating away at the souls of Black people, compromise their health and claim their lives.

Most certainly, we will remember the year of the pandemic as an inflection point, a pivotal time in which the evil triplets of coronavirus, economic deprivation and racial injustice joined forces to expose the cruel, cold-blooded America that Black people have always known far too intimately. Many White people participated in Black Lives Matter protests following the death of George Floyd and experienced a heightened political consciousness. Some appeared genuinely gobsmacked over the levels of systemic racism people of color face. And yet, both as individuals and as a collective, White Americans have enthusiastically created toxic environments for Black children, women and men for over 400 years, and continue to foster Black trauma in all facets of their daily life.

Racism murdered George Floyd with a police officer's knee to his neck, just as it killed Breonna Taylor in a hail of police bullets as she lay in her bed. Racism also claimed the life of Dr. Susan Moore, a Black Indiana physician, who accused her White doctors of racial mistreatment weeks before she died of COVID-19. These doctors then accused Dr. Moore of causing her own death and claimed she "intimidated" hospital staff. And America has been treated to a small taste of the harassment, insults and indignities Black people face, such as the son of Jazz musician Keyon Harrold, who was racially profiled, assaulted and falsely accused by a White woman of stealing her iPhone in a New York hotel.

Studies show that structural and cultural racism and individual experiences with discrimination adversely affect the mental and physical health of Black and Brown people, stresses them out and causes them to age faster. In her book, *Black Fatigue: How Racism Erodes the Mind, Body, and Spirit*, Mary-Frances Winters referred to Black fatigue as "repeated variations of stress that result in extreme exhaustion and cause mental, physical and spiritual maladies that are passed down from generation to generation. It is a deeply embedded fatigue that take inordinate amounts of energy to overcome—herculean efforts to sustain an optimistic outlook and enormous amounts of faith to continue to believe 'we shall overcome someday.'"

Exhausted for years, Black people were finally granted permission to speak their truth during the pandemic, when America woke up to years of injustice. Organiza-



tions, companies, educational institutions and houses of worship conducted listening sessions, where Black people poured their outrage while White leaders claimed they had no idea.

All African Americans have personal stories of the racial trauma and accumulated microaggressions they have endured. These include, but are not limited to including underhanded compliments such as being told they are articulate or have "street smarts"; comments on their hair; being told they are intellectually inferior or "we can't find qualified Black employees," or White people in authority telling them not to wear a certain "unprofessional" hairstyle. As a Black man who has experienced his share of microaggressions and racial harassment since childhood, I have come to regard these painful traumatic incidents as life-defining, life-changing moments.

One of those transformative experiences came in my teen years, as a student at Harvard, while I attended the 1987 Harvard-Yale football game. After Harvard scored a touchdown, a white middle-aged alumna turned to me and rubbed my head for good luck. He told me about his white, blond grandson who was held in awe by the Black children at his daycare. "They had never seen anyone like him before," he said. Finally, as if to outdo himself, he asked me, "Do you know what we call your kind of hair? Ear-to-ear carpet!" In a letter to me after news spread of the incident, the man urged me to "reconsider your interpretation of my behavior," claiming he was "both shocked and saddened that what was intended as good camaraderie was interpreted as a racial slur."

After college and throughout my life, I have experienced a constant mix of microaggressions, harassment, gaslighting, conspiracy and outright White supremacist guerilla warfare. Once a White executive even told me, "Don't use your race as a crutch." And yet I am not special. Those experiences haunted me, burned me out and heightened my self-doubt. At one point, I lost much of my enthusiasm, self-confidence and sense of direction, along with my hair, and nearly my mind.

While racism causes Black people, particularly young people to experience depression and low self-worth, they also exhibit resilience when facing racism, and take action, attend protests and fight for racial justice. Certainly, through a lifetime of racial trauma, I became a far stronger person and reinvented myself to help others. I became a human rights activist and journalist, went to law school, worked in government and the non-profit sector, and now teach journalism. Yet, I wonder how much further I would have soared compared to my white peers, in the absence of institutional roadblocks and exposure to racially toxic environments. An over-emphasis on Black resilience ignores the many who perish under the weight of White supremacy, and plays into the American racialized capitalist narrative that the victims of oppression deserve their lot, and must pull themselves up by their bootstraps.

Surely our Black parents and grandparents thought they were making sacrifices to spare us from the hardships they endured. I question whether much has changed.

