

THE BLACK LENSTM

NEWS FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

City Council Rejects Police Contract

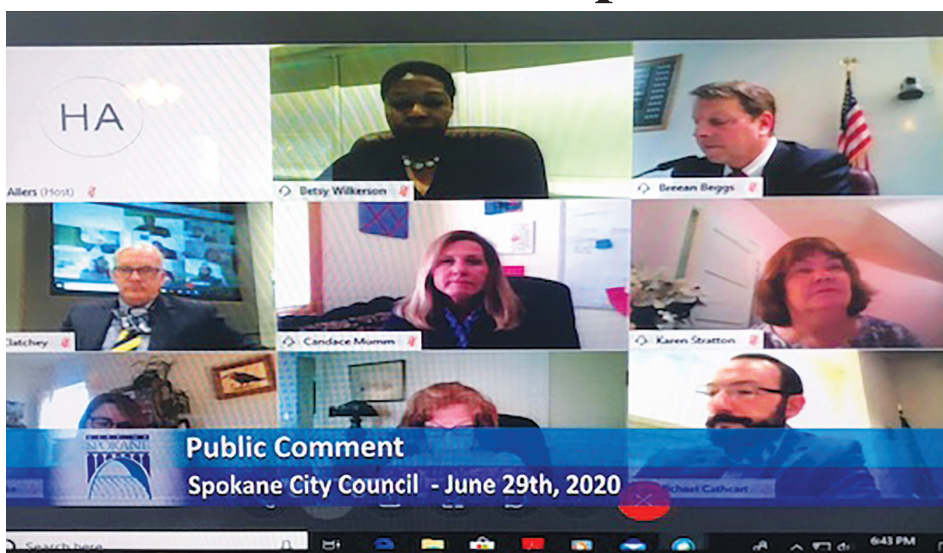
Thousands of E-mails and Calls Prompt 7-0 Vote in Virtual Meeting

By Sandra Williams

It was a decision that seemed to be seven years in the making. The Spokane City Council, on Monday evening (June 29) voted unanimously to reject the current collective bargaining agreement that had been negotiated between Mayor Nadine Woodward (and Mayor Condon before her) and the Spokane Police Guild.

Pushback against the contract was unprecedented, according to Council members, who said they received thousands of e-mails and phone calls. Public testimony, which was held over the phone due to COVID-19 concerns, lasted nearly ninety minutes and was overwhelmingly in support of rejection.

The common theme amongst those opposing the draft contract was that it does not



comply with the city charter which calls for independent investigative powers for the Police Ombudsman, along with the ability to publish closing reports.

In 2013, 70% of Spokane voters approved a city charter amendment to establish a Police Ombudsman Office with the authority to independently investigate alleged police

misconduct. Council members felt that the contract, as presented to them, did not honor the city charter or the will of the voters.

The other sticking point was an addition of a "poison pill," which opponents say gives the Police guild the ability to influence the appointment of the very people who are charged with overseeing them.

All council members expressed their support for police officers and the work that they do for the Spokane community. Several lamented that officers have been working without a contract for three years and as a result have not received a cost of living adjustment to their salary.

Despite that, however, Council President Beggs summed it up. "The contract doesn't comply with the city charter." The community is now waiting to see what will happen if the contract goes into arbitration.

EWU Reverses Decision, Keeps Diversity Office

By Sandra Williams

It appeared to be a done deal. The decision by Eastern Washington University (EWU) President Mary Cullinan to eliminate the Office for Diversity and Inclusion (ODI) and "decentralize" its services, and to also not renew the contract of Dr. Shari Clarke, VP for Diversity and Inclusion seemed cast in stone, with the full support of EWU's Board of Trustees.

Feeling that their voice was not being heard on campus, however, students of color in the Multicultural Coalition of EWU reached outside of the university for help, not really believing though that it would make that much of a difference. What a difference a month makes, however.

In response to a very loud public outcry that followed the Black Lens breaking the story, Dr. Cullinan reversed course, issuing a statement on June 9 reaffirming her "commitment to issues of diversity and racial injustice, and responding to concerns expressed by students, faculty, alumni and community members."

Not only had Dr. Cullinan decided to eliminate the Office for Diversity, she was also considering a separate plan to consolidate the university's diversity academic programs—Africana Studies, American Indian Studies and the Chicana/o/x Stud-



**Shari Clarke, Marilyn Dreis & Kim Davis
The Diversity & Inclusion Team**

ies— into one department. She has reconsidered both. "Our students have expressed how now, more than ever, both of these issues are of great importance to them," Cullinan said. "Their voices matter."

Cullinan announced that the Office for Diversity and Inclusion (ODI) will continue under the leadership of Shari Clarke, PhD, Vice President for Diversity. Clarke will now also serve as the university's Chief Diversity Officer.

"Our office is humbled and overwhelmed by the support received from students, faculty, staff, the broader community, area businesses & government offices and representatives," said Dr. Clarke. "However," she added, "I am hopeful that with this renewed and committed partnership, The Office for Diversity will be fully embraced with the same level of respect, consideration and inclusion garnered by the other university-wide departments."

President Cullinan says that under Clarke's leadership, the Office for Diversity and Inclusion will be "charged with focusing on a broad cultural shift for EWU." Clarke is hoping that the concerns that she has expressed regarding "the organizational structure and the need to fully promote, support and embrace the office" will become a reality.

"Given the myriad of concerns the nation is grappling with on race and multicultural issues, the Office for Diversity & Inclusion is called upon as a pivotal and unifying force during these challenging times," Clarke said.

"Adding the additional title of Chief Diversity Officer sends a clear message," Clarke added, "that this position is one of collaboration across the entire University, as we strive to enhance awareness, increase diversity representation, and create a climate of inclusive excellence."

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ON MY MIND

THOUGHTS FROM THE EDITOR

by Sandra Williams

Still Processing

Whew, this has been some month!

Black Lives Matter Protests in the aftermath of the senseless murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and so many others, have sprung up all across the country, and the world, in an unprecedented outpouring of support for the Black community.



The Black Lens had an insert printed inside of the Spokesman Review, providing a uniquely Black perspective on the protests. (6/7/20).

Eastern Washington University eliminated their Office for Diversity and Inclusion. Then changed their mind and reinstated both the office and the Vice President for Diversity. (6/10/20).

The Spokane School Board adopted a historic resolution to begin the process of addressing systemic racial inequity in the district, something many of us have been working on for decades. (6/10/20).

Spokane Community Against Racism (SCAR) unveiled a Platform for Change during a Juneteenth press conference to define short-term and long-term goals for structural, systemic, and cultural

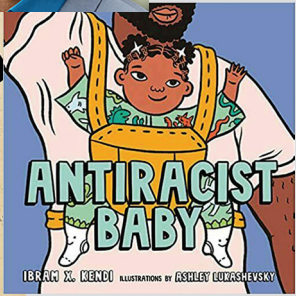
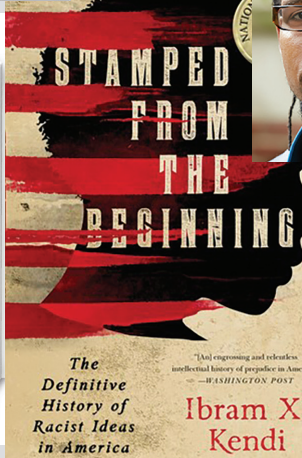
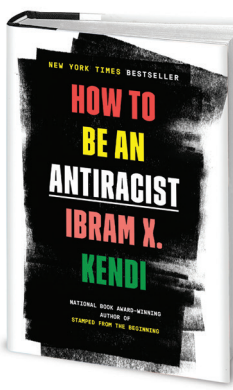
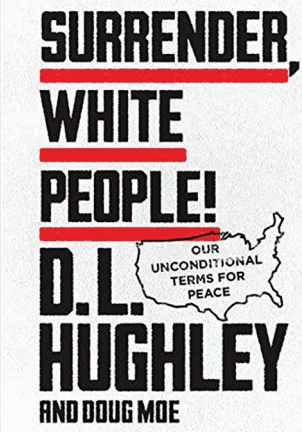
change within the Spokane criminal justice system. (6/19/20)

Twenty-one African Americans representing churches and organizations from around Spokane came together and signed onto a full page advertisement in the Spokesman Review to speak in a unified voice urging the Spokane City Council to reject the current police guild contract. (6/28/20) And the Spokane City Council voted unanimously to reject that contract. 6/29/30.

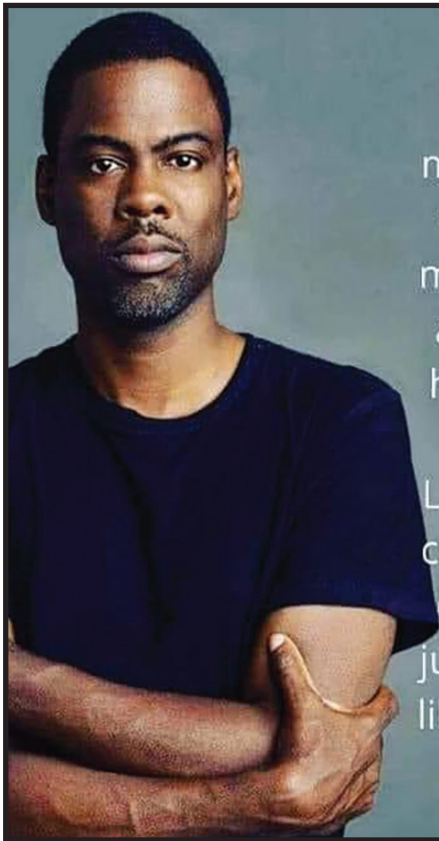
There have been ups and downs. Joy and sadness. Elation and heartbreak. All within a mere four weeks. And I am still processing everything.

So, instead of trying to make sense of it all, so that I can put something in this column, I'm going to just let it all sit here inside of my head and my heart until next month and see what comes out then.

In the mean time, since I have been working my buns off over the past month, I'm going to give you some work to do over the next four weeks as well. Here is some reading for you. Two serious. One seriously funny and one just plain delightful. All of them important. Enjoy!



QUOTE OF THE MONTH



"Bad apple? That's a lovely name for murderer. ... I mean, I've had a bad apple. It was tart, but it didn't choke me out. I know it's hard being a cop ... but some jobs can't have bad apples. Some jobs, everybody gotta be good. Like, pilots. American Airlines can't be like, 'You know, most of our pilots like to land, we just got a few bad apples that like to crash into mountains.'"

- Chris Rock

Source: Facebook

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THE BLACK LENS NEWS

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

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Carl Maxey Center Holds Virtual Annual Meeting

The Carl Maxey Center opted to hold their annual meeting virtually this year in response to the impact that COVID-19 is having across the country and in Spokane. The yearly report back to the community about the organization's work and accomplishments took place over Zoom on Saturday, June 27 at 10am..

The meeting began with a welcome from Betsy Wilkerson, Board President, who thanked the fifty-plus attendees who had logged into the meeting, as well as the elected officials were in attendance.

Following her welcome, Betsy introduced the Carl Maxey Center's Board Members: Walter Kendricks (Vice President), Curtis

Hampton (Treasurer), Terri Ashby-Scott (Secretary) and Wilhelmenia Williams, who Betsy referred to as the Sergeant at Arms. The Board members have all made a commitment to serve in their positions for another year.

Sandy Williams, Executive Director of the Carl Maxey Center, shared a Year in Review, using a powerpoint presentation to highlight Maxey Center accomplishments and activities over the past year.

The highlights included: participating in a Board Development Retreat; co-hosting the annual Black Business Expo with the Black Lens and a get out the vote event at the East Central Community Center; and



partnering with other organizations to host a number of events inside of the building, including a Pop Up Art Show with Shades of Me; a Courageous Conversations discussion about Reparations with Wilburn & Associates; and the Black Prisoner's Caucus Family Summit. The Carl Maxey Center has also made its space available to community groups for focus groups and meetings and has been participating in efforts to revitalize the East Fifth Avenue corridor.

The Year in Review was followed by an acknowledgment of the 370 individual donors who have contributed to the center and grant funding that the center has received in the past year: Smith-Barbieri Progressive Fund; Unitarian Universalist Church; City of Spokane Cultural Center Grant; Washington Census Alliance (Census Outreach); AHANA (COVID-19 Business Outreach); Innovia (COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund); Group Health Foundation (Three Year Grant/General Operations Support) and a huge thank you was given to Andy Billig, Marcus Riccelli and Timm Ormsby for helping the Maxey Center secure the WA State Department of Commerce,

Capital Grant, which is making Phase I of the remodel possible.

