

THE BLACK LENSTM

NEWS FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

POST RACIAL?

White Nationalist Rally Sparks Reflection On Race, Equality In Charlottesville

By Sarah Rankin, Associated Press
Reprinted from <https://blackamericaweb.com>

CHARLOTTESVILLE, Va. (AP) — A white nationalist rally that turned violent has forced Charlottesville, VA residents to confront the ugly realities of racism, bigotry and inequality lurking beneath the charming veneer of their progressive college town.

In the weeks since the rally, where a woman protesting was hit by a car and killed, anger has erupted at local officials about how they responded to the violence. But at a recent City Council meeting, a press conference and a Sunday town hall, residents have also expressed concerns about broader, long-standing issues.

"This racism, this is nothing new to Charlottesville," said Daniel Thompson, an Army veteran whose voice rose as he spoke at the Sunday afternoon meeting billed as a first step in the city's recovery effort. "This is what us Black residents have gone through our entire lives," he said to cheers and applause.



Photo Credit Andrew Shurtleff/The Daily Progress

Thompson went on to say that the city had bigger problems than the Confederate monument that sparked the rally on Aug. 12. Chief among them, he and many others at the meeting said, was the cost of housing. Others speakers pointed to a deep mistrust of police among Black community members. Some called for better community mental health services; others said the education system was failing their children.

The meeting was held in conjunction with the Community Relations Service of the Department of Justice, and the facilitator told the audience they would be taking notes. On a laptop connected to a large projector screen, her colleague started a running list once the first speaker stepped up to the microphone. He had a hard time keeping up. "About the police," said Katrina Turner, who wore a Black Lives

Matter T-shirt. "We didn't trust the police before the rallies got here." She cited the department's stop-and-frisk statistics, which show the practice disproportionately affects Black residents.

In a city that's about 70 percent white and 19 percent black, more than 70 percent of all people stopped by Charlottesville police for an "investigative detention" so far this year have been Black, local newspaper The Daily Progress reported last week, saying that follows at least a four-year trend.

Susan Sherman, another speaker, said the city hadn't done enough to build up the African-American community and economy.

Sherman said she recently visited the city's website looking for information about how to support minority-owned businesses. She said she couldn't find anything about that but noted that the website touted the city's many awards for its quality of life.

"What it does say at the bottom of that home page is, Charlottesville, voted No. 1 city to live in, exclamation point.

Continued on Page 11

ON KATRINA'S ANNIVERSARY HOUSTON UNDER WATER

Houston Defender Publisher Rescued From Flood Waters



By Hazel Trice Edney

(TriceEdneyWire.com) – At publication deadline this week, more than 9,000 people – an overflow of evacuees – had packed into the Houston Convention Center fleeing the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey. Additional people on higher ground south of Houston had been urged to leave their homes immediately due to the possibility of broken levees. More than 17,000 were in shelters across the state. And more than 30,000 people were expected to seek shelter before it's all over.

Even with a 49 inch record rainfall for the U. S., Texas forecasts predicted even more heavy rain for the remainder of this week as the Hurricane appeared to boomerang, hitting the city for a second time. Parts of Louisiana are also under water and expected to get worse as well.

"Since the shelter opened early Sunday morning, I've seen throngs of survivors coming in, people who have barely the clothes on their backs, soaking wet, their belongings in their hands," Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee (D-Texas) said in a live CNN interview Tuesday. "But they're resilient, they have faith, they're looking for a future. And they believe that they're going to get help. That's an important message for those who now have nothing. We now have an obligation to commit to them that they will have a future and that the resources will come."

Lee said after conversations with rescue workers, volunteers and others in charge of the rescues, the key issue was to continue focusing on getting people to safety. She said she believed that there are "certain pockets in this community – including Beltway 8, Tidwell and Northside – where we need to continue to rescue people." Continued on Page 19



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ON MY MIND

THOUGHTS FROM THE EDITOR

by Sandra Williams

#NFL Black Out

What Has the NFL Done for You Lately?

We Americans love our Freedom of Speech. In fact, we claim it as one of the very things that separates us from the rest of the world, and we rabidly defend the First Amendment Right of our fellow Americans to speak their mind, even if the mind that they are speaking is in stark contrast to everything that we say we stand for as a country.

Case in point, a group of swastika wearing, gun-toting, “Heil Hitler” saluting Nazis and Neo-Nazis gleefully parading down the streets of Charlottesville, VA last month, having been granted legal permission to spew their messages of hate under the guise of protesting the removal of a Confederate statue.

Some protested the rights that had been granted to the Nazis and their sympathizers, given what the group proudly says it stands for, and the fact that this country actually went to war to fight against them. One protester, Heather Heyer, even lost her life as a result, when a Nazi sympathizer intentionally rammed his car into a crowd of protesters, murdering Heather and injuring nineteen others.

In the aftermath of that violent weekend, many condemned the Nazis and their message of hatred and division, but many others, while denouncing what the Nazis represent, argued for their right to Free Speech.

I found that fascinating, given that many of the same very vocal Freedom of Speech proponents were the very same ones that were offended and outraged when quarterback Colin Kaepernick quietly took a knee during the playing of the national anthem.

The message seems to be that U.S. flag waving Nazis should be free to march in protest of the perceived mistreatment of white people in this country, but a Black football player shouldn’t be free to take a knee to protest the treatment of African Americans? Hmmmm.....

If all things were equal, you could simply chalk that discrepancy up as just another one of the contradictions we seem to have grown just a little too comfortable with in the United States, but all things are not equal, and owners of sports teams in this country, who have historically been almost exclusively white, have had an unfortunate history of using and abusing athletes, particularly Black ones, as if they were highly paid chattel, required to trade their consciousness for a paycheck.



Colin Kaepernick dared to break the cardinal rule that Blacks discover very early on is a prerequisite for our success in this country, whether you are in business, the public sector, academia, or professional sports. Above all else, thou must know thy place.

Some have argued that Kaepernick, a free agent, sits unsigned by an NFL team not because of his “controversial” and “un-American” protest, but because he is not a good enough player, and that not one of the thirty-plus teams in the NFL have a use for his substandard talent.

Maybe that’s true, and I have to admit that I scratch my head each year at the near religious fervor that surrounds the Sunday, Monday, and now Thursday night games, so I don’t feel able to make an educated judgment about Kaepernick’s ability.

But there is a growing movement spreading across the country called NFL Black Out, made up of football fans and supporters of Kaepernick, church leaders, community members, entertainers and activists, both Black and non-Black, who seem to be saying they are not buying the “not good enough” argument and calling out the NFL for its hypocrisy. NFL Black Out-ers are vowing not to attend a game, watch a game or buy NFL swag until Kaepernick gets signed. Pledging to speak to NFL owners in the only language many believe the owners will understand. Money!