Before the glow from America's racial justice reawakening dissipates, we must resist the call to convene another diversity and inclusion task force, or hire another point person to handle institutional racism and white supremacy as a public relations embarrassment. If America has any hope of liberating itself from racism—and coming to terms with its original sin and the Civil War it never stopped waging—the country hold truth, reconciliation and justice commissions to allow the victims of racism to tell their stories. And then the country must repair the damage.

Offenders rarely face consequences for their harmful actions. But what do we do when the entire system is at fault?

David A. Love, JD - Serves BlackCommentator.com as Executive Editor. He is a journalist, commentator, human rights advocate and an adjunct instructor at the Rutgers University School of Communication and Information based in Philadelphia, a contributor to Four Hundred Souls: A Community History of African America, 1619-2019, theGrio, AtlantaBlackStar, The Progressive, CNN.com, Morpheus, NewsWorks and The Huffington Post. He also blogs at davidalove.com.

Back to Normal. What Normal? Continued From Page 32

People who have had the vaccine have still tested positive. They still need to wear masks and wash their hands frequently. But too many have made mask wearing a political statement. Our non-mask-wearing former president contracted COVID and got priority treatment and had access to the drug Regeneron, which is not available to the general public. And he still won't wear a mask, emboldening his sycophants.

I really don't know what is normal anymore, but I am sure that if 2019 was normal, we must embrace the abnormal. Or, we need to define the new normal as safe, fair, and equitable. As my anonymous tweeter said, "Rona" is an opportunity for us to check ourselves and maybe get it right. The actions and conduct of those who would lead. If they fail to zealously act in our behalf in times of crisis, we must remove them in times of elections.

Dr. Julianne Malveaux is an economist and author. She can be reached at juliannealveaux.com

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Skilled Technicians

Spokane Forklift and Construction Equipment is a fast-growing, small business based in the Inland Northwest. We specialize in Forklift repairs, sales, & rentals but we work on all heavy equipment, telehandlers, box trucks, semis, etc.

We are currently seeking additional skilled technicians in the Spokane & surrounding areas. Candidates with an aptitude in technical trades & background in field service or heavy machinery are preferred.

If interested, please email your resume to ryan@spokaneforklift.com or drop off at 4907 E Trent Ave. Spokane, WA 99212.



LUTHERAN
Community Services
NORTHWEST

Volunteer Crisis Response Advocate

As a Volunteer Crisis Response Advocate (CRA), you will provide phone assistance and accompaniment to survivors of sexual assault during exams at Spokane area hospitals. You will provide crisis intervention and support to survivors of sexual assault and other crimes, their families, and loved ones.

In 2020, our crisis line received over 3,870 calls. People often make these calls during the hardest moments of their lives. Advocates provide crucial information about medical, legal, and support options following victimization.

Volunteering as a CRA is a great addition to your resume, and you will have a deeply meaningful experience with each shift as you interact directly with callers. You'll learn skills that translate to every workplace and relationship you engage in. You'll also be a part of a fun and compassionate volunteer and staff team.

Training and meetings are typically held at our office. Shifts are worked at home with response to area hospitals when needed. We ask for a one year commitment with at least 4 shifts per month. Shift sign up is on a first come, first served basis at our monthly meetings.

Call or email Volunteer Supervisor Roshelle Cleland at 509-343-5007 or CrisisResponseTeam@lcsnw.org.

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

EMPLOYMENT & BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

We're hiring!

Better Health Together (BHT) believes that bringing together a range of perspectives strengthens our team and community.

BHT's diverse team brings together a unique set of talents and perspectives. Our common thread is that we are passionate about our communities and helping people achieve better health. Join our team of tenacious problem solvers, and let's get to work!

BHT is recruiting for two open positions:

- Outreach Specialist - Access to Care
- Senior Program Manager - Broadband Capacity Building

Benefits include:

- 100% employer paid health, dental, and vision insurance
- Retirement plan with 6% employer contribution
- 6 weeks paid time off
- Flexible work environment

Learn more and apply!
www.BetterHealthTogether.org/Careers



careers: We love our employees and our employees love their jobs!



Canopy Credit Union is looking for purpose driven individuals to join our creative community!

If you are someone who enjoys thinking outside the box, working in an environment that puts people first, and has a passion for serving others, Canopy will be a perfect fit.

We currently have job openings for:

- Community Development Officer
- Phone Center Member Advocate
- General Consideration

Go to canopycu.com/careers to see why Canopy is THE best place to work and apply online today.