Sandy concluded her presentation with an update on the remodel process. The designs are completed. The remodel team is in place: Patsy O'Connor (architect), Deacon Band (General Contractor) and Rusty Pritchard (Project Manager). The Board is securing a line of credit to cover construction costs and the application for building permits should be submitted within a few days. Volunteers will be invited to participate in some of the remodel and that information will be shared with the community.

The meeting was wrapped up by Curtis Hampton offering the financial report, followed by a brief Q&A, and closing remarks from Board President Wilkerson, who thanked every for attending and invited the attendees to "continue to walk with us" on this journey.

The Carl Maxey Center is forming an Advisory Board, community members who are interested in participating are invited to contact Sandy Williams by e-mail at sandy@carlmaxeycenter.org.

A recording of the meeting will be available on the Carl Maxey Center website at carlmaxeycenter.org.

Lowe's Donates Masks to Carl Maxey Center



The Carl Maxey Center offers a HUGE shout out and thank you to store manager Robert Gause of Lowe's on North Division for donating 4,000 disposable masks to the Carl Maxey Center so that we can distribute them to churches and businesses in the community. This will go a long way towards helping us keep our community members safe and healthy as we all deal with the impact of COVID-19.



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From Spokane to Minneapolis

By Victor Jones

I’m a distant son of Spokane, though I was born, and my parents were raised, in rural, segregated North Carolina. My grandmother delivered me in the house my mother was raised in. My grandfather could not read or write and he worked a farm, and lived in a house, he never owned. His occupation would probably have best been described as a sharecropper.

Personally, I have only faint memories of my grandfather. But I do remember him—or rather sensed him—as being strong and kind and angry. It was a quiet anger. I asked my mother about his anger. She told me he carried it within him from being denied opportunities as a young man.

That same quiet anger is something I’ve learned my father also had, though he became highly educated. It was an anger he developed as a young man, growing up in segregated North Carolina. He, too, carried it with him his whole life.

While I lived in Spokane, we had a Black mayor. Jim Chase. Crazy as it may sound today, at the time nothing struck me as unusually significant that my town, which I’m sure must have been at least 95% white—and maybe still is—would have a Black mayor.

Perhaps it was because of how we identified ourselves as a family. We knew we were Black. (Truth be told, my father could “pass,” but certainly not the rest of us) And



we could see we were Black (we owned mirrors) but we were never allowed to use our Blackness as a reason for not achieving. We were taught that we were everybody’s equal: No “yes sir” or “yes ma’am” from the Jones kids speaking to anyone in Spokane.

For most of the citizenry of Spokane, I don’t think Jim Chase was a source of pride. Or diversity. Or progress. I just think people liked him and what he stood for, so they elected him mayor (he won by a landslide). That’s not to say that Spokane was colorblind. Or that our family (or Jim Chase) didn’t have to deal with discrimination and other adversity. Prior to being elected mayor, Chase was president of the Spokane chapter of the NAACP.

I left Spokane in 1985. Now, I live in Minneapolis.

I have been to 38th and Chicago. Ground Zero of our Country’s latest reckoning with race. The most famous address in the State’s history. It’s a powerful experience!

It’s only a short drive, or long walk, from my house to where George Floyd died under the knee of Eric Chauvin. It’s also only a short drive, or long walk, to the neighborhoods where our community has seen both peaceful protest marches and businesses destroyed.

Like everyone I know, and I know people who voted for Obama and people who voted for Trump, I was angered and outraged by the video of Floyd’s killing. And as I think most people know, George Floyd was not the first to die, unlawfully, at the hands of the police in this town. To think our state motto is “Minnesota Nice”.

Now it appears there is a great national awakening of racial injustice brought to life by a convergence of events

which could not have been foreseen only few months ago: A video gone viral, a pandemic locking us in our houses with our consciences, and Trump.

So, where do we go from here?

If we as a community, as a country, in spite of our political differences, can agree Floyd’s murder was senseless and deplorable, how do we agree on a path forward?

This raises another question: What’s “really” going on? I ask that question because I’m not sure I always know. There is so much coming at me. I can read and Tweet and # and watch CNN (or Fox), but sometimes I’m having a hard time discerning what is real.

What I do know is what I want. What Black Americans in this country deserve. I want equality and justice and reform. But I am fearful that anger and unbridled passion may result in a loss of perspective and overtake reason and judgment. It would not be the first time that a movement founded in righteousness crashed and burned because it became too consumed with itself and ruled out (or shouted down, or fired, or humiliated) any voices which it felt were not in total alignment with its vision.

My greatest concern is that anger and “us vs them” may rule the day. If that happens, come November, the majority of people, during that private act of voting, may not vote for equality, justice and reform – they will be afraid of it!

My greatest hope is meaningful change – this is a unique opportunity, it’s truly possible! But it feels like we’re at a tipping point while walking a tightrope.



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The work that provided the basis for this publication was supported in part by funding under a grant with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, HUD. NWFHA is solely responsible for the accuracy of the statements and interpretations contained in this publication.

NAACP UPDATE:



NAACP Executive Committee Member

After serving 22 years of a Life without the possibility of parole sentence, I was released to Spokane Washington in June of 2019 to the only organization that would allow one-who has served so much time-into their re-entry program and that was Revive Re-entry/ I Did The Time.

Within ten days of being released, my Son was slain in a gang related shootout. As I boarded the plane back to California, a place that I have not been since 1996, I questioned my capacity to “view this tragedy up close and remain dedicated to gang violence prevention and intervention”.

Needless to say, I spoke light into a dark place. I chose to use the moment to inspire, rather than perpetuate another's expiration, and now have been working to broker a truce between rival factions concerning the death of my Son.

So, I became even more diligent in my pursuit of peace, justice and social change within our communities, establishing N'STEP® as a viable option for youth who may be 'in risk" and becoming the Lead Credible Messenger agency in this region.

In my capacity with the NAACP Spokane Branch, I've been called upon to make investigation concerning issues of inequality in all aspects of society. I am now addressing work place discrimination and the violation of wage laws as it applies to African American men at a local Company. Work place



discrimination has the same results as violence and the same lasting impact to those already vulnerable and living in poverty.

Immersing myself into the struggle in Spokane, I engaged individuals and organizations that displayed a desire to change the trajectory of their consciousness within this social construct utilizing my philosophy of “Concrete Activism”- groups such as the NAACP, Revive Re-entry/I Did The Time, Occupy Spokane, etc. - and growing relationships with the Native American communities from whose land we garner our resources in this country.

Now we, as a people and a country, are faced with both a new challenge and one whose tentacles reach back into the formative period of this country.....**RACISM!**

On the heels of the Covid-19 pandemic, which in and of itself has revealed the digital divide between African American students and our Caucasian counterparts, police brutality continues to rear its ugly head. The cry-once again being.....**BLACK LIVES MATTER!**

However, do they? And if they do - who do they matter to? And if they don't matter - what are you willing to do to ensure that you not only say "Black Lives Matter" but you are found engaged in activity that promotes the reality that Black Lives Matter?

We find ourselves in a very precarious dispensation of time, wherein we, as a country, have to address authentically and courageously the continued inequalities that plague the psyche of this country.

Time dictates agenda!

Our agenda as a people, and as a country, should be to honor the tragic deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and so many more, by forcing our President, political figures, representatives, organizations, leadership, and each other as individuals, to apply the necessary pressure to the consciousness of this country to recognize that the insensate killing of African American, Hispanic, Native American and all people of color is reprehensible.

And if it happens, that form of cowardice under the color of law will be met with the full force of justice, in order to dissuade others from employing the psychological malady of white supremacy. Lets be clear, it is the cancer of white supremacy that governs our institutions in America. Dictating power relationships between Black and White people.

Of course, Black Lives Matter! However, after that fact is overstood as a reality there must be corresponding and sustaining activity on behalf of ALL Lives that not one aspect of humanity is left behind - for when that happens ALL forms of humanity suffers.

We are inextricably bound on this landmass, in this dispensation of time, charged with the daunting task of leaving racism no quarter, by collectively administering pressure on the consciousness of the country and if we fail, in this time, the repercussion will change the landscape of this country.



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BLACK NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Local, State, National and Around the World

Spokane School Board Passes Historic Resolution



The public testimony lasted well into the night on June 10. From parents and students. Educators and community members. Call after call, with very few exceptions, during the virtual meeting urged the Spokane School Board to adopt a historic resolution, brought forward by a historic school board, majority people of color, who said they were seeking, perhaps for the first time, to address the institutional barriers to racial equity.

Resolution No. 2020-11: A Board Resolution to Establish Equity Policies, calls out racism from the very beginning. "We realize that structural racism is built into the bones of our schools, as well as every structure in society; we have to build anti-racism into the bones in order to increase student empowerment, belonging, value, and hope for the future."

The resolution begins by declaring "Spokane Public Schools will establish equity policies that guide budgetary processes, operations,

and student programming" and will "develop a strategic plan using a racial-equity lens in every goal and objective by Spring 2021."

And goes on to address everything from teacher training, to student voice, curriculum, access to technology, student discipline and workforce diversity.

The most controversial section of the resolution calls for the development of a "new safety strategy" by the fall of 2020 and working with the Spokane Education Association (SEA) and Campus Resource Officers (CROs) to come to an agreement that will "eliminate employees' ability to arrest students."

The School Board voted unanimously to approve and adopt the resolution. What happens now will remain to be seen, with both those supporting and those opposing the resolution watching carefully. But as is stated in the resolution's conclusion, this is just the beginning.

Alliance of Black Women Leaders Launches Fund to Support Washington's Black Community



Seattle, WA — On June 16, a group of anchor leaders announced a first-of-its-kind fund to support the Black community in Washington state. **The Black Future Co-op Fund** launched with over \$2.5 million in committed donations from dozens of corporations, philanthropies, and individuals.

Formed as a powerful response to systemic racism, the Fund aims to respond to the disproportionate impacts on COVID-19, strengthen Black culture, increase resilience to economic and other shocks, and build generational wealth.

"The Black communities across Washington state have long done the work to uplift our communities without appropriate funding and resources. The Black Future Co-op Fund will ensure that we have a strong infrastructure and network for sustainable progress," said Angela Jones, CEO of Washington STEM.

Jones is one of the architects of the Fund, alongside Michelle Merriweather, President and CEO

of the Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle; Andrea Caupain, CEO of Byrd Barr Place; and T'wina Nobles, President and CEO of Tacoma Urban League. All of the Fund's architects are women with long histories of supporting Washington's Black community.

The Fund will invest in a range of areas including health, housing, education, youth development, art and history, economic and land development, and advocacy and civic engagement. According to Andrea Caupain of Byrd Barr Place, the Fund is an acknowledgment of the harm that systemic racism has done to the Black community in Washington state.

"The world has leveraged Black people for profit for centuries. This fund begins to turn that tide," said Caupain.

To learn more about the Fund and to see the full list of inaugural donors, please visit: www.seattlefoundation.org/BlackFutureFund.

Elijah McClain's Final Words

Twenty-three year old Elijah McClain, a massage therapist, who loved to play the violin and would often go to animal shelters to play music for the dogs and the cats, was walking home from a store around 10:30 p.m. on the evening of August 24, 2019 in Aurora, Colorado. Someone called 911 to report a "suspicious person" who was wearing a ski mask and waving his arms.

Three police officers responded to the scene and attempted to subdue McClain, who was listening to music, grabbing him and telling him to stop "tensing up" and threatening to use a dog on him if he didn't "stop messing around."

The officers, who claimed their body cameras "fell off" during the encounter, said that 5 feet 6 inch, 140 pound McClain had "incredible strength" and had attempted to grab one of their guns.

McClean was eventually restrained and placed into a chokehold by one of the officers. Body cam footage that was eventually released shows McClean cry out and vomit as he pleads for help.

The officers requested medical assistance and the medical responders, who arrived about fifteen minutes later, injected McClean with ketamine, an anesthetic. He suffered cardiac arrest during the ambulance ride to a nearby hospital and was declared brain dead the following day.

The three officers involved in the incident were never charged, but after a public outcry on the heels of the killing of George Floyd, Colorado's governor has now ordered prosecutors to reopen the investigation.