When I heard about the NFL Black Out protest spreading across social media, my first thought was, it’s about time! My second thought, however, was, I wonder how many Black folk are going to join in? We have supported Kaepernick, and even admired his guts, behind closed doors. But asking us to give up football? Hmmmm.....

Imagine, though, how quickly Kaepernick would be added to a team if all of the Black people who pack the stands each week, spending millions upon millions of dollars, decided to stay home for just one game? And imagine what we could accomplish if we took some of those millions and re-directed them towards our communities and our businesses and most importantly toward uplifting our children? Imagine.

THE BLACK LENS NEWS

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

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Black Lens Out and About



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The winners of the Black Lens Trombone Shorty Contest (and mom).

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BLACK NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Local, State, National and Around the World

Dick Gregory: Comedian and Civil Rights Activist



October 12, 1932 - August 19, 2017

By Monée Fields-White

Excerpts reprinted from <http://www.theroot.com>

Comedian Dick Gregory—who attacked racism through a biting and satirical style of comedy, and was equally well-known for his civil rights activism and advocacy of an austere health regimen—died Saturday, Aug. 19, at the age of 84. Gregory’s family confirmed his death with a post on Instagram.

Born Oct. 12, 1932, in St. Louis, Gregory grew up in an impoverished community in that city. He helped to support his family from an early age. In high school he excelled in track and field, earning a scholarship to Southern Illinois University at Carbondale. He set school records in the 1/2-mile and 1-mile races. His college career was interrupted when the U.S. Army drafted him in 1954.

Gregory began to venture into comedy while in the Army, performing various routines in military shows. After briefly returning to Southern Illinois after being discharged in 1956, he moved to Chicago to join the national comedy circuit, without finishing his degree. He performed mostly in small, primarily black nightclubs while working at the U.S. Postal Service during the day. It was at one of those nightclubs that he met Lillian, the woman who became his wife in 1959. She and Gregory would have 10 children.

His big break came in 1961, when a one-night show at the Chicago Playboy Club turned into a two-month engagement. Time magazine profiled him, and he landed an appearance on The Jack Paar Show. Gregory was a new phenomenon: a black comedian performing for white audiences. He was also part of a new generation of black comedians, including Nipsey Russell, Bill Cosby and Godfrey Cambridge, who shunned the stereotypical

comedic minstrel show. In his routines, Gregory tackled issues of the day—especially racism and civil rights—head on. A sampling of his stand-up: “Segregation is not all bad. Have you ever heard of a collision where the people in the back of the bus got hurt?”

During this time, Gregory became very active in the civil rights movement. He spoke before the voter-registration drive known as Freedom Day on Oct. 7, 1963, and made appearances at a number of other rallies, marches and benefits. In 1963 he was jailed in Birmingham, Ala. He was also an outspoken opponent of the Vietnam War.

In 1964 Gregory released his autobiography, *Nigger*, about his experiences with America’s color line, starting in boyhood; it has since sold more than 7 million copies. In response to his mother’s objection over the incendiary title, he wrote in the foreword, “Whenever you hear the word ‘nigger,’ you’ll know they’re advertising my book.”

Gregory’s political activism led him to run, unsuccessfully, for mayor of Chicago in 1966 and for the presidency as a write-in candidate of the Freedom and Peace Party in 1968. Of his presidential campaign, he wrote in the 1968 book *Write Me In!* about how one-dollar bills that the campaign had printed with Gregory’s picture on them had made their way into the money supply. The federal government managed to seize most of the bills, and Gregory avoided criminal charges.

Throughout his life, Gregory remained outspoken on many issues, including world hunger, capital punishment, women’s rights (he marched for ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment in 1978), health care and drug abuse.

Continued on Page 19

Kenneth Frazier: Merck CEO Quits Trump Panel

(Source: Matthew Herper, <https://www.forbes.com>)

Citing President Trump’s reluctance to denounce the white supremacists and neo-nazis whose protest in Charlottesville, VA last month resulted in the death of one counter-protestor, Heather Heyer, and injuries to 19 others, Kenneth C. Frazier, the chairman and chief executive of the U.S. drug maker Merck, resigned from President Donald Trump’s American Manufacturing Council on August 14, saying in a statement, “As CEO of Merck and as a matter of personal conscience, I feel a responsibility to take a stand against intolerance and extremism.”

According to Forbes magazine, who profiled Frazier, he grew up in inner city Philadelphia. His father was a janitor with a limited education, but Forbes says, Frazier described his father as, “one of the most intelligent men I’ve met in my life.” His father “devoured two newspapers a day” and, later on, “his three kids’ college textbooks.”

As a young man, according to Forbes, Frazier, who went to both Penn State and then Harvard Law School on



Photo by Ron Sachs - Pool/Getty Images)

scholarship, idolized Thurgood Marshall. In 1978 joined the law firm of Drinker Biddle & Reath in Philadelphia.

In 1991, Frazier defended James Willie “Bo” Cochran who had been arrested and accused of murdering an assistant manager at a Birmingham grocery store in 1976. Cochran’s conviction was eventually overturned in 1995, after he had spent 19 years on death row. He was tried again and found not guilty in 1997.

While Frazier was working on the Cochran case in 1992, according to Forbes, he was hired as the general counsel of Astra Merck Group, a joint venture that sold the “blockbuster heartburn drug Prilosec”. In 1994, he was brought into Merck to run public affairs.

Frazier was made Merck’s corporate counsel, or chief lawyer, in 1999, and it was his success defending the company against an “onslaught of lawsuits relating to its handling of the painkiller Vioxx”, ultimately saving the company billions of dollars by some projections, that led Frazier to get the CEO job, in 2011.

In an excerpt from his full statement of resignation, Frazier said, “Our country’s strength stems from its diversity and the contributions made by men and women of different faiths, races, sexual orientations and political beliefs. America’s leaders must honor our fundamental values by clearly rejecting expressions hatred, bigotry and group supremacy, which run counter to the American ideal that all people are created equal.”

Several other CEOs followed suit and on August 16 President Trump disbanded both the Manufacturing Council & Strategy & Policy Forum.



Photo: Michael Lund, WSJ

BLACK NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Local, State, National and Around the World

Francis Adawale

Local Attorney Receives President’s Award

(Source: Jessica Fisher, City of Spokane)

In June, City of Spokane Public Defender Francis Adewale received the President’s Award from the Washington Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers (WACDL) in honor of his work in the Spokane Community.

According to WACDL, the “President’s Awards are given to recognize distinguished service to the highest traditions of the criminal defense bar. This award may be given to recognize achievement in a particular case or series of related cases, or long-time service to the criminal defense bar.”

Francis Adewale, whose home country is Nigeria, earned a law degree in 1990 at a local law school in Lagos. Eight years later, he fled Nigeria and moved to Washington D.C. after receiving a U.S. Visa through a lottery program.