Canopy Credit Union is an Equal Housing Lender and an Equal Opportunity Employer that recruits and hires qualified candidates without regard to race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, disability, or veteran status.

With our commitment to building a diverse and inclusive community, the credit union encourages applications from populations underrepresented at Canopy including members of racial/ethnic communities, women, and persons with disabilities.



Downtown - Northside - Spokane Valley
509.328.2900 - canopycu.com
Federally insured by NCUA



DOWNTOWN SPOKANE

DOWNTOWN SPOKANE IS HIRING!

Join a team that takes pride in making downtown a great place to live, work and play.

Permanent and seasonal positions available.

Please go to www.downtownspokane.org/employment for more information and to complete an application.



LEADERSHIP SPOKANE

Office Manager

Passion. The common attribute of those who work for our organization. We are dedicated to serving the diverse leaders of our community.

If you're ready to make a difference, join our team! We are currently in search of an Office Manager to support our mission—Educating and uniting diverse, collaborative leaders to ensure a vibrant Spokane.

If you're ready to support the greater Spokane area and take on this new role, check out our website LeadershipSpokane.Org, and select "Join Our Team!" under the Menu Bar. We look forward to hearing from you!

For questions, call 509-321-3639

EMPLOYMENT & BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES



END FAMILY HOMELESSNESS

by giving your time as a **volunteer** or **staff member**.

www.familypromiseofspokane.org

 **Family Promise**
of Spokane

SRTC
SPOKANE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL

Executive Director

Spokane Regional Transportation Council (SRTC) is seeking qualified candidates for the position of Executive Director.

SRTC serves as the lead agency for regional transportation planning as the Regional Transportation Planning Organization for Spokane County, and federally-designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).

The SRTC Executive Director serves as the administrative leader of the agency, carrying out the goals and objectives of the Board and providing strategic and tactical leadership to organize and efficiently direct transportation planning activities and operations regionally.

SRTC desires candidates with a servant leadership management philosophy, who are committed to diversity, and ensuring that transportation investments are geared to bring economic opportunity to all racial and socio-economic classes.

Experience working with a Board of Directors and prior experience hiring, managing, coaching, training, leading, and developing a professional/technical staff is essential. AICP certification and/or prior MPO experience is ideal.

Complete position information, requirements, and information about applying can be found at: <http://bit.ly/38PPMwz>

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Join Our Team

Volunteers of America is a family, where everyone truly cares and works hard.

To us and to those we serve, all our staff are heroes and we'd love for you to join our ranks!



Health Coverage - Retirement - Flexible Schedule - Paid Vacation

For more information please visit <https://www.voaspokane.org/jobs>

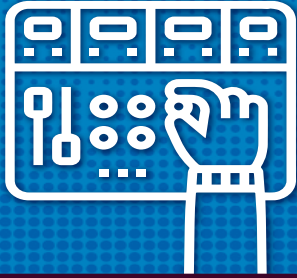
Need a Job?

Get a new job in 9 months

Try a Career in Audio Engineering
Annual Salary starting at \$31,000

Learn more at Spokane.edu

 **Community Colleges of Spokane**



Community Colleges of Spokane does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, sexual orientation or age in its programs, activities or employment. Marketing and Public Relations.

“Diversity Dialogues:”

“I see you. I hear you. I feel you.”

CONVERSATIONS ABOUT RACE AND EQUITY



January

20

Marlon James

5:00pm



January

27

Daudi Abe

6:30pm



February

17

Kevin Young

5:00pm



March

03

Anu Taranath

6:30pm

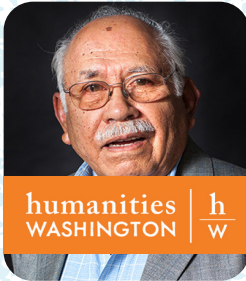


March

10

Tracy K. Smith

5:00pm



April

14

Carlos Gil

6:30pm



April

27

Angie Thomas

5:30pm



May

12

Luis Rodriguez

6:30pm



June

02

Hilton Als

5:00pm



June

09

Omari Amili

6:30pm

Learn more at scc.spokane.edu/HaganCenter

Events are open to the public and available via
livestreaming on YouTube at scc.spokane.edu/live.



I, Too

By Langston Hughes

I, too, sing America.

I am the darker brother.

They send me to eat in the kitchen

When company comes,

But I laugh,

And eat well,

And grow strong.