Elijah McClain's Words to Aurora Police Officers from body camera footage:

I can't breathe. I have my ID right here. My name is Elijah McClain. That's my house. I was just going



home. I'm an introvert. I'm just different. That's all. I'm so sorry. I have no gun. I don't do that stuff. I don't do any fighting. Why are you attacking me? I don't even kill flies! I don't eat meat! But I don't judge people, I don't judge people who do eat meat. Forgive me. All I was trying to do was become better. I will do it. I will do anything. Sacrifice my identity, I'll do it. You all are phenomenal. You are beautiful and I love you. Try to forgive me. I'm a mood Gemini. I'm sorry. I'm so sorry. Ow, that really hurt. You are all very strong. Teamwork makes the dream work. Oh, I'm sorry I wasn't trying to do that. I just can't breathe correctly.

Excerpts from Snopes.com:

Someone picks up a body camera and McClain can be seen lying on his side with both hands restrained behind his back, and one officer jamming his knee into his torso.

When McClain attempts to roll over to vomit, they shout at him to "stop fighting us."

"If you keep messing around, I'm going to bring my dog out here and he's going to bite you," says an officer standing over McClain.

McClain proceeds to vomit.

"I can't fix myself," he says weakly.

McClain's body goes limp and he passes out.

Eventually one officer asks, "Are you OK?"

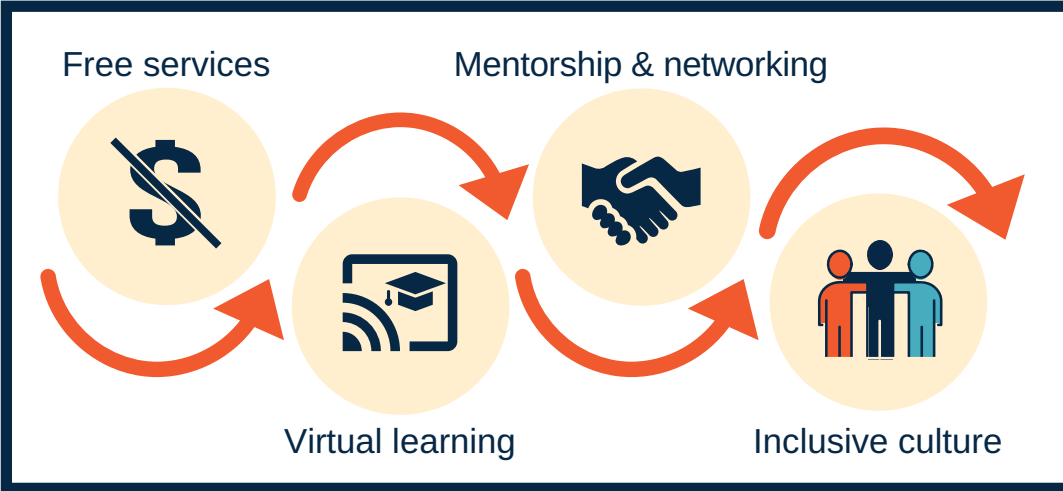
But he's not asking McClain. He's speaking to the officer on top of him.

"Yeah, I'm good," the officer says shifting his weight.

The body camera footage can be seen on YouTube at https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=758&v=q5NcyePEOJ8&feature=emb_logo. The relevant portion of the video starts at around the 12:30 mark. Source Snopes.com.



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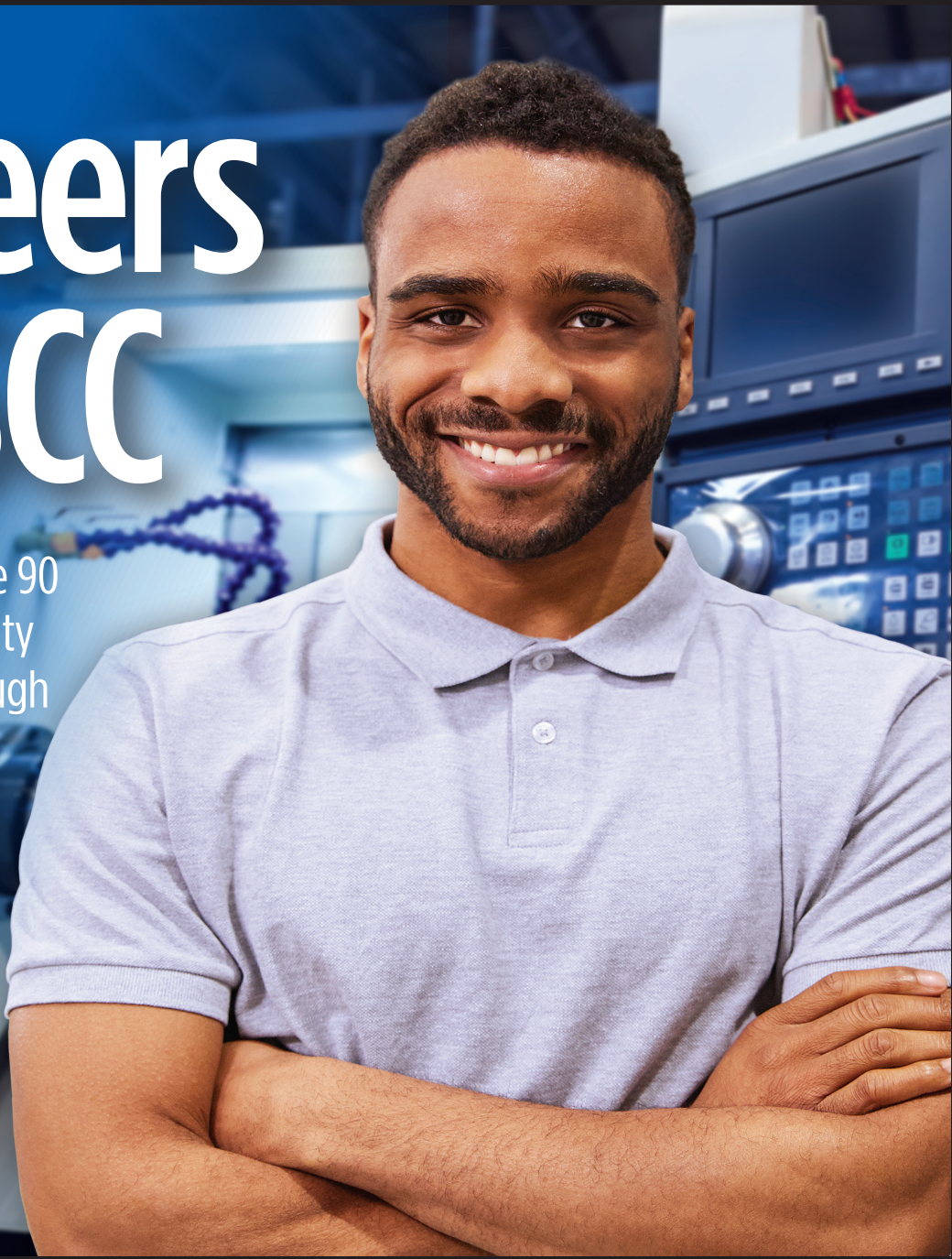
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A Different View

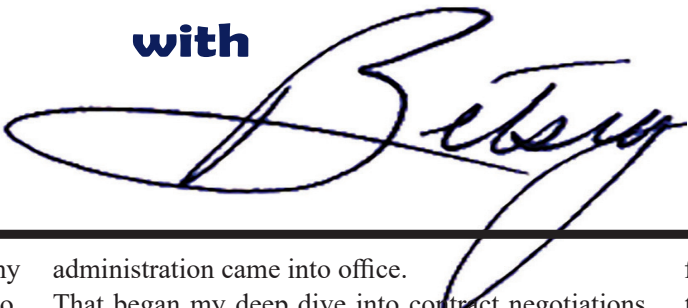
with 



Photo Credit: Maddie Pearson

Betsy Wilkerson, Spokane City Council

Wow, I really don't know where to begin since my column last month, which seems like a lifetime ago. Maybe, like me, there are days when you are just so pissed, then crying, angry, hurt and overwhelmed, all in the same damn day! It's draining. I thought COVID-19 would be the defining event of my time on the council, like "What could compete with a global pandemic?"

That's when deaths like Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery and then George Floyd were there for the whole world to see. George's death seems to have pierced the conscience of the world. Since then, I have marched with many of you. I've protested, been a part of rallies, attended endless meetings and conversations that make me feel like I can't breathe either! I have heard stories from many Folks of Color, the pain, the injustices and the fear in their voices. Now flipping the switch, I have heard from many White Folks also who say they didn't know Racism was this bad in Spokane and how can they help. As with many Blacks and others, my spirit is grieved.

So what's happening at City Hall? Before George Floyd's death the police contract had come before the council for a vote. To approve or reject. We are set to vote today. I am writing this hours before that vote. I will be honest and say that I have my concerns, there were already concerns expressed with the language regarding the Police Ombudsman Office (OPO) before all the protests. The rub is it is not in alignment with the amendment to the City Charter that was voted on in 2013 by 70% of the population. In fairness this contract was already negotiated before the current

administration came into office. That began my deep dive into contract negotiations, bargaining, The Police Guild and arbitration. The Mayor and her office have been working with Council to work through this impasse. There have been numerous Resolutions and Ordinance changes floated, but no agreement to date.

In my position, it is my job to listen to everybody and that includes Police Officers as they are residents of Spokane and should be heard too. Over the past month, my Councilmates and I have received literally thousands of emails and numerous phone calls about the ratification of the Spokane Police Guild Contract. I have also personally met with people from all sides of the argument to hear their stories. That is what's happening right now, as a Nation we are at a moment where we are hearing Black voices, in many cases for the first time.

Working in an industry that has lots and lots of oversight, I understand how frustrating it can be to have all your decisions second guessed. It's frustrating because the people who make the rules/policies are not always the ones on the frontline. They are not the ones tasked with the intricacies of the day to day work or even understand what needs to be done.

To get more of a feel for what they go through, I showed up for Roll Call with the Spokane Police Department on Saturday, June the 28th. The shift I was on was called "the overlap shift" and it starts at 4pm going until 2:45 am. It covers the end of the day shift, and the beginning of the night shift. On this shift, there were about 11 male officers, and one female of-

ficer. As they walked in they had their temperatures taken as required. As I looked around they were so young that they could have been my son or daughter. The Roll Call Captain gave some updates on events that had happened on the previous shift. Another officer shared about an officer getting shot somewhere on the East Coast. It ended with "Is there anything else? Oh yeah, don't forget to wear your mask"

The group dispersed with gear and computers, and I went with my partner for the day to the garage. So during our ride here are some highlights of the conversations I had with the officers:

Betsy: Tell me about this BearCat and why you think it is needed.

Officer: The BearCat is just an armored car. It allows us to get up close safely. It also has a great megaphone so we can be heard. The 'Cat is not used as a military weapon, but as a tool to keep us safe and the mental health counselors who might be along.

Betsy: We should paint it like the Scooby Doo Mystery Machine to make it friendlier!

Betsy: Do you guys need all the "use of force tactics"?

He asked me if I had ever been in a fight, and my answer was "No." He then told me, "Well we don't want to fight either, but if we get into a fight we use whatever is necessary to protect ourselves and keep our firearms out of the wrong hands. We never know what (mental/physical) state the person is in or the whole situation."

Continued on Page 16

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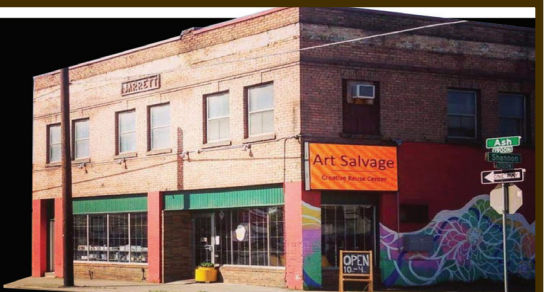
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The Case of Troy LeBlanc

By Monique Peters

In the month since the first Spokane Black Lives Matter protest was held on May 31, twenty-three people have been arrested by Spokane Police department in relation to the demonstration and its subsequent events. According to an article on KXLY.com, fifteen of the twenty-three protesters that have been arrested were detained the day of the May 31st protest, and eight in the following days.

Local 20-year-old student, Troy LeBlanc, is currently being charged by Spokane County with a felony after being accused by a member of Spokane Police Department of harassment and threats during Spokane protests against police violence.

According to court documents sourced from an article by KHQ News, the officer charging LeBlanc claims he was "receiving derogatory comments from [Leblanc], who is accused of telling the officer '[his] time is coming' and that [the officer] is a 'racist pig'." The court document also states that the officer accused LeBlanc of threatening his life and that of his family members.

Though Leblanc was charged with threatening a police officer during the original May 31st event, a warrant for his arrest was not issued until Friday, June 5, nearly a week after the incident.