While working odd jobs in D.C., Adewale learned that lawyers who have practiced for at least seven years in common-law countries are eligible to take the Washington State bar exam. He took and passed the bar exam on his first attempt and then moved his family to Spokane, Washington.

After moving to Spokane, Adewale was hired by the City of Spokane’s Public Defender’s Office

through the City’s Civil Service merit system. While working for the Public Defender’s Office he worked with a team of prosecutors, defense attorneys and judges to help shape Spokane’s Community Court. Community Court is a specialized docket held at the downtown Spokane Library each Monday from 10:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. for non-inmates, and each Friday at 8:30 a.m. in municipal courtroom A for inmates. The docket is composed of offenders who are charged with various nuisance / quality of life charges from events in the city’s urban core.

Using a combination of offender needs assessments, on-site wrap around social services and intensive case monitoring, the goal of Community Court is to assist offenders with getting the services they need to put their lives back on track and break the cycle of recidivism.

Spokane’s Community Court has been serving citizens since 2013 and has become a model for numerous cities across the country.

Adewale was honored with the inaugural City of Spokane Human Rights Award or his work in helping create Spokane’s Community Court, volunteering his time to help put on a training symposium for immigrants to learn the basics of Washington law and participating in the street law program.



Cleveland Browns Stage Largest National Anthem Protest

(Reprinted from <https://www.rt.com/sport>)

More than a dozen Cleveland Browns players staged the largest national anthem protest seen in the NFL so far, ahead of Monday’s preseason game against the New York Giants.

The group gathered by water coolers during the playing of the Star-Spangled Banner and included tight end Seth DeValve, the first white NFL player to kneel in the protests, an initiative begun by former San Francisco 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick.

The protests have since regained prominence due to recent violence and racial tensions in Charlottesville, Virginia, where right-wing demonstrators and white supremacists clashed with counter-protesters.

DeValve was joined by Jabrill Peppers, linebackers Jamie Collins and Christian Kirksey, running backs Isaiah Crowell, Duke Johnson and Terrence Magee, wide receivers Kenny Britt and Ricardo Louis, and defensive back Calvin Pryor, who dropped to one knee in a circle.

Outside of that circle, rookie quarterback DeShone Kizer, offensive tackle Shon Coleman, punter Britton Colquitt, defensive back Jason McCourty and offensive lineman Marcus Martin all supported their teammates by standing next to them and putting their hands on their shoulders.

DeValve, 24, whose wife is black, told of his reasons for supporting his teammates in a post-game interview. “It saddens me that in 2017 we have to do something like



Photo Credit: Ken Blaze / Reuters

that. I personally would like to say that I love this country. I love our national anthem,” DeValve told reporters.

“I’m very grateful to the men and women who have given their lives and do a lot every day to protect this country and to

serve this country and I want to honour them as much as I can.

“The United States is the greatest country in the world. It is because it provides opportunities to its citizens that no other country does. The issue is that it doesn’t

provide equal opportunity to everybody. “I wanted to support my African American teammates today who wanted to take a knee. We wanted to draw attention to the fact that there’s things in this country that still need to change.

“I myself will be raising children that don’t look like me and I want to do my part as well to do everything I can to raise them in a better environment than we have right now. “So I wanted to take the opportunity with my teammates during the anthem to pray for our country and also to draw attention to the fact that we have work to do and that’s why I did what I did.”

The participation of DeValve in the protest comes after Seattle Seahawks’ Michael Bennett claimed last week that the movement would be more effective if white players became involved.

The Cleveland Browns issued a statement at half-time in which it said that it has “a profound respect for our country’s national anthem, flag and the servicemen and servicewomen” but respects “the great liberties afforded by our country, including the freedom of personal expression.”

“Couple guys got together, spoke, we all spoke, voiced the way we want go about it,” Jabrill Peppers told reporters, MLive.com reported. “Ultimately, we thought coming together and praying for our nation was the best outcome that we could have gotten for everyone to come together and express how we feel.”

The Browns went on to win the game 10-6 at the FirstEnergy Stadium in Ohio.

YOU SHOULD KNOW

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

The “Silent Negro Parade”

10,000 African Americans Marched in NAACP Sponsored Protest

The National Association of the Advancement of Colored People’s (NAACP) Silent Protest Parade, also known as the Silent March, was held in New York City on Saturday, July 28, 1917, on 5th Avenue. This parade came about because the violence acted upon African Americans, including the race riots, lynching, and outages in Texas, Tennessee, Illinois, and other states.

One incident in particular, the East St. Louis Race Riot, also called the East St. Louis Massacre, was a major catalyst of the silent parade. This horrific event drove close to six thousand blacks from their own burning homes and left several hundred dead.

James Weldon Johnson, the second vice president of the NAACP, brought together other civil rights leaders who gathered at St. Phillips Church in New York to plan protest strategies. None of the group wanted a mass protest, yet all agreed that a silent protest through the streets of the city could spark the idea of racial reform and an end to the violence. Johnson remembered the idea of a silent protest from a NAACP Conference in 1916 when Oswald Garrison Villard suggested it. All the organizations agreed that this parade needed to be comprised of the black citizens, rather than a racially-mixed gathering. They argued that as the principal victims of the violence, African Americans had a special responsibility to participate in this, the first major public protest of racial violence in U.S. history.

The parade went south down 5th Avenue, moved to 57th Street and then to Madison Square. It brought out nearly ten thousand black women, men, and children, who all marched in silence. Johnson urged that the only sound to be heard would be the “the sound of muffled drums.”

Children, dressed in white, led the protest, followed by women behind, also dressed in



By Public Domain

white. Men followed at the rear, dressed in dark suits.

The marchers carried banners and posters stating their reasons for the march. Both participants and onlookers remarked that this protest was unlike any other seen in the city and the nation. There were no chants, no songs, just silence. As those participating in the parade continued down the streets of New York, black Boy Scouts handed out flyers to those watching that described the NAACP’s struggle against segregation, lynching, and discrimination, as well as other forms of racist oppression.

James Weldon Johnson wrote in his 1938 autobiography, *Along This Way*, that “the streets of New York have witnessed many strange sites, but I judge, never one stranger than this; among the watchers were those with tears in their eyes.”



By Unknown - NY Public Library - Public Domain



By Underwood & Underwood

Sources:

Jessie Carney Smith, Linda T. Wynn, *Freedom Facts and Firsts: 400 Years of the African American Civil Rights Experience* (Visible Ink Press, 2009); James Weldon Johnson, *Along This Way: The Autobiography of James Weldon Johnson* (New York: Penguin Classics, 2008); James Barron, “A History of Making Protest Messages Heard, Silently,” *The New York Times* (June 2012); “Snippet From History #2: The Negro Silent Protest of 1917,” <http://www.usprisonculture.com/blog/2013/02/28/snippet-from-history-2-the-negro-silent-protest-of-1917/>; “The Negro Silent Protest Parade,” <https://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/pds/maai2/forward/text4/silentprotest.pdf>.