Tomorrow,

I'll be at the table

When company comes.

Nobody'll dare

Say to me,

"Eat in the kitchen,"

Then.

Besides,

They'll see how beautiful I am

And be ashamed—

I, too, am America.

APRIL EVENTS

APRIL 14
FUSE DIVERSITY BOOK CLUB
The Selected Works of Audre Lorde
(edited by Roxane Gay)
Self-described "black, lesbian, mother, warrior, poet" Audre Lorde is an unforgettable voice in twentieth-century literature, and one of the first to center the experiences of black, queer women. This essential reader showcases her indelible contributions to intersectional feminism, queer theory, and critical race studies in twelve landmark essays and more than sixty poems--selected and introduced by one of our most powerful contemporary voices on race and gender, Roxane Gay.
6:30pm-8pm
Virtual Discussion
Visit the Fuse Book Club Facebook Page:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/fusediversity>

APRIL 19 - 22
A RECKONING: WHITE POWER AFTER THE CAPITOL INSURRECTION
With Kathleen Belew
Author of "Bring the War Home: The White Power Movement and Paramilitary America"
4/19 @ Noon - Keynote with Kathleen Belew
Zoom - <https://ewu.zoom.us/j/95217213684>
4/20 - 1-2:30pm -Teaching a More Inclusive Narrative with local Professor Panel
<https://ewu.zoom.us/j/91984508542>
4/21 - 1-2:30pm - Panel of Local Activists on the Problem of White Supremacy
<https://ewu.zoom.us/j/92960769483>
4/22 - 1-2:30pm - Book Talk with Kathleey Belew on "Bring the War Home"
<https://ewu.zoom.us/j/96294878373>

Sponsored by: EWU College of Social Sciences, Gender, Women's & Sexuality Studies, Jeffers Chertok Memorial Endowed Professorship

TRIVIA NIGHT

with...
CARL MAXEY CENTER!

Hosted By Gonzaga Students!



JOIN US!!!

WHEN:
Tuesday April 13th, 2021 @ 7pm

WHERE: Zoom
Meeting ID# : 988 5625 8891



APRIL 19
NAACP GENERAL MEETING
Join the NAACP for our monthly general membership meeting. For more information please check social media at facebook.com/spokane.naACP or contact the NAACP at 509-209-2425 or visit naacpspokane.org.

****SAVE THE DATE****
JUNE 19
JUNETEENTH COMEDY NIGHT
Presented by the Spokane NAACP and Comedy Cafe
7pm
Bing Crosby Theater, Spokane, WA

REMINDER:
NAACP Michael P. Anderson Scholarship
Application Deadline April 10th
For Details See Page 25

THE CITY OF SPOKANE & LEGACY LEARNERS PRESENTS:

STEAM IN THE GARDEN

CLASSES START
APRIL 13, 2021
GROUP A - 12:00PM-2:00PM
GROUP B - 3:00PM-5:00PM
EMMANUEL FAMILY LIFE CENTER
631 S. RICHARD ALLEN CT.
CLASSES ARE FREE AND OPEN TO PARTICIPANTS IN GRADES 3-8
SPOTS ARE LIMITED. SIGN UP TODAY!
CONTACT LATESHA WOOD
509-842-6958 lwood@legacylearners.org

STEAM IN THE GARDEN ENCOMPASSES SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, ARTS AND MATH CONCEPTS TO BUILD A COMMUNITY GARDEN AND COMPOST BINS ON THE PROPERTIES OF APARTMENT COMPLEXES IN THE EAST CENTRAL NEIGHBORHOOD IN SPOKANE.

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



EWU PRESENTS

2021

VIRTUAL FESTIVAL
COVID-19 EDITION

APRIL 12-18

READINGS
PIE & WHISKEY
PANEL DISCUSSIONS
CRAFT CLASSES

Featuring
Jess Walter, Esi Edugyan,
Aimee Nezhukumatathil,
Robin Wall Kimmerer
and more!

Stream the festival from
the comfort of your home
on YouTube.

For a full lineup visit:
getlitfestival.org

get lit!
PROGRAMS



RIDES FOR SENIORS

Socially-distanced travel to work, grocery stores, medical appointments, and all your destinations.

People age 60 and over can use STA Paratransit vans to travel to destinations without other passengers for only **\$2 each way.**



**CALL 328-1552 TO
SCHEDULE YOUR TRIP**