At 12:05 am the morning of June 6, the day after the initial release of Leblanc's warrant, three police officers arrived at the home of Troy LeBlanc's mother in North Spokane. According to Ms. LeBlanc, the officers knocked on her apartment door,



but covered the door's peephole. "I said, what's going on? And they wouldn't tell me. They said 'Is Troy here?'" The officers then proceeded to search Ms. LeBlanc's apartment upon request without a warrant.

"I thought they were coming to tell me Troy got killed," Ms. LeBlanc said. "They said Troy got a warrant for his arrest." "I said 'it resulted from that picture?' and they said 'what picture?' she stated. Leblanc then got her phone and showed the three police officers the photo of her son that had been taken at the May 31st demonstration and had been circulating on local news platforms.

The police officers continued to deny their knowledge of the photo. "The whole damn world knows about that picture. Because it

was in The Inlander... I guess its public records, but they got no one's permission to post that picture," Ms. Leblanc stated.

Later on that same day, June 6th, Troy LeBlanc's mother arrived back at her apartment from a birthday celebration to see what looked like an undercover police car with tinted windows in her complex's parking lot. "I was coming from a virtual birthday party for my best friend and I," LeBlanc said.

"I rolled my window down and flagged my arm out and he stopped. I said 'Looking for Troy?'" He said 'no'." The officer in question told LeBlanc that he was off-duty. As Ms. LeBlanc peered into the police vehicle, she could see the picture of her son

from the Inlander displayed on the officer's computer screen. Leblanc told the officer "There's my son right on your screen," she continued, "he started laughing. He said 'I just wanna talk to him'."

Though denied by the Spokane Police Department, many residents close to LeBlanc, including his mother, believe his arrest was made due to the photo that was circulated by The Inlander during the first week of June, just a few days prior to his warrant being issued. In the photo that was taken during the initial May 31st protest, LeBlanc can be seen gesturing and talking to a police officer from across a sidewalk.

On a June 6 Facebook post, Troy LeBlanc shared the photo of himself with the officer along with a caption: "After seeing some of the comments and reactions... I feel like assumptions have been made and conclusions have been drawn simply from this photo," he continued, "Based off these recent events I feel like false accusations have been made against me."

LeBlanc was arrested a week later, on Friday June 12, and a bail was set for \$50,000. He was incarcerated for a total of three days.

On Monday June 15, LeBlanc had his first court hearing. He was represented by Morgan Maxey of Maxey Law Office PLLC. According to Leblanc's legal team, other than the word of the police officers, the police refused to release any evidence of the incident during the initial court hearing. As far as the legal team is aware, there is no body cam footage of the incident.

Continued on Page 17

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Tongues of Fire

By Beverly Spears



To Everything There is a Season

I belong to the Baby-Boomer generation. We Boomers span almost twenty years, born between 1946, immediately after WWII, and 1964. Boomers fall into first, second and third groupings. The oldest Boomers are now in their early to mid-seventies. The middle group are in their early to mid-sixties, and the youngest group are in their mid-fifties to sixty. I'm a middle Baby Boomer.

Like so many places in this Country, in the city and county in which I live, the revolutionary anti-racist movement sparked by the murder of George Floyd at the hands of white police officers has taken a firm hold, and as in towns and cities large and small across the nation, this radical, powerful, world encompassing justice and peace movement is galvanized, lead and fueled by young adults— Black, Latinx, Indigenous, Asian and White.

Here, in my small city, as many as two thousand people marched in the streets in protests for seven days and nights straight, with continued action somewhere in the County almost every day. We've had it all; confrontations with local law enforcement—tear gas, pepper spray and rubber bullets. In this County that is unprecedented.

Last week I attended a virtual meeting of people from Black organizations here in Sonoma County, CA. The meeting was to talk about support of regional Black Lives Matter actions. Those gathered were diverse in age, but most were in their very early twenties. They were representatives from various Black student unions, and other Black organizations, many of which were started relatively recently.

Those of us of a certain age, like me, had a few ideas to offer, but from the outset it was clear that we were not in charge of the meeting. We listened as these young people talked about their planned actions to recall the racist sheriff, defund police, defeat local and regional elected officials in the November elections who had disregarded findings and recommendations from a civilian police oversight committee, and ignored incidents reported by the Sonoma Human Rights Commission. These young people shared a host of resources and a list of demands to be presented to local author-

ities and leaders; emphasis on the word, demands. In short, they had their stuff together.

One young Brother had a message for us "revered Elders." He said they all hoped we would come to the rallies and marches to support them. We were invited to walk beside them, or follow them, but we were not welcomed to lead, and if we could not agree to that, all they asked is that we stay out of the way. It was a hard message for a veteran social justice advocate like me to hear. I don't think of myself as an Elder, revered or otherwise, but I guess I am one, and I guess I got told.

A Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) verse from the book of Ecclesiastes came to mind: "To everything there is a season and a time for every purpose under heaven...a time to tear down and a time to build up...a time to be silent and a time to speak..." Yes, and there is a time to lead and a time to follow. Ready or not, it's time for Elders to follow.

This meeting reminded me of a conversation I'd had about a year ago with an exceptionally bright, mature and outspoken fourteen-year old, a member of Generation Z. She was curious about how things were "back in the day." I don't know how old she assumed I was, or how far back she thought I could go, but she seemed sure it was quite a way. We covered a lot of territory starting in my early grade school years with the post war Duck-and-Cover Atomic Bomb drills. Her response to that, said with more incredulity than sarcasm was, "seriously?—like that was supposed to protect you from a nuclear missile."

We went on to talk about the 60's Civil Rights Movement, the Black Power Movement and gains made by Black people because of them. At that point she stopped asking questions, looked dead into my eyes and said pretty much as a matter of fact, "and then you dropped the ball. Your generation dropped the ball. Now it's up to us, and we're going to do what you couldn't."

I was stunned. I thought, is this young chick really calling me out like this?! I wanted to say, "Child, do you think you got where you are by yourself?! You're standing on

many mighty shoulders! Show some damn respect!" But I said none of those things. I wanted to get defensive, "well I didn't drop the ball, and a lot of other people didn't drop the ball." I didn't say that either. I just looked at her. She wasn't being confrontational. She wasn't trying to goad me. She was stating the facts as she saw them. I couldn't work up any righteous indignation because in that moment I realized she was right. A generation of Black Americans had collectively dropped the ball. We had taken our eyes off the prize, deluding ourselves into thinking we had finally won it. I've been obsessed by her statement ever since.

I told this story to a dear friend of mine the other day, a Sister Boomer. She said, "well, you know why we dropped the ball, right?" She went on to remind me that Black Middle-Baby Boomers, and the younger Boomer group that followed us, were the ones to reap the reward of those hard-fought battles for racial equity and justice. We rode the tide of Affirmative Action. Opportunities came flooding our way. Doors that had been closed to our parents and even to our older siblings, opened for us. We got the good jobs, we made good money, we went to college, earned degrees, and got recruited into senior management positions. We gained standing and a certain amount of prestige in the dominant white world. We were so sure we knew how to navigate it.

But many of us who found ourselves in these high places soon realized that thriving in that world was not going to be easy, and quite possibly it wasn't even in the cards. Who could think about thriving when it took everything we had to simply survive! We were held to a different standard, whether that standard was too high or too low. We had to work harder, faster and smarter than our white counterparts. Sometimes opportunities were handed to us for which we were not adequately prepared. We ceased those offers and soon learned we had been set up to fail. Smiling faces, warm handshakes, pats on the back and liberal politics, cloaked white resentment and covert racism.

Yes, we dropped the ball because we believed it was no longer necessary for us to carry it. Some Black people never gave up

on the idea that they had truly arrived and got comfortable and complacent. But many of us realized the ugly truth. All our energy would have to go into trying to survive our success. The ball rolled on down the street. We were too busy and too worn out to go after it.

Of course, it's true that a whole lot changed in this country between 1946 and 2020, but the deeper truth is that a lot of what seemed to have changed, especially for Black people, actually hadn't. Black people thought we'd brought about a tectonic shift in social consciousness and law in the 1960s and 70s, but in the 1980's under the Reagan Administration it became painfully clear that what we thought was a major seismic social event, was a mere tremor—only a slight and short-lived release of pressure.

It was always just a matter of time until a socio-political volcanic eruption blew the top off a mountain of white dominance, racism, greed and moral corruption in America. It was just a matter of time before the foundations of the Empire would begin to crumble because of America's original and unatoned for sins of Genocide and slavery.

The young people taking the lead today are not prophetic voices. They are not like the Biblical Hebrew Prophets. They bring no warnings; the time for warnings is long past. They are not like John the Baptist—they do not herald the coming of anyone greater than they are to set things right. No, I believe, The Spirit of the Lord is upon [THEM]. [THEY] are anointed to proclaim good news to the poor...to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind. [They] are anointed to set the oppressed free.

Go Children, go get your equity, justice and peace! Don't pick up the ball that was dropped. Kick that thing as far out of the way as you can. It was part of a game Black people could never win. You know the time for games is over. It's a new season and there is a new purpose under heaven.

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

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Because I Love You

By Kiantha Duncan

The Bicycle of Justice

Because I love you, I will hold onto you as you learn to ride the bicycle of justice.

The first bicycle I owned was gifted to me by my favorite uncle Eric Small. I remember approaching the bike outside as he stood there to surprise me with the special gift. As a child, I was immediately drawn to the shine of the chrome, the glitter embedded in the paint, and the pink and white plastic tassels hanging from the handlebars.

The bike looked so much bigger than me, but somehow I knew that if I could figure out how to balance myself and actually ride it, I could experience a level of freedom I had never felt before. I knew that if I was able to ride the big bike it would take me much further than my feet alone ever could.

It was scary. I fell many times. There was blood. I bruised my knees, elbows and even scrapped my legs on the metal pedal spokes. I cried a few times and even got so frustrated that at one point I fell off the bike and refused for a few moments to pick it up and get back on it again.

Eventually with practice, I was able to stay on the bike for 30 seconds, then a few minutes, and before long I was riding the bike with ease. I learned about the logistics of riding my new bike. I learned that I could put all my energy into pedaling really fast to get my speed up then I

could just coast on the momentum. I also learned that if I was going uphill it would take much more of my energy and that I would need to put everything I had into getting myself up the incline.

The feeling of gliding, the few seconds of riding with no hands made the learning process all worthwhile. My confidence grew stronger and the rewarding feeling of freedom made the scars not hurt as bad.

Right now, this country is approaching what looks like a vehicle much bigger than itself. The vehicle of true justice and equality for all. For some the thought of true freedom is worth every bruise and bump along the way. For some, this time feels extremely scary. Many are struggling with balancing themselves on this bike of justice.

Because I love you, I want you to know that you can do it. I promise the freedom we will all feel, and the distance mankind will go is beyond what our minds can imagine. But we must all commit to never giving up until riding this bike becomes second nature. When you fall, get back up and get back on. I am here with you to help tend to any bruises you sustain along the way.