Contributor: Newman, Alexis, University of Washington, Seattle

MONEY/FINANCE

Black Wealth 2020: New Economic Justice Movement Aims to ‘Turbo Charge’ Black Wealth in America

By Hazel Trice Edney

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - According to the following statistics, the economic condition of America's Black community is in dire straits:

- A recent study by Harvard University found that homeownership in the Black community stands at only 42.2 percent in the nation's largest metro areas. That's below the Latino-American community, which is at 46 percent and well below the White-American community, which is at 72 percent.

- In addition, the mortgage denial rate for Blacks is more than 25 percent, near 20 percent for Latinos but just over 10 percent for White applicants, according to the Center for Enterprise Development.

- Likewise, the U.S. Black Chambers, Inc. says the lack of access to capital remains the greatest barrier to the establishment, expansion and growth of Black-owned businesses.

- Finally, Black-owned banks, which grant an overwhelming majority of their loans to Black people, continue to climb their way out of the disparate hit they took during the great recession while maintaining their historic role in stabilizing Black communities.

These revelations illustrating the economic struggles of African-Americans are the driving forces behind the founding of a new group that's leading a movement for Black economic justice across America.

Black Wealth 2020, formally established only two years ago, aims to lock arms with some of the most historic national civic and civil rights organizations with a goal to impact economic outcomes in Black America over the next three years. The group's three-pronged strategy is to increase the number of Black homeowners, strengthen Black-owned businesses and increase deposits in Black banks by the year 2020.

"This is, in my recollection, the first time there's been a systematic effort to draw our community's attention to these very critical issues related to wealth-building and economic self-sufficiency. That being the importance of supporting Black banks, the importance of homeownership, the importance of growing Black businesses - those really are the three pillars of economic empowerment," says Marie Johns, former deputy administrator at the Small Business Administration and retired president of Verizon Washington, who is a member of Black Wealth 2020.

"If you have strong business ownership, strong home ownership and strong financial institutions, that's freedom. It's the closest proximity that we'll get," says Johns, also chair of the Howard University board of visitors and creator of SBA's Council on Underserved Communities.

In a nutshell, the seeds of Black Wealth 2020 were initially planted during a fight for economic justice. It started about seven years ago as several like-minded heads of organizations with economic components began regularly discussing the financial plight of Black people. The group gelled



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after National Bankers Association President Michael Grant, National Association of Black-owned Broadcasters (NABOB) President Jim Winston and U.S. Black Chamber President (USBC) Ron Busby joined forces with Congresswoman Maxine Waters (D-Calif.) to push for Black business inclusion in a proposed merger between Comcast and NBC Universal.

Winston had asked Waters, ranking Democrat on the House Financial Services Committee, to take action in the situation. Winston then pulled in Grant who pulled in Busby. The Comcast merger ultimately failed. But, "We decided to put together some kind of organizational team," recalls Grant, "So that whenever these issues come up, we'll have a united front and we'll have a lot of organizations. That's how Black Wealth 2020 was formed." The ultimate goal is to "turbo charge" Black wealth, Grant says.

While Black Wealth 2020 is uniquely economic, it aims to work alongside traditional civil rights organizations, including the National Urban League, the NAACP and others, Winston says.

"We have been concerned that for many years the Black civil rights movement had been the only national voice of the African-American community. Those groups do a great job but there are business and economic battles that the Black community has been fighting. And we don't believe that the Black community's voice has been strong enough and effective enough in that regard," says Winston. "And so we are able to strengthen each other in each other's activities as well as our collective voice for the Black community."

Other leaders in Black Wealth 2020 are HomeFree USA President Marcia Griffin; Zenviba Academy of Arts and Sci-

ence President John William Templeton; Collective Empowerment Group National President Dr. Jonathan Weaver; National Association of Real Estate Brokers President Ron Cooper; Enlightened: Beyond Expectations President Antwanye Ford; and Delta Sigma Theta President Dr. Paulette Walker. At latest count, the group has a total immediate reach of at least 3 million people.

Members of Black Wealth 2020 are quick to point to the historic roots of its economic goals. When Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated on April 4, 1968, he had launched a "Poor People's Campaign," an economic justice movement that had begun in Memphis. John William Templeton, founder of the 14th Annual National Black Business Month in August, sees the work of Black Wealth 2020 as a continuum of Dr. King's vision. Templeton contends the prophecy spoken by King the night before his death must still come to fruition.

"King said he wasn't going to get to the promise land with us. But we as a people will get to the promise land. And people have forgotten that," Templeton says.

Over the past 49 years since the assassination of Dr. King, other Black economic strategies have popped up and fizzled out. For this movement, Black Wealth 2020 members say the strategy for sustainability is built in, including the following elements:

- **Black America's current state of affairs:** "This current administration is going to force us to look internally because we don't have any help coming from outside our community," says USBC President Ron Busby. "It's not about one organization or about one individual leading the conversation, but once the mission was set and the three goals were established we can now go back to our collective constituencies and say this is what's important."

- **Youth involvement:** National Bankers President Grant says the participation of youth is key. Black Wealth 2020 has begun incorporating and mentoring youth economic leaders in their monthly meetings. "In my study of history, going back to ancient times, I can't think of any major movement that was a societal changing movement that wasn't driven by the energy of youth," Grant says.

- **Shared Leadership:** "In the past, movements have been tied to one individual. And as soon as there is some issue, and perhaps maybe death, often times what happens on the demise of that individual is the organization goes through a down spin and it in many instances ends up being discarded," says Dr. Jonathan Weaver. "As a result of this, there is no mindset or mentality among any of us that we want to be the one to be glorified or recognized as the so-called leader. That there is indeed shared leadership within this body and because we are so focused and so intentional about it, we really are just very resolute and determined to make this work."

- **Unique structure:** The umbrella structure of Black Wealth 2020 also lends to unity, accountability and sustainability.

Continued on Page 18

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EVERY STUDENT COUNTS ALLIANCE

Addressing Disparities in Spokane Schools

In 2014, Spokane Public Schools had a discipline problem. Too many students --- and far too many Black, multiracial, Native American, and Pacific Islander students --- were getting removed from school. Students with disabilities were excluded for behaviors related to disabilities. Elementary school students, even kindergarteners, were suspended at rates far exceeding the state average.

Indeed, Spokane’s overall rates of discipline were more than twice the state average, and student arrest rates in the district were high. The system exacerbated inequities, and it did nothing to make schools safer or more effective. It needed to change.

J. is just one example. When J. was in kindergarten, she was suspended for “disruptive behavior.” J. has an autism diagnosis and part of her IEP is having an aide at recess to help with transitioning back into class. One day when J. didn’t have an aide as directed, she became upset during the transition to recess. She kicked off her shoes, ran into school, and hid in the bathroom. Her family was ordered to pick her up from school and J. was suspended for several days.

J. didn’t understand why she couldn’t return to school and the suspension significantly disrupted J.’s family’s relationship with the school. They were confused about why the situation escalated so quickly and felt alienated from J.’s teachers and school principal.

Throughout the country, parent and community engagement has been a crucial part of reforming school discipline systems.

For example, in Denver, Colorado, a group of parents and students named Padres y Jovenes Unidos spearhead-



Wendy Bromley, Assistant Principal and Maryo Gustafson, Dean of Students, North Central High School

ed a six-year campaign that culminated in new discipline policies designed to eliminate racial disparities in discipline, stop police involvement in minor misbehavior, and make schools safer by using restorative justice policies. Parents and students organized, identified areas for improvement, and ensured that their perspectives were centered in reform efforts.

The Smith-Barbieri Progressive Fund, A Charitable Foundation, has supported similar efforts in Spokane, through the Every Student Counts Alliance (ESCA).

The ESCA is an alliance of existing organizations (including the ACLU of Washington, the Spokane NAACP, Team Child, Northwest Justice Project, Disability Rights Washington, the Center for Justice, the Arc of Spokane, PAVE, and Passages) and individual parents who coordinate efforts to reform Spokane Pubic Schools’ discipline systems.

Over the past year, ESCA members have successfully advocated for a Superintendent’s Resolution committing the district to a two-year reform effort, effectuated through a workgroup (co-facilitated by ESCA members) that includes district administrators, teachers, communi-

ty members, and parents, working together to develop a blueprint for reform.

The ESCA has also sponsored parent “know your rights events,” and taken direct action to influence school board policies and the district budget.

And there’s already been success. As a result of the ESCA efforts, the Spokane School District has revised its student discipline policies to prioritize the use of restorative justice, required training for school police officers in implicit bias and youth development (among other topics), developed the district’s first policy on school police that limits the offenses for which youth will be arrested, and providing significant training in restorative practices to teachers and school administrators. This year, the District allocated nearly \$900,000 of funds to support discipline reform work, including adding new staff positions and family liaisons.

But there is much more work to be done which is why the Smith-Barbieri Progressive Fund will continue to support the ESCA.

While overall rates of discipline in the district have decreased, racial and disability disproportionality continues. Similarly, arrest rates are down, but students of color are still more likely to be arrested in school. These continued disparities indicate why it’s so important to center the expertise of parents and students of color, and parents of and students with disabilities.

Effective policy change and effective cultural change will come – but we need to keep demanding it.

For more information or to get involved, email vhernandez@aclu-wa.org.

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Blinded By Love: Spokane Immigrants Community Can Breathe Easy Again

By Francis Adewale

One of the iconic photos of the last solar eclipse is a newly wedded couple gazing at the sun with their authentic eclipse glasses at Rose Garden in Manito Park, Spokane, WA. When the couple was asked why they choose an eclipse day to marry, the newlywed said “We wanted people to be blinded by love, not the sun.” This unique Spokane story came to mind as we celebrate the decision by Spokane Superior Court to keep an anti-immigrant ballot initiative in Spokane out of the November election. A victory obtained through the dint of hard work of attorneys at Center for Justice.

The people and organizations behind the initiative were clear in their message from the very beginning; they do not want immigrants in Spokane. The rhetoric they unleashed was frightening to say the least. For weeks, some of us in the immigrants’ community had to keep our kids away from local media where they peddled their hatred. I recalled having a conversation with my children at the height of their campaign telling them that this hateful rhetoric does not in any way represent the beautiful people of Spokane who received me and my family with open arms and hearts for more than 17 years.

The allegations by the supporters of the initiatives is baffling and sometimes ridiculous, Spokesman Review quoted one of the supporters, Susan Bacon, as saying immigrants “bring dangerous, infectious diseases to the country, including tuberculosis, influenza, leprosy, cholera and scabies.” She further said, “I am not going to bring up Ebola per se because we know far too much about that.” You have to remember that she made the preceding statement in 2014, at the height of the Ebola scare. Overnight, some of us in the immigrant community had to counsel our children on what to say when bullies in school started making fun of them as being disease-ridden. It was hurtful and I hope that experience will never happen again in the Inland Northwest.

However, if history is any guide, my hope may be forlorn. A recent article in Slate.com remind-



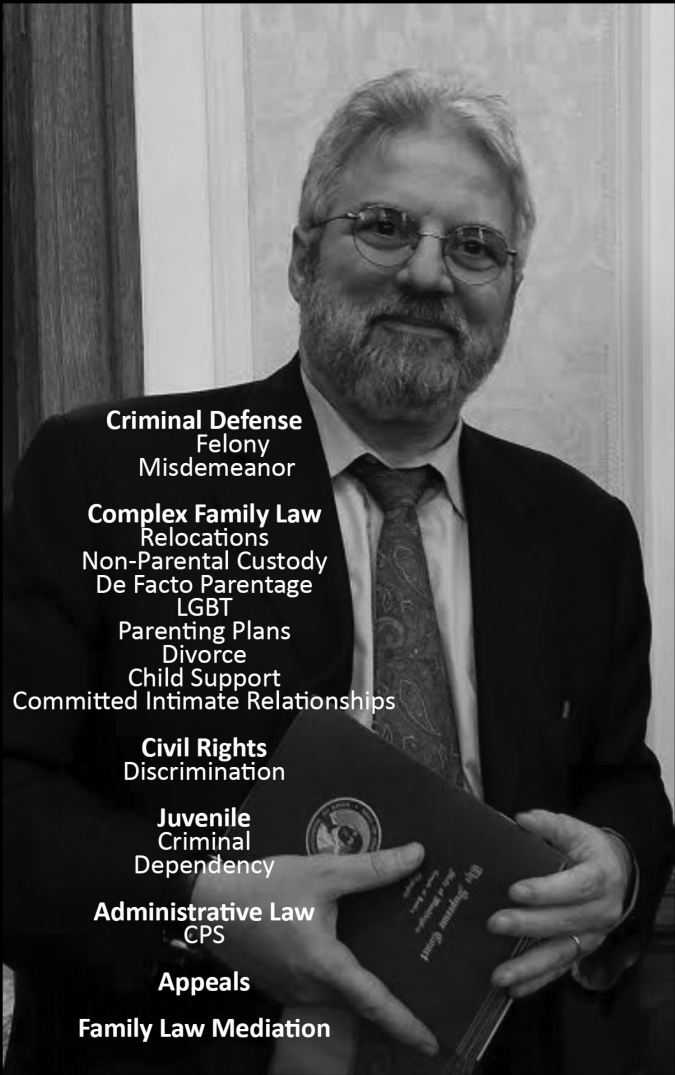
ed us of the axiom that those who do not learn from history are bound to repeat it. In an article titled “The Yakima Terror”, the online journal recounted a wave of anti-immigrant sentiment which resulted in horror for Filipino immigrants in Yakima county 90 years ago. In November 1927, a mob converged on Yakima city hall demanding immediate deportation of foreign farm workers on the grounds that they were taking away jobs and “bothering” white women on the streets.