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





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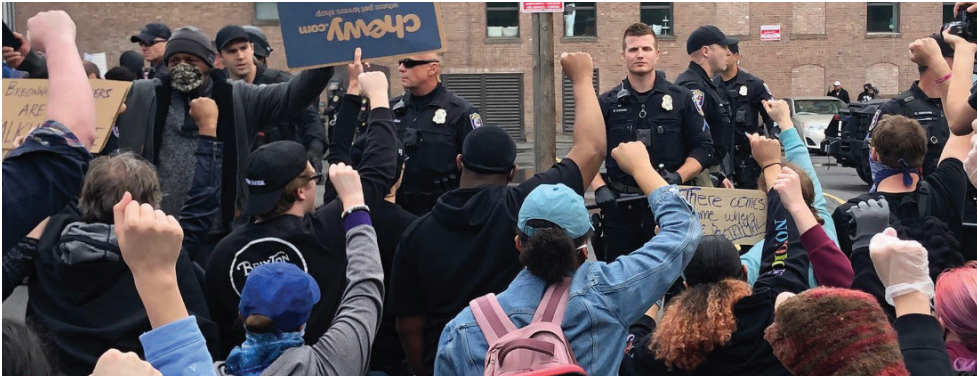
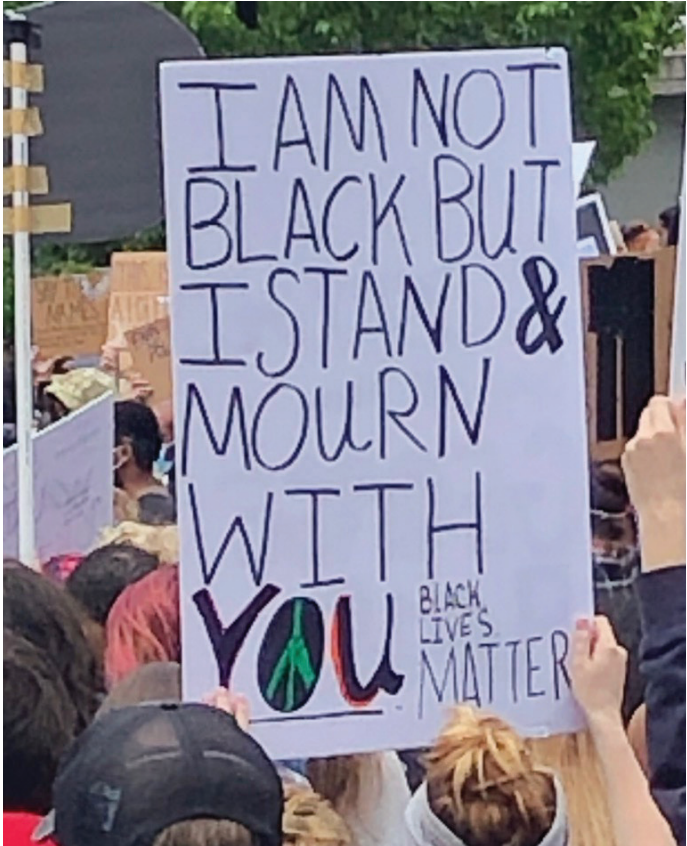
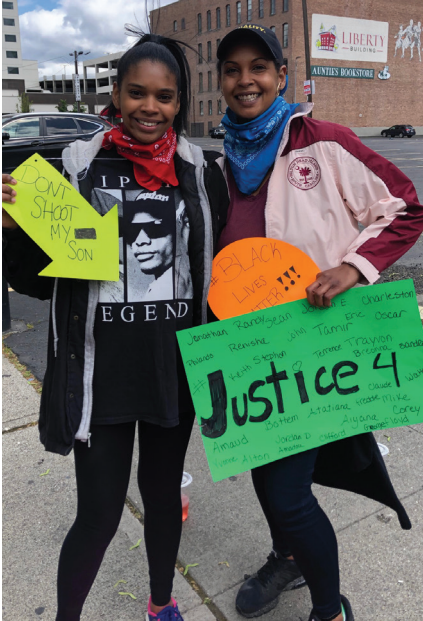


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SPOKANE BLACK LIVES MATTER PROTEST



MAY 31, 2020 - RIVERFRONT PARK



WHY DO WE MARCH?

By Robert Lloyd

By now we've all seen what's happening in Minneapolis, Detroit, Louisville, Atlanta, New York, Washington DC, Phoenix, Denver, Columbus, Dallas, Chicago, Memphis, Bakersfield, Albuquerque, Los Vegas, Oakland, San Jose, Los Angeles, Portland, Seattle and more - twenty plus and growing - due to the killing of Floyd.

The question is why and who benefits from these protests. We all know the why - systemic racism and injustice for people of color and the poor. But who benefits?

We have all seen this before - be it Martin Luther King's death in Memphis, be it the Rodney King beating in Los Angeles, the Chicago fire truck killing, be it Ferguson, Trayvon Martin in Florida, Eric Garner in New York, Freddie Gray in Baltimore, Orlando Castile in Minnesota. The lists goes on. The question is "Who benefits?"

All of these demonstrations had three components. There are those who want to mourn. The parents and loved ones will bring flowers, teddy bears and pictures of the person lost. There are those who will hold non-violent protests. The politicians, the ministers and the status quo organizations will express their dissatisfactions with articulate speeches and venting rhetoric. And then there are those who will co-opt your

non-violent protests. The extreme left and right, the anarchists and those who would like to destroy your community, institutions and trust with violence, chaos and destruction.

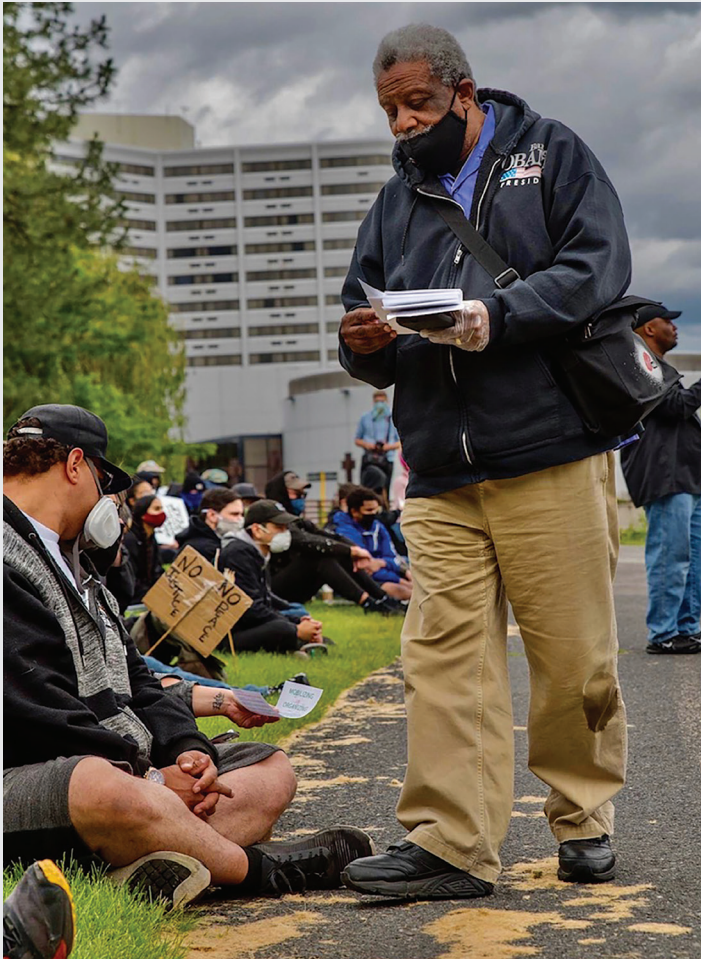
After demonstrations like this, people will go back home to cynicism, apathy, complacency, self-medication and risky behavior, and party and bullshit and party and bullshit. And there will be no change. The question should be what is it that you want, what is the price you are willing to pay and how do you go about getting it.

Will you build a grass root organization?

If so form small groups of 5 - 10 people. Get to know and vet who your people are. Are they actors, allies or accomplices? Are they people who will sit down and meet regularly to discuss strategies and planned actions? Meet in a public place or Zoom. Let us know what your results are at 4comculture.com. Email info to: info@4comculture.com

I'd suggest that you make this message go viral through your social media outlets. I'd suggest that you print this out on your home printer and distribute it at upcoming non-violent protests. You can become a civic activist and work between horrific events and elections.

Robert Lloyd, Spokane Civic Activist
email: info@4comculture.com
4comculture.com or on Facebook.



Our Votes and Voices Matter in Every Election For Every Office

Protesting inequity in our criminal justice system is important. Rallying and standing up against police violence is essential. Taking to the streets to tell elected officials that enough is enough is our civic responsibility.

Protest is an essential part of our American democracy: our nation’s painfully slow march toward social justice would not have happened without social upheaval and protest.

However, it is also important for you to be a voter and help choose the kind of elected officials who will govern you.

It can be difficult to understand how your vote connects to the criminal justice system, so let’s break down how your vote affects the kind of policing you receive and the amount of investment in social justice your community makes.

On our ballot this August and November, we will be voting for judges for the Spokane Superior Court, the District Court of Appeals, and the Washington Supreme Court.

That is right: we elect judges and we can choose people we think are worthy of that position.

We will also be voting for two of the three Spokane County Commissioners. These are the people

in charge of the Spokane County Jail, among other things. They also make many of the funding decisions for our region.

We will be voting for Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and a host of other State offices. These people oversee the state agencies that implement criminal justice and public safety policy and programs, including state police, corrections, and juvenile justice.

We will elect State Legislators who are responsible for the policies that define crime, procedures for responding to crime, sentencing structures, and funding for government agencies that are responsible for dealing with offenders and victims.

Your Congressional Representatives create federal laws and have power to reform the criminal justice system through legislation.

The President appoints the Attorney General, who leads the Department of Justice which is responsible for enforcing the federal law and administering justice in the United States.

All these offices are up for re-election this year. Although not on the ballot this year, we also elect a Mayor and City Council members who are responsible for the city chief of police and managing local law enforcement; the Spokane County

Sheriff; and the Spokane County Prosecuting Attorney: all elected positions that affect how YOU get to live your life.

Our votes and voices matter in every election, for every office. You have the choice of getting involved in these decisions or leaving the decision making to others.

Vote. Vote. Vote.

But voting is not enough: it is our civic responsibility to ask candidates for public office the tough questions, so we know if their values mirror our own values. It is our civic responsibility to ask elected officials the tough questions, so we know if they are in office to represent us or themselves.

And it our civic responsibility to take to the streets to protest when the community’s voice is not being heard or when elected officials are not doing the job we put them in office to do.



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Police Brutality Against African American Women



#SAYHERNAME

A VIGIL IN REMEMBRANCE OF BLACK WOMEN AND GIRLS KILLED BY THE POLICE
NEW YORK CITY | MAY 20, 2015



By Dr. Jeanne Aston Baynes

Two months before George Floyd was killed by police in Minneapolis in May, Breonna Taylor, a 26-year old Black emergency medical technician, was in her home in Louisville, Kentucky, when plain-clothed police burst in with a no-knock warrant. Her boyfriend, thinking they were intruders, fired a shot. The police returned fire with a barrage of bullets, killing Taylor.

The three Louisville Metro Police Department officers involved have not been charged. Ms. Taylor's death, and the deaths of many other Black women, haven't sparked the same level of global outrage against police brutality as the killings of cisgender Black men by law enforcement.

Another tragedy was the killing of 28 year old Atatiana Jefferson by a former Fort Worth police officer, Aaron Dean, who was indicted on a murder charge in October 2019. Dean was one of several officers who responded to Jefferson's home after police were called for a welfare check by a concerned neighbor. The officer "perceived a threat" and fired one shot, striking and killing Ms. Jefferson who had been inside her residence playing video games with her 8 year old nephew.

Black women have the highest rates of homicide in the country, says Kimberle Crenshaw, a professor of law at UCLA and Columbia Law Schools, and the Executive Director of the African American Policy Forum. She says she has repeatedly seen

the killings of Black women go unnoticed. Crenshaw and the African American Policy Forum started the #Say Her Name campaign. Launched in December 2014, the #SayHerName campaign brings awareness to the often invisible names and stories of Black women and girls who have been victimized by racist police violence, and provides support to their families.

Black women as old as 92, and girls as young as 7, have been killed by police, though we rarely hear their names.

Aiyana Stanley was asleep on her grandmother's sofa and an officer who executed a no-knock warrant collided with the 7-year-old girl's grandmother causing him to accidentally fire. Aiyana was shot in

the head. Four years before Aiyana was killed, 92-year-old Kathryn Johnston was shot and killed inside her Atlanta, Georgia, home during a botched drug raid.

Some say it takes video footage in order to garner the attention of the masses nationally and internationally. Crenshaw argues, however, that even when there have been past videos of brutality against Black women, they didn't permeate the news cycle or spark a major outcry for accountability and action like we saw in Floyd's case.

Take Natasha McKenna for example. In 2015, the 37-year-old was tasered to death in jail while she was experiencing a mental health crisis, Crenshaw says.

Continued on Page 18



87% OF SENIORS
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A Different View: Betsy Wilkerson

Continued From Page 8

Betsy: If this job is so challenging, why do you do it?

Officer: I believe for the majority of officers it's a calling and I have asked that question of new officers, and they all say "We want to serve, and help people."

Betsy: Talk to me about the dogs given the history of Black folks protesting, and the police back then bringing out the dogs and the hoses. That history and those images cannot be erased.

Officer: Our dogs are well trained and they go in and search out the suspect/s. The command to attack is only if the officer is in imminent danger. We have layers of oversight and accountability when it comes to the dogs.

Betsy: Do you think the released video of the dog attacking the suspect made the community mad?

Officer: Yes.

Betsy: We have seen how disrespectful officers can be by the language they use. What's your thinking?

Officer: We can do a better job of how we communicate with people. In our training that was pointed out how it inflames the situation. I believe allowing us more time to interact with the community should be a goal. I hate it when every time I pull up, people think someone is in trouble when actually I am just checking up on them!