The Yakima Valley community’s response to the mob’s havoc is similar to the experience I had when I forwarded the article to friends, neighbors and pastors in the Inland Northwest during our recent initiative saga. They all rose in unison against this hateful rhetoric and let me and other immigrants know that they have our back.

Many promised they will do everything in their power to ensure that this initiative failed at the ballot. What is more, even those who support anti-sanctuary city policies agree that the City and County of Spokane is not one and that what this group sought is an attempt to divide our community and make the job of law enforcement a lot more difficult.

The decision by Judge Julie McKay is therefore a refreshing icing on the cake. We can breathe easy at last, thanks to Center for Justice and our courageous judiciary.

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HEALTH & MEDICINE

DR. STEFAN HUMPHRIES: Making Our Churches Healthy



Dr. Stefan Humphries has been working with a planning group in Spokane spearheaded by Pastor Happy Watkins of New Hope Baptist Church and Elder Ezra Kinlow of Holy Temple Church of God in Christ, who have been meeting weekly with the Spokane Regional Health District to organize a community health event that will address the key health issues that are disproportionately affecting the African American community. The Black Lens had the opportunity to interview Dr. Humphries about his work and his background. The following is an excerpt from that interview:

Tell me about your background. You were an athlete and then became a doctor, is that correct?

Yes, that's correct. I had an opportunity that was afforded to me to play professional football. I had a great experience with the Bears and the Broncos, and I got to play in a couple of Super Bowls. But most professional athletes will tell you, they are only as good as their last injury and I had a fairly significant injury that took me out of the game.

I had always thought that I would become a doctor at some point in my life and most of us who go through high school playing high school athletics and then go on to play collegiate athletics know that very few have the opportunity to play professional athletics. So, as I matriculated at the University of Michigan, my goal was to eventually go to medical school or to do something medical related. I majored in bio-engineering, with the idea that I would either go into clinical medicine or go into some kind of research in a medically related field.

As it turned out, after my career was cut short with an injury, I had the opportunity to fulfill that dream of going to medical school. I did that at the University of Colorado and subsequently did a residency at the Mayo Clinic in physical medicine and rehabilitation.

What made you want to be a doctor?

I had a sister that became a doctor and she and I are kindred spirits. She was older and kind of my mentor in a lot of ways. And as I grew up, I used to love Marcus Welby M.D. I said to myself, I'm going to be Marcus Welby M.D. one day. It was also a combination of having great parents, I thank the Lord to this day that he blessed me with great parents, and having great role models in my life. I think it kept me grounded. It kept me moving in the right direction.

African Americans are over-represented in most health categories, why do we as a people seem to be less healthy?

I've thought about that myself. I look at my own family and some of the conditions that my aunts and uncles, my mother and father have and they certainly are the same things that always come up. Diabetes. Hypertension.



Stroke. So, I think it begs the question of whether or not we have been exposed in a meaningful way to managing our health. I think it is needed in our communities, education about prevention and health management. As well as education about healthy lifestyles and healthy behaviors.

Certainly, it's not limited to the Black community. You can look across the board and healthy behaviors and prevention is needed across all populations, but I hear what you are saying and I definitely do see some recurrent themes that pertain to Black health and those include hypertension management and diabetes management.

How did you get involved in doing this type of work?

I first came to Spokane when I was recruited to work for St. Luke's Rehabilitation Institute and through my affiliation with St. Luke's, I had the opportunity to meet Pastor Happy Watkins and Rev. Kinlow. We've talked about how to better the experience for the Black community in Spokane over the years. As it so happens, I joined Work Well Consultants in 2008 and our goal was to raise awareness about health wellness in the employer community. Pastor Watkins and I continued to talk about an event for the church that would raise the awareness of wellness and that event is finally coming to fruition as we've gotten more people involved.

Rev. Watkins and Rev. Kinlow will be hosting an event for the church community in October that stresses health and wellness, including becoming aware of your numbers, so that the community can use that information to better their own health and wellness.

If a person were to come to the health event, what is the key thing that you want them to get out of it?

I think our goal is to empower individuals to be actors in their own health and wellness. That includes not only going to a provider on a yearly basis, but actually engaging in healthy activities and a healthy diet. In that way, hopefully, preventing the development of some of the conditions that might otherwise lead to something catastrophic. For those who already have conditions, the goal is to engage them in a way that they are active in the management of those conditions.

A lot of us walk around and we think we're fine, but in all actuality, we have uncontrolled hypertension. We have the onset of diabetes. We're kind of a walking time bomb. So, at the event, in addition to biometric screenings, there will be individuals talking about how to maintain your health and wellness, and for those who have issues with hypertension, diabetes, other medical conditions, they will be able to have information provided to them about continued management, as well as information about access to health care providers in the community that might be able to help them manage those conditions.

Do you have any advice for young African Americans?

For me, it started in my home. I had a mom and dad who were both educators, and stressed the importance of education, so my encouragement to young African Americans is to take their education seriously. I can't stress enough the importance of taking your education seriously, because it sets you up for success or failure, depending on how seriously you take it. Education is the key to success in America.

A lot of us, don't necessarily think about goals early on as we're going to high school. Having some career goals, I think is very important, so that it gives you some direction. Without those career goals sometimes the direction is not necessarily clear and you begin to spin your wheels and you can go off course. I think you need to look for mentors. Mentors that have been successful and that are willing to help you find success as well.

It's kind of a vision quest. Having that vision. Having that direction lends itself to defining what work ethic needs to occur to meet the goals. And also don't be afraid of having big goals. Most of us don't have stretch goals. I'm encouraging our up and coming scientists, doctors and lawyers to have stretch goals. To challenge themselves, because in that challenge somewhere is their greatness.

The Make Our Churches Healthy Community event is coming in October. Stay tuned for more information.

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A Thousand Ministers March for Justice and Peace

By Alanté Millow

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - More than one thousand religious leaders from across the nation gathered Monday morning at the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial in a “Minister’s March for Justice” to hold the Trump White House accountable.

“We wanted one thousand rabbis, sheiks ... Christian ministers of all denominations,” said the National Action Network’s Rev. Al Sharpton, the organizer of the demonstration. “It’s time for moral leaders of all religions to get freed of the fears and political laryngitis ... and stand up together!”

The march from the King Memorial to the U. S. Department of Justice commemorated 54 years after Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., also a Christian minister, led the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. His eldest son, Martin Luther King III, led marchers, alongside Sharpton, down Pennsylvania Avenue to the Department of Justice. King III described the march as a “moral crusade.”

“My father talked about a revolution of values which meant every human being would be treated with dignity and worth,” he said.

The march aimed to hold the Trump administration and Attorney Jeff Sessions accountable during an increase in hate crimes, mass incarceration and discrimination, according to a release by the organization.

Participants gathered that morning, adorned in various types of religious garb, t-shirts and

carrying protest signs. Among the messages displayed on the signs were: “Do Justice, Love Mercy, March Proudly,” “54 Years Later, Still Marching,” and “Black Lives Matter to This Rabbi.”

Organizers expected 1,000 ministers in the march. But Sharpton announced that nearly 3,000 had registered that morning, surpassing his goal of unity.

The crowd gathered around a stage and was first serenaded by a choir singing the words, “Love is patient. Love is kind. No room for hate. Show a little more love.” An array of speeches were given by several religious leaders from various walks of faith. Among them was Rev. Dr. Jamal-Harrison Bryant, from the Empowerment Movement of Baltimore. He spoke about the apologies religious leaders may owe to different groups.

“We owe an apology today to the members of Black Lives Matter because we have had to adjust,” Bryant said. “Black Lives Matter will historically hold an asterisk as the first social justice movement not led by a religious body and so it has been difficult for us.”

He also said an apology was owed to the LGBT community for “forgetting that [they] too are members of the body of Christ.”

Bryant, known as a prolific speaker, added, “But let me tell you who we don’t owe an apology to... We don’t owe an apology to the alt-right, the extremists, to KKK ... We stand today in alignment, in agreement, that our



lives matter and we shall not be denied. Donald Trump, we’re coming!”

As the crowd cheered with excited, the outcries got louder as the next speaker, Grammy award-winning gospel artist, Bishop Marvin Sapp, was introduced. Onstage, he delivered a few quick words before singing his hit song, “Never Would Have Made It” acapella-style, to the participants.

“We are here to celebrate years of successful fighting but we’re also here to make sure that the fight continues. You’ve all had some great speakers ... telling you all of these wonderful things that we need to be doing,” Sapp said. “But the reality is that we’re not here because of our goodness or because of our kindness. We’re here because all of us have realized that we never would have made it without him.”

With high anticipation, Rev. Sharpton led the crowd in the chant, “No justice, No peace”, before leading marchers out into the streets and toward the Department of Justice. Streets were blocked by police to ensure a smooth journey for the marchers amidst heavy traffic for commuters.

Tourists and working men and women on their lunch breaks stopped, taking in the site of the Monday mid-day march. Some even showing their solidarity with a thumbs-up or wave. The marchers sang traditional songs in

harmony such as “Wade in the Water,” and “This Little Light of Mine,” as they passed by the National Monuments on their route. The group also stopped at the Trump hotel, for a brief prayer before continuing their journey.

Once protesters arrived at the DOJ, several more speakers addressed the issues they want addressed.

“It’s time to take those statues down.” Jeffrey David Cox Sr., National President of the American Federation of Government Employees, said. “But leave the base so we have to tell our children and our grandchildren what an evil wicked thing this country did.” He was making obvious reference to slave-supporting Confederate leaders around the country, an issue made national due to recent violence connected to them three years ago in Charleston, S.C. and earlier this month in Charlottesville, Va.

“Pardoning the sheriff convicted of contempt of court and racial profiling, this is not normal,” said Rev. Marshall Hatch, referred to Trump’s recent pardon of Arizona Sheriff Joe Arpaio. “Press briefings from the White House un-televised and filled with misinformation, this is not normal. Threatening of nuclear war and rumor of war by president by tweet is not normal. Refusing to condemn racism and anti antisemitism is not normal. Somebody has to have the courage to stand up and say, ‘This emperor has no clothes!’”



White Nationalist Rally

Continued From Page 1

No. 1 city to retire in, exclamation point. And the list keeps growing, exclamation point. And I thought: for whom?” she said.

A housing report prepared last year for the city hints at an answer. The most underserved segment is the city’s lowest income households, and a key factor creating supply challenges is a large affluent population that desires city living and can afford to pay higher prices for housing, the report found.

There is little, if any, new for-sale housing being built at price points below \$250,000 for a single family home, the report said. The average price at new actively selling communities is about \$430,000, said the report published in January 2016.

“There’s nowhere for the poor people to live,” said Thompson, the Army veteran. “And it’s not just Black and white. There’s an economic crisis going on in Charlottesville and you all need to fix it.”

Charlene Green, manager of the city’s Office of Human Rights, started the meeting by acknowledging the difficult events of the summer, which saw two other white nationalist rallies. But the community also bears the scars of “decades of pain,” she told the crowd.

In an interview Monday, Green said two things in the city’s history had been at the top of her mind: first, the impact of the segregationist movement known as Massive Resistance on Charlottesville schools, some of which shut down rather than integrate; and second, the destruction of Vinegar Hill, a historically black community and the city’s principle black business district, in the interest of urban renewal.

“Those kinds of things happened all over the country,” Green said. “But it’s one of the filters that people have, especially if you were born and raised here in Charlottesville, that has an impact on how people view whether or not the city is sincere in moving forward.”

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Photos Courtesy Dennis Mitchell, Yolande Powell Colins and Theresa Cronin Unity in the Community - <http://www.nwunity.org>

The Color of Justice

Washington State Minority and Justice Commission Hopes Girls Will Become Judges

In August, the Washington State Minority and Justice Commission co-sponsored an event title **The Color of Justice** at the Pierce County Superior Court.

The program, which was adapted by Judge G. Helen Whitener from a Color of Justice event by the National Association of Women Judges', has the goal of connecting girls from marginalized communities to female judges who can mentor and empower them.

Women judges representing all court levels in Washington encouraged over 60 minority girls between the ages of 11-18 to consider legal and judicial careers.

The event featured networking and empowerment panels on the law and the legal profession and why diversity and minority perspectives matter.

The girls had the opportunity to hear inspirational speeches from Justice Mary Yu, Judge Linda Lee, and Judge Veronica Alicea-Galvan.

The event was sponsored by: Pierce County Superior Court, National Association of Women Judges, Washington State Gender and Equality Commission, WA State SCJA: Equality & Fairness Committee, Gonzaga University School of Law, University of Washington School of Law, Seattle University School of Law, and The Law Firm of Miller, Nash, Graham & Dunn.

The Minority and Justice Commission seeks to foster and support a fair and bias-free system of justice in the Washington State courts and judicial systems. For more information call (360) 705-5327 or visit: <https://www.courts.wa.gov/?fa=home.sub&org=mjc>.