Betsy: Tell me about your training.

Officer: We have to complete 24 hours of in-service a year on various topics. We all would like more so we could train to be more effective for whatever the situation is. We do have implicit bias training that is required and then online training. It helps but it's not enough, I would like to really get to know my community and the different cultures that live here.

Betsy: I keep hearing the morale of the officers is low.

Officer: Yes it is, we have not had a contract in three years, and we feel like we are being painted with the same brush as the officer who killed George Floyd. Many think that City Council is against us.

Betsy: WHOA, don't get it twisted. Just because we want the Office of the Police

Ombudsman to mirror the City Charter, it does not mean we don't like the police."

I went on to say that it saddens me to have this us vs the Police attitude.

Officer: The City needs to just tell us what they want us to do, but we can't do it all.

I shared with him that Council has talked a lot about the brave men and women in blue. That we talk about them being our neighbors with families, and how their work is dangerous and that they deserve our support and have earned their salary raise.

After 4 hours, I was in information and emotional overload, but during that time for me trust was beginning, along with understanding. I asked the officer if there is anything else that he wanted to say, "We just want to go home at the end of our shift."

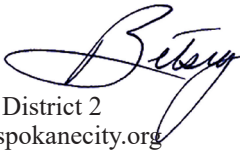
By the end of my ride-along I felt there was trust and understanding gained on both sides, as we parted ways.

As of this writing, I want to say as an African American Councilwoman, I hear you, I see you, and I feel your pain. My problem isn't the police, my problem is the lack of Independence of Police Civilian oversight.

Carl Maxey, Spokane's first Black attorney, said in 1974, "You can't allow the police to investigate themselves." This was in response to the killing of Craig S. Jordan, a 17-year-old Black Lewis and Clark High School student who was killed before the advent of the cell phone camera. I'm not going to wait for the next hashtag to come out of Spokane.

So it's not just for George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and many more that are flooding the headlines that I will cast my vote. I cast my vote for Malia, Sasha, Aisa, Cyan, Thomas, and all the children that deserve to grow up in a society where they don't live in fear of a few bad apples in the police force.

I want you to know that my vote "No" is a result of the community conversations that we have been having since I picked up that protest sign on the morning of May 31st. I leave you with my fighting words, "Use your voice, use your vote, use your resources."

In Solidarity,

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EWU Diversity Programs

Statement in Support of Black Lives and Against State Violence

We, the directors of the four Diversity Programs at EWU, write to express our grief and outrage at the recent state-sanctioned killings of so many Black people. We join multitudes of others nationally and internationally in protest and demand an end to anti-Black police and state violence.

We have been reeling from the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on our communities, and then we got hit with this terrifying upsurge in state violence. Some have suggested these are two different crises, but we know better.

The pandemic and this surge in racist violence are both deeply rooted in a history of white supremacy that values white lives and property above all else. We know this nation was founded on Indigenous genocide and dispossession, built through Black enslavement, and developed via the exploitation of immigrant labor – those oppressive structures are not just our past, but very much our present. This moment is revealing these truths for many beyond our QTBIPOC communities.

We are inspired by the outpouring of solidarity and resistance across the globe, the country, and right here in Spokane. As educators, we are particularly moved by the youth who are acting with brilliance and courage. We are at a tipping point and they are unrelenting in their demands for true social transformation. In this historic moment, we are putting all of our collective weight on Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.'s long "arc of the moral universe" to bend it more quickly toward justice.

Dr. Deirdre Almeida, Director, American Indian Studies

Dr. Scott Finnie, Director, Africana Studies

Dr. Nydia Martinez, Director, Chicana/o/x Studies

Dr. Judy Rohrer, Director, Women's and Gender Studies

(This content was paid for by the above directors due to budget cuts at Eastern Washington University)



The Case of Troy LeBlanc

Continued from Page 9



The June 15 hearing resulted in LeBlanc's bond being lowered from 50,000 to 5,000, and that same day he was bonded out of jail by his mother. Many community members also commented on LeBlanc's June 6 Facebook post, showing their support for his statement and their belief in his innocence. Multiple community members posted their own photos and videos of LeBlanc during the May 31 event, none of which displayed him threatening any police officers.

Members of the Spokane community have created two GoFundMe accounts in support of LeBlanc's case, as well as a Change.org petition demanding his case be dropped by Spokane county.

Ms. LeBlanc, along with Troy LeBlanc's father, believe strongly in obtaining justice for their son. Speaking about the day the LeBlanc family first found out of their son's charge, Ms. Leblanc said, "Troy was crying and screaming. Mom don't let them do this to me. Mom, don't let them lie on me like this. Troy wasn't lying."

Speaking about his son's case, LeBlanc's father said, "We want justice first of all, but we want, people to make informed decisions before making assumptions based on a picture and without any kind of proof."

He went on to say, “With all the racial profiling going on right now, I wholeheartedly believe that there are some bad apples. There are some folks who don’t wanna see people get equal treatment... Troy is a very smart kid with a lot of potential.” He continued, “We’re talking about community policing, that’s something that could have been done (in this situation). Instead of coming down to a person’s house, making a big scene. This is something that could’ve been hashed out in a totally different way.”

Troy's next hearing is scheduled for August.





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Police Violence Against Black Women

Continued From Page 15

The scene was captured on video and distributed, yet little national attention was focused on her horrific death, she says.

“Their stories tend to just sort of dissipate into the ether,” Crenshaw says. “Had what happened on March 13 not happened just before two very high-profile killings of Black men, we probably wouldn’t be saying Breonna Taylor’s name either.”

About five days after the death of 18-year-old Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, Crenshaw says 50-year-old Micelle Cusseaux was shot and killed “within seconds” of the police encountering her during a mental health call. Cusseaux’s mother organized a protest where her daughter’s casket was taken to Phoenix City Hall, she says.

“A Black woman has been killed and no one was saying her name,” Crenshaw said. “So we started collecting other names of Black women who were killed by police.”

There’s a long history of sidelining Black women’s lived experiences. And it may be hard to conceptualize anti-Black violence against women because of the historical emphasis on Black men’s stories, she says.

During slavery in the United States, Black women endured endless labor, sexual assault and being torn away from their children. Black men also bared inhumane treatment during slavery, but oftentimes their stories became the center narrative, Crenshaw says.

“For our entire history of slavery and efforts to challenge it, the way that it’s experienced by men has been at the center of it,” she says. “And that has created a narrative about what anti-Black racism looks like. That is accurate, but it is not entirely inclusive.”

The overwhelming response to Floyd’s killing was in part because it’s “amplifying what we know racism to have been about,” Crenshaw says. Many people don’t have the framework to conceptualize the racist violence toward Black women because their stories have historically been erased or ignored, she says.

The lives of Black women are routinely erased by the police. Lawyer and activist, Andrea Ritchie, has, for almost twenty years called the public’s attention to the killings, assaults, and rapes committed by the police against Black women, other women of color, and the transgender community. The consciousness and will of the public to provide broad-based support to the early effort

to highlight violence against Black women was lacking. The reasons for that lack of support was complex and had as much to do with community self-censure as it did with racism/sexism in both law enforcement and media.

Prosecutor, turned media personality, Nancy Grace, reported on missing women. All of the women Grace reported about were White, and the obvious lack of coverage about missing Black women led the late NPR anchor, Gwen Ifill, to coin the phrase “missing White woman syndrome” to describe the media’s exclusive focus on White women. Few mainstream media outlets cared whether a Black woman was missing or dead. Even with the new focus on police killings of Black people, it is still difficult to find the stories about any of the twenty-eight mentioned in #SayHerName. The killing of men and boys should not be minimized but that the media should also cover the killings of women as well. (University of Florida Levin College of Law Professor Michelle Jacobs, J.D.)

Mothers of the Movement is a group of women whose African American children have been killed by police officers or by gun violence. The group campaigns for causes and legislative proposals. Sybrina Fulton, mother of Trayvon Martin, and Gwen Carr, the mother of Eric Garner, are working tirelessly to push for legislation that would fundamentally change American policing. Ms. Fulton, along with Democratic Georgia Congresswoman Lucy McBath, the mother of Jordan Davis, and Lesley McSpadden, the mother of Michael Brown, have run for public office. In the wake of recent protests, these women are calling for greater police accountability and joining the chorus of voices demanding the end of police killings of black people in the United States.

“It is the reality of living life in a Black body that makes you more subject to police violence. Now if the body happens to be gendered as something other than male, it also makes you vulnerable to being misremembered.” If our collective outrage around cases of police violence is meant to serve as a warning to the state that its agents cannot kill without consequence, our silence around the cases of Black women and girls sends the message that certain deaths do not merit repercussions. Let’s advance a gender-inclusive narrative in the movement for Black lives. Black Women’s Lives Matter too.

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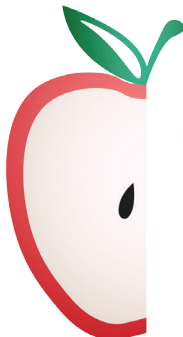
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Can't Stay Home, Can't Keep Curfew

National Advocates Renew Call for Housing, Safety

By The National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty

(NNPA NEWSWIRE - blackpressusa.com) People experiencing homelessness in the United States—already at heightened risk and with fewer resources due to the pandemic—now face even greater challenges as a result of both the violence sweeping many city streets and the curfews many are imposing in an effort to control.

While people take to the streets across the country to protest police brutality and the killings of unarmed Black Americans, The National Law Center on Homelessness urges lawmakers, police units, and neighbors to do more to provide people experiencing homelessness with shelter and safety.

Without homes to shelter in place, and with limited access to already-burdened emergency shelter, people experiencing homelessness are left to fend for themselves. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has issued guidance urging cities to house unsheltered people whenever possible, avoid sweeping encampments, and reconfigure shelters to conform to social distancing and sanitation guidelines.

Unfortunately, compliance across the nation has been spotty at best,



Photo Credit: (Stockphoto / NNPA)

and people experiencing homelessness have remained at extraordinary risk.

Now, various cities have implemented curfews as an effort to curb violence conducted outside of protests against police brutality. Unfortunately, curfews have created further challenges, as unsheltered people, already subject to laws criminalizing acts such as sleeping in public, are at risk of arrest for yet another “crime”—violating an order to stay inside after curfew when they have nowhere inside to go.

People experiencing homelessness are disproportionately people of color in the United States—40% are Black, despite being only 12% of the national population—and thus are already at greater risk of being targeted by police.

Increased police presence on the streets means increased risk of arrest and attacks during perceived curfew violations as well as pre-existing laws that criminalize sleeping or that criminalize basic life sustaining activities.

“We call on cities across the country to follow the CDC guidance by housing people experiencing homelessness immediately—and to protect them from arrest, violence, and further trauma,” said Maria Foscarinis, Founder & Executive Director of the Law Center.

In addition to putting people experiencing homelessness at greater risk, the curfew further restricts access to basic services such as food, sanitation, and bathrooms. The lack of services further jeopardizes the health and safety of people who already suffer from more chronic diseases due to stress and trauma, and who, if infected, are twice as likely to die of COVID-19 than housed people.

The National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty (the Law Center) is the only national organization dedicated solely to using the power of the law to prevent and end homelessness. With the support of a large network of pro bono lawyers, we address the immediate and long-term needs of people who are homeless or at risk through outreach and training, advocacy, impact litigation, and public education.

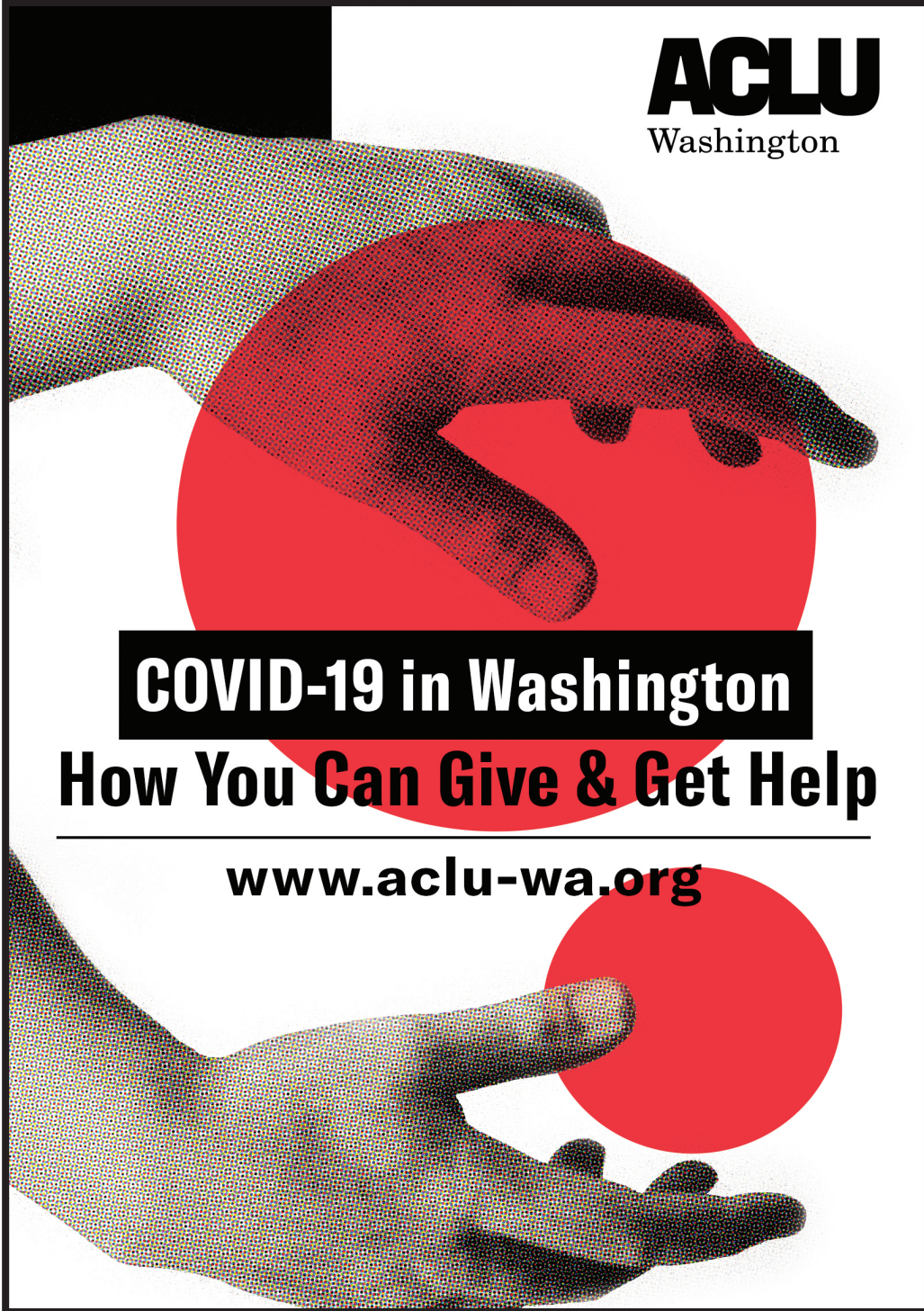


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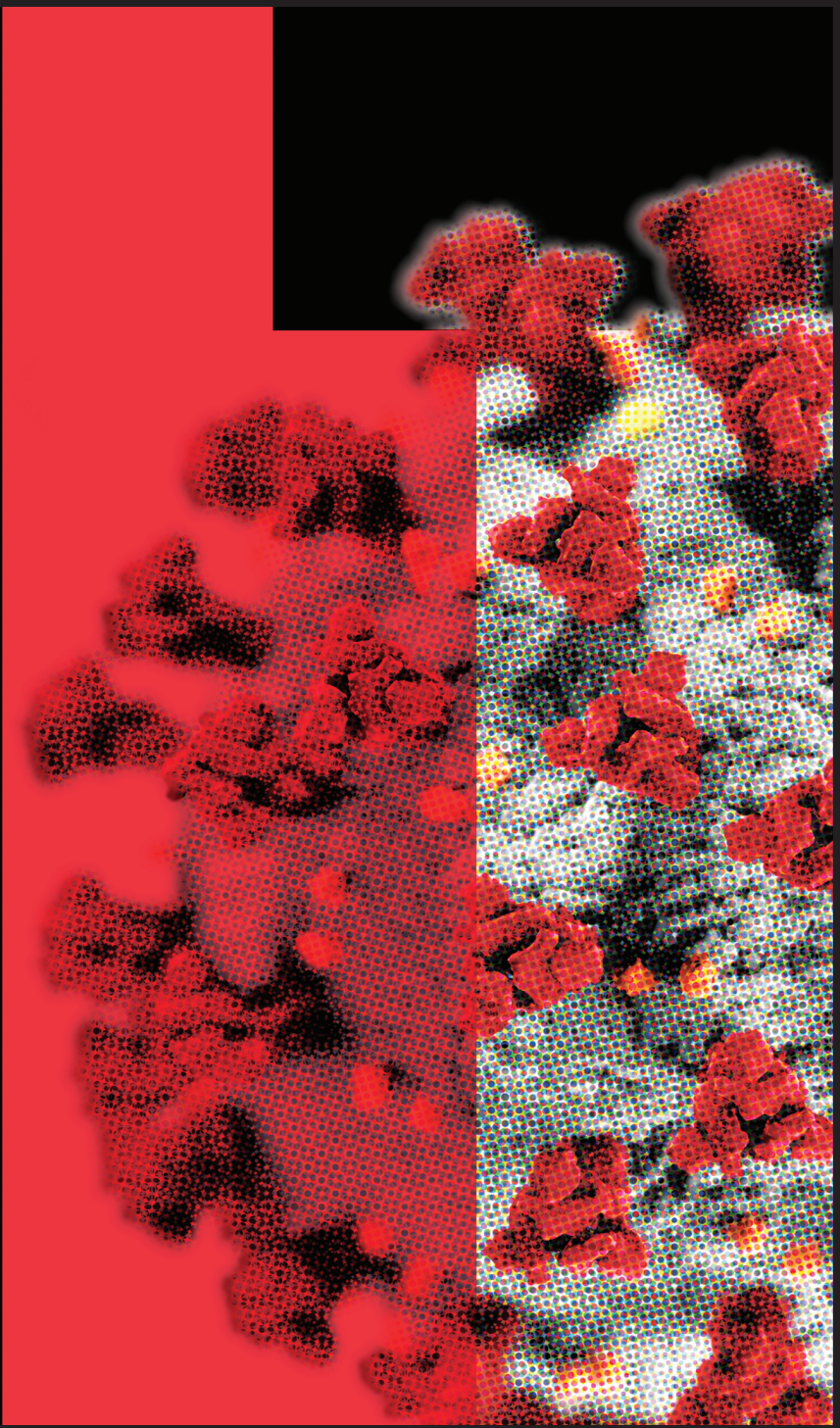
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OUR VOICES

A Moment or a Movement? The Blowback Will Tell

By Dr. Wilmer Leon

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - *“George Floyd should not be among the deceased. He did not die of common health conditions. He died of a common American criminal justice malfunction.” Rev. Al Sharpton (June 4, 2020)*

I understand Rev. Sharpton’s point, but to cast this lynching in the context of a “malfunction” is to lose site of the much broader historical context in which African’s in America and later African-Americans have existed since 1619. I am not inferring that it was Rev. Sharpton’s intent, but to cast this horror in the context of a “malfunction”, is to give America a pass. We can no longer afford to do that.

The total disregard for George Floyd as a human being, coupled with a hatred for the Black community that Officer Derek Chauvin took an oath to protect and serve, led to the lynching on May 25. Chauvin was sending a message to the community by holding his knee on Mr. Floyd’s neck in broad daylight. “Black people, know your place, understand your place and stay in your place”. Even the knowledge that he was being videotaped didn’t deter Chauvin. His inhumanity towards Mr. Floyd as his life was slowly choked out of his handcuffed body emanates from America’s historic inhumanity towards people of color since Tristan de Luna established the short-lived settlement at Pensacola Bay in 1559.

This hatred is woven into the very fabric of America. It is in the founding documents of this country. It’s evident in Supreme Court decisions and the blowback from America’s dominant culture to any modicum of success achieved by African Americans (The Red Summer of 1919 or Tulsa 1921). A clear and indisputable pattern is obvious. Within this historic context, this atrocity

captured on video, this act of domestic terrorism was America in action. The power of the State as carried out through Officer Chauvin was in full effect. This was no malfunction...it was business as usual.

Our ancestors were brought to these shores for only one purpose; free labor. Our task was to perform all the requisite dirty work to build an economy and empire for Europe. The so-called “christians” who swore in the Mayflower Compact of 1620 that they undertook, “...for the Glory of God, and Advancement of the Christian Faith, and the Honour of our King and Country, a Voyage to plant the first Colony in the northern Parts of Virginia...” could not reconcile their inhumane treatment of their African captives with their “christianity”. To absolve themselves of the dilemma posed by the true Christian ethic that God created man in his own image, the Europeans slowly dehumanized their captives and codified this in law and constitution.

Examine the Laws of Virginia: Act XII 1662, “children got by Englishmen upon a Negro woman, is the child slave or free?” The status of the child shall be determined by the status of the mother. Act II 1667 addresses, “What happens to the status of a baptized slave?” Answer: “the conferring of baptism doth not alter the condition of person as to his bondage...” Act I 1669, a master cannot be charged with murder for the “casual killing of slaves” since no one in their right mind would destroy their own property.

By 1669, the enslaved were no longer persons, they were no longer human; they were property. The Constitution gave us the Three Fifths Compromise, the Fugitive Slave Provision (the constitutional vali-



dated for slave patrols, the early form of American policing) and allowed for the importation of enslaved Africans for twenty years, until January 1, 1808. In 1857 the Supreme Court via Chief Justice Taney gave us the Dred Scott decision, validating the belief that all blacks -- enslaved as well as free -- were not and could never become citizens of the United States. The framers of the Constitution, he wrote, believed that blacks "had no rights which the white man was bound to respect..."

These are a few examples of what is meant by structural or “institutional racism”. Stripping our ancestors of their humanity, relegating them to the position of property or things and codifying it in the founding documents and court decisions of this country. This is not a malfunction; this is the machine operating as designed!

Yes, there has been legislation and court decisions that have amended and/or eliminated many of these laws from the books. The Brown decision, the 64’ Civil Rights Act, the 65’ Voting Rights Act and the

Fair Housing Act were all great legal and legislative advancements. This progress has lulled us to sleep with a false sense of accomplishment and optimism. The reality remains that legislation alone does not do anything to disabuse those in power and those they represent of the controlling mindset of this country, of the notion that African-Americans are less than human.

For example...banning the chokehold is a great idea, but that same banned chokehold is what killed Eric Garner. Until we get to the real crux of the issue, the controlling and racist mindset of an entire criminal justice system that turns a blind eye to choking, shooting unarmed suspects and not holding officers accountable when they use excessively violent tactics, nothing substantive will change. Jury verdicts validating police abuse and police departments staging sickouts to protest fellow officers being charged with crimes is evidence of the machine making corrections to protect itself.

Are the ongoing protests a moment or a movement? The jury is still out. The verdict will be determined by the blowback that comes from this moment and how those who are protesting and advocating for change respond to it. The response to judicial and legislative advancements is always substantive blowback. The Supreme Court has dismantled the Voting Rights Act and conservative groups have escalated voter suppression tactics such as The Crosscheck Program. The Supreme Court has made it more difficult to prove discrimination under the Civil Rights Act. The election of Donald Trump was blowback to the election of Barak Obama, as was Sen. McConnell’s not allowing the nomination of Merrick Garland to go forward.

Continued on Page 21

Time to Work Together to Strengthen Relationships Between Law Enforcement and Black Communities

By Daniel Jay Cameron

(NNPA NEWSWIRE - blackpressusa.com) - In December, I was honored to be sworn in as Kentucky’s 51st Attorney General, the first Black man to hold the position, the first to be named chief law enforcement officer of the Commonwealth, and the first to be independently elected to a statewide constitutional office.

In my inaugural remarks, I chose to address these “firsts” by speaking to my vision for the Attorney General’s office, namely, the application of our system of laws, which despite an imperfect history is rooted in an enduring maxim — equal justice under the law.

This maxim must be punctuated by the equally important truth that justice cannot be truly equal unless it is applied the same to everyone. As I noted in my remarks, “your politics, your upbringing, your station in life, your heritage, your finances, your color, your gender, your geography...these things do not determine how you will be treated under the law.”

This truth of the law is why Lady Justice, the physical depiction of our justice system, is most often portrayed wearing a blindfold. Justice should be blind to the very things our own eyes, mind, and heart are so quick to use to judge others.

Recent protests in communities across the country, including in my home city of Louisville, suggest that many see the blindfold worn by Lady Justice not as an indication of blind justice, but as blinders to the many issues facing our society. Chief among these issues is the current distrust and tension between law enforcement and Black communities.



It is incumbent upon elected leaders, at every level, to tackle these issues head on by having an open, honest conversation about how we can move forward together.

I’ve appreciated President Trump’s willingness to do just that. Earlier this month, I had the opportunity to attend a law enforcement roundtable at the White House led by the President along with Vice President Pence, Attorney General Barr, and other stakeholders. This roundtable provided a unique opportunity for a productive and necessary conversation about healing the fabric of our country by not only improving, but strengthening, the relationship between law enforcement and Black communities.

The roundtable discussion centered around the responsibility, which we all share, to look for ways to do things better, to become better citizens, and to become better neighbors. It is my belief from the time spent both with my law enforcement colleagues at the roundtable and in my home state, that the law enforcement community recognizes the sincerity of that need and is committed to not only protecting and serving, but also to demonstrating understanding.

It is this understanding and recognition that has led to images of peaceful protesters and law enforcement officers locking arms in solidarity at protests around the country. And, it is this understanding that will propel our country forward.

As we move forward, however, we cannot sacrifice the rule of law in the name of reform. The rule of law is the necessary foundation in this country for building lasting change. Abandoning law and order for violence and looting is not the answer. And, a radical dismantling of our law enforcement community with calls to “defund the police” only invite further fear and uncertainty at a time when we need understanding and stability.

This is not a moment to weaponize or politicize. It is a moment that calls for us to come together and to find common ground.

Daniel Jay Cameron is the 51st Attorney General for the Commonwealth of Kentucky. He is the first African American independently elected to statewide office in Kentucky’s history and the first Republican elected to the Attorney General’s office since 1948.

OUR VOICES

The Pledge of A-Lie: "With Libery and Justice for All"

ByPatricia Hicks

Like most of you I was hurt and infuriated when I saw the brutal and heartless murder of George Floyd. Thank God it was recorded. I'm no fan of the media, but staying true to form, the media aired the murder over and over and over again.

This was truly the straw that Broke Us or should I say that Woke Us. What kind of a nation is America where police can lynch Black Men almost daily and nothing significant is done to the perpetrators? Those Good Old Boys no longer use ropes and hang us from trees, but the result is the same; dead bodies.

Cops claim, Mr. Floyd and the other victims were resisting, were combative and non-compliant. The officers said they "feared for their lives". Stevie Wonder, Ray Charles and Jose Feliciano could all see that George Floyd was handcuffed, lying on the ground, and was not a threat to any officer. He was lying there helpless with a knee on his neck instead of a rope around it. He was crying out for help. We all saw it!

Black folks in America, especially Black Men, have been Dissed and Missed systematically since slavery was abolished. Black men are discouraged, displaced, disassociated, dismissed, distrusted, discounted, disoriented, disconnected, disordered and disenfranchised. Then they are mistreated, misrepresented, misunderstood, misappropriated, and misplaced (preferably to prisons).

The Police, who are supposed to serve and protect all Citizens, (including Black citizens) are funded by the good old boy, white house politicians to keep Black folks subjugated. The murder we witnessed was by design not by accident. If a Black or Brown Man demands to be treated fairly and respectfully by law enforcement or the powers that be, he is routinely subjected to denigration, emasculation, incarceration and even strangulation.

But finally, the good old boys are being exposed for the killers they really are. The Rodney King beating was almost 30 years ago and here we are decades later again watching not just police brutality, but police murder on television.

At one of the Black Lives Matter protests at Riverfront park, I saw a sign that said "Say their Names." We can't possibly say all of their names, because there are far too many. Most of their names, their murders, we will never even know about. For many decades, these deaths have been quietly swept under the judicial rugs of America.

When I was in elementary school, my older brother, who is almost 70 years old now, was badly beaten by racist cops. He was only 16 years old. His life could have easily ended at the age of 16. The next day, after my brother came home bruised and bloody, I remember being in my elementary classroom and the teacher told us to stand, face the flag, and put our right hand over our heart in preparation to recite the Pledge of Allegiance. I had no idea what I was reciting, it was just a ritual that we had to do. Even at that young age, I knew it was a form of respect for the flag and the country, that much I knew.

In this climate of social unrest, I have been dealing with and processing a lot of anger. Decades of suppressed anger have welled up in me. I've attended 3 peaceful protests



and one rally, which has helped, but the anger is still in me. As an American citizen and a retired teacher, for half a century, I have personally recited and lead countless students dutifully through the Pledge of Allegiance. For some reason that pledge of A-Lie, as I see it, has been on my mind lately. So, let's take a closer look at this oath.

I pledge Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America; And to the republic for which it stands; One nation under God, Indivisible, with liberty and justice for All.

This is what it's supposed to mean:

As I stand before this flag with my right hand over my heart; I promise my loyalty to the United States of America (*TRUE FOR MOST BLACK AMERICANS*)

A country Where Power is held by the people and their elected officials (*VOTE OR SHUT UP*)

A country where We have a common language and culture that we all respect (*A-LIE*)

A country where We are divinely protected and unable to be divided (*A-LIE*)

A country whose citizens are all free from oppression (*A-LIE*)

And everyone receives fair treatment (*A-LIE*)

I'm wondering why are we still requiring children and adults to recite this pledge as if it is the truth?

The truth is, Black Americans have demonstrated, in a variety of ways, our loyalty to America, yet we are oppressed, treated unfairly, hated and feared by far too many Americans. Ok, maybe they don't hate Oprah. After all, who doesn't love Oprah? And there are also countless super rich and talented Black athletes, musicians, film mak-

ers and movie stars that are loved too. My God, we even had Present Obama and Michelle in the white house for 8 years.

Historically though, white Americans have always been more comfortable letting Black folks entertain and serve them. This is nothing new. It's the same meal, but now served on a silver platter to a few, while the masses are living in poverty in dangerous underserved communities. Even some of the most "open minded" white Americans still think, "We love Black folks, we really do, but please don't buy the house next door to me or marry my child."

Understand that I am speaking about the minority of white folks. I firmly believe deep in my heart that the majority of white Americans are good people (some of my best friends are white, really). But unfortunately, I also believe that there are simple-minded, gun toting agitators, instigators and red neck haters who are praying and waiting for any chance to collectively act out and kill Black folks.

The current administration appears to be divisive and encourages violence, oppression and the knee on the neck approach. Black America please wake up!! White America is not going to save us. We love and appreciate our allies, but Black folks we can't keep praying in dead churches on Sundays and waiting for the rapture. We have got to rapture ourselves now!

For more than 16 generations, enslaved and later freed Black folks were systematically pitted against one another. Even today we still don't like and trust each other. Let's admit that. The good old boy American system has done a great job at squelching our self-love, our gifts and talents by lacing our communities with drugs, guns, gangs, snitches and inferior educational institutions. This has been by design. White slave owners did a real psychological number on Black slaves. The mis-trust and discomfort still demonstrates in our current psyche.

Now, centuries later, we must re-learn and go against our own un-natural anti-Black nature. To change our dynamics and thrive as a cohesive community, we must re-teach ourselves. We can learn to love and support each other again. Remember in the sixties, when we used to refer to each other as "Brother or Sistah" with our big afros and the raised fist? We were proud and respectful of each other.

For some reason, Black folks in Spokane see each other on the street or in the market and drop their eyes and don't even speak to one other. Wake up Black Spokane. Are we so beaten down that we can't even hold our heads up and say hello to each other? Have you forgotten who you are? We are the very backbone of America?

Brothers and Sistahs, we must become willing to trust each other again. Let's just start with a simple nod or a hello. Take any small step to help unite our community. The next time you need a service or product, take the time to seek out and patronize Black owned business. Other races do it. We can do it too.

Lastly, Black folks in America, if you don't do anything else this year for your community, please do two things. First, fill out the 2020 Census now at 2020census.gov, and in November, no matter how difficult it might be, go to the polls and VOTE!!

Power to the People.

A Moment or a Movement? Continued from Page 20

The American ethos of exceptionalism and the illusion of white supremacy are under attack. The battle is playing out right before our eyes on both the foreign and domestic fronts.

You cannot separate the racist aggression being carried out against people of color in the streets of the US by the State (aka the police) and the racist aggression being

carried out by the US against Venezuela, Bolivia, Afghanistan, Zimbabwe, Yemen, Libya and Syria (just to name a few).

Dr. King warned us about the three major evils: "poverty, global racial oppression and militarism"... King told us, "And we must face the hard fact that many Americans would like to have a nation which is a democracy for white Americans but

simultaneously a dictatorship over black Americans."

Too many white Americans are insecure and losing their footing in the shifting sands of the quest for ethnic equality in America.

How those of good conscience and morality respond to the violent blowback will de-

termine if and how the country can move from this moment of unrest and uncertainty to a movement of peace and equality.

I am certain that we will never get there until Congress and others stop wading in the safety of the shallow waters of chokeholds and panels and begin to swim into the deep waters of the real issue... the racist ethos of America.

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

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

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JULY EVENTS

JULY 3
PEOPLE OF COLOR AFFINITY SPACE
Join us for the 3rd virtual POC affinity space of the summer. A virtual People of Color specific space for the Spokane community of Color to gather, breathe and heal. Focusing on internalized and horizontal oppression. We are actively striving to advance belongingness and strengthen our interracial solidarity.
5-6:30pm - Online
Sponsored by Excelerate Success. To register e-mail Michaelab@unitedwayspokane.org.

JULY 3
JOHN LEWIS: GOOD TROUBLE
On Friday, July 3rd the Magic Lantern will be opening JOHN LEWIS: GOOD TROUBLE. Proceeds will go towards the Spokane NAACP!
For more information visit: magiclanternonline.com or call 509-203-2383. Immediately following the feature, there will be a pre-recorded discussion between Representative Lewis and Oprah Winfrey, filmed last month and being made available exclusively for virtual cinema and in-theater engagements of the film. This is a wide-ranging, informal, 16-minute conversation that's a perfect follow-up to the documentary, and could not be more relevant.

JULY 8
MEANINGFUL MOVIES SPOKANE
Join UUCS for weekly discussions of movies that speak to the events of our times. Unless noted, the movies are viewed in advance and the discussion is held online.
7/8 - "Whose Streets" - 7pm. (watch before)
7/15 - "Activized" - 6:30pm. (watch together)
7/22 - "Do Not Resist"- 7:00pm (watch before)
7/29 - "I Am Not Your Negro" - 7:00pm. (watch before)
For more information e-mail - meaningful-moviestspokane@gmail.com or visit: [/meaningfulmovies.org](http://meaningfulmovies.org)

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Soul

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JULY 8

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spokaneeastsideunionassociation.com

JULY 20
NAACP GENERAL MEETING
Join the NAACP for our monthly general membership meeting.
For more information please check social media or contact the NAACP at 509-209-2425 or visit: naacpspokane.org.

OPENTogether

Greater Spokane Inc. (GSI) and Spokane County have come together to provide **FREE PPE** supplies to small and non-profit businesses with **49 and fewer employees**.

Supplies will include:
Hand Sanitizer • Disinfecting Cleaner
Disposable and Cloth Facial Coverings

WHAT
FREE PPE Distribution for Small and Non-profit Businesses

WHERE
Spokane County Fairgrounds
(404 N Havana Street, Spokane Valley)

WHEN
Monday, June 29 thru Thursday, July 2
9am-4pm



MUST REGISTER PRIOR TO PICK-UP!

Register Here: [SurveyGizmo.com/s/5664867/PPERegistration](https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/5664867/PPERegistration)



GREATER SPOKANE INC.



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

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nwunity.org

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COVID-19 Business Assistance for Multi-Ethnic, Multi-Cultural Businesses.

AHANA has been contracted by the Washington State Department of Commerce Small Business Resiliency Assistance Program to assist and provide technical support for small businesses in underserved and under-represented communities affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Technical support and assistance may include:

- Navigational and technical assistance with contracts and applications
- Translating and distributing information
- Mentorship, education and/or training
- Planning for recovery and re-opening and support of their workforce

These services are available through August 31, 2020.

Contact:

Ben Cabildo at (509) 999-5365
ahana.meba10@gmail.com
www.ahana-meba.org



Navigating through Covid-19 and Beyond

Join us for these 3 webinars in July!

- **July 8 - Noon to 1pm:**
How to Plan for Reopening Your Business
- **July 14 - Noon to 1pm:**
Building the Resilience of Your Business
- **July 21 - Noon to 1pm:**
Designing Communication Strategies and Updating Technology

Register on our website to receive the webinar link.