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Tongues of Fire

By Beverly Spears



Will Christians be the Death of Christianity?

On the night of August 11, 2017, in Charlottesville Virginia, a group of torch-carrying, swastika-waving, rifle-toting, hate-spewing neo-Nazis, and white supremacist groups of every ilk, gathered, ostensibly to protest the City of Charlottesville's decision to remove the statue of General Robert E. Lee, commander of the Confederate army of the southern states that seceded from the American Union to protect their perceived God-given right to enslave Black people. Yes—their God-given right.

The nationalist mob really came to Charlottesville to stoke fear and hate, and to provoke violence. The weekend protest ended in tragedy the next day when a man with a documented history of neo-Nazi ideology, intentionally and at high speed plowed his car into a crowd of counter-protestors peacefully marching down the street, killing 32-year old Heather Heyer and injuring 19 others. President of the United States, Donald Trump refused to unambiguously condemn the Neo-Nazis and other hate groups—indeed, he defended many of them as “good people.”

In all likelihood, among these “good people”, white nationalists and proud racists, were those who call themselves Christians. Christian fascists. The Christian fascist rallying cry is, the United States of America is for white Christians only! Christian fascists are those who promote an authoritarian, quasi-Christian, political ideology that controls the government, and empowers only those who conform to its so-called moral code; a code that undermines civil

rights, and subverts equal protection under the law. It is a quasi-Christo-political code that does not recognize the validity of other faith traditions, and relegates people of color and immigrants to inferior status.

There is now a far-right evangelical Christian network called POTUS Shield (Prophetic Order of the United States), aggressively promoting the idea among their faithful that Donald Trump was anointed by God, before the beginning of time, to bring America back to white Christian-nation status.

White supremacy in America, is a current of hate that has flowed throughout the history of this nation. It frequently runs underground, but resurfaces when its adherents feel threatened and/or enabled by social and political forces. Perhaps this latest fascist, Christian movement seems to be a new group of fringe fanatics, but there has long been a mainstream campaign of fascism by so-called Christians. It was a carefully planned and implemented political strategy to elect to public office only those people who adhere to “white Christian values.” This was not a fringe movement of extremists. These influential people had direct influence on George W. Bushes' White House administration, and arguably got him elected.

I have previously written about a political action group in the late 1970s and early 80s called The Moral Majority. The PAC was organized and led by conservative evangelical Southern Baptist pastor Jerry Falwell. It acted to coerce politicians to make all legislative decisions conform to their version of Christian moral law. It was one tactic of a wider movement led by Christian evangelists, such as Pat Robertson, to make the United States into their vision of a Christian empire.

Among many much worse attributes, Christian fascists are also staggeringly ignorant. Jesus was not white, nor was he a Christian. He was a middle eastern Jew, whose life exemplified love and inclusion of all people, especially those most marginalized in his society. He restored people to their full humanity, and unified the community. Jesus spoke out against the authority of the hypocritical religious leaders of his time. In other words, Jesus represented all that Christian fascists hate. One is either a fascist, OR one is a Christian. It is utterly and completely impossible to be both!

According to a Pew Research Center Poll, 81 percent of white evangelicals, 60 percent of white Catholics, and 58 percent of white mainline protestants supported Donald Trump for president. These “good” Christians either saw nothing wrong, or chose to overlook Trump's unapologetic predatory sexual behavior and misogyny; his race-baiting, homophobia, xenophobia, and demagoguery. I would certainly not label all these people fascists, but where is the Christian moral ethic in their decision?

Christianity has been so co-opted, compromised, and befouled that it bears little resemblance to the faith movement that was inspired by the life and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth, and it is the very antithesis of the eternal love of Christ. Jesus repudiated bigotry and hate. Jesus spoke out against those who espoused and supported hate. If we are followers of Jesus, that's what we do.

I thank God for the solidarity of courageous spiritual leaders, such as the Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II, Pastor of Greenleaf Christian Church, Disciples of Christ in Goldsboro, North Carolina. He is the leader of the Forward Together Moral Movement that gained national acclaim with its Moral Monday protests at the North Caro-

lina General Assembly in 2013. Dr. Barber is now spearheading a national movement called Repairers of the Breach, ” a nonpartisan, ecumenical organization that seeks to build a progressive agenda rooted in a moral framework to counter the ultra-conservative constructs that try to dominate the public square. Repairers will help frame public policies which are not constrained or confined by the narrow tenets of neo-conservatism. Repairers will bring together clergy and lay people from different faith traditions, with people without a spiritual practice but who share the moral principles at the heart of the great moral teachings. Repairers will expand a ‘school of prophets’ who can broadly spread the vision of a nation that is just and loving.”

Recently, Dr. Barber came under harsh criticism from neo-conservative Christians. After seeing a newspaper picture of far-right ministers who support Donald Trump's agenda praying for the President, he published an open letter calling out their faith as hypocrisy:

“It is a form of theological malpractice that borders on heresy,” Dr. Barber said. “When you can pray for a President and others, while they are preying on the most vulnerable, you are violating the sacred principles of religion” Those of us who profess to be followers of Jesus and recognize this heresy must, like Dr. Barber, expose it.

I experience the light and love of Jesus as eternal. I believe the authentic spiritual movement founded in the name of Jesus will endure, but it may well have to be called something other than Christianity.

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

Black Lens in the Community: “Coffee” and Conversation with Black Lens Columnist Beverly Spears



The Black Lens has launched a new community discussion series called **Black Lens in the Community**. The intention of the series, in this world of social media, is to lift the topics that are covered in the paper each month off of the pages and bring them in to the community, giving people the opportunity to sit in a room with each other and talk, discuss, even argue, face to face.

The series, which is sponsored by Friends of the Black Lens, kicked off its first discussion on Monday, August 7, at Caffè Affogatto, located on Main Street.

The “Coffee” and Conversation event featured Black Lens columnist Beverly Spears, an ordained American Baptist minister, teacher and preacher of Evolutionary Christianity, who formerly lived in Spokane, but currently resides in northern California. Spears was passing through Washington visiting family and friends, and agreed to sit down with Black Lens readers during her brief stop in Spokane.

Spears shared her personal, spiritual journey on the road to her ordination, as well as the challenges that she is currently experiencing as a Christian in the aftermath of the 2016 Presidential election. The conversation ranged from questions about religion and politics, to whether or not humans are evolving, to pondering the direction that the Christian church is headed, and much more.

The discussion was thoughtful, heartfelt, and engaging, and it was a perfect way to kick-off the series. The consensus was that folks want more, so stay tuned for more Black Lens in the Community events in the coming months.

UNIFIED BLACK AGENDA - SPOKANE

While nazis and white supremacists were marching in Charlottesville on Saturday, August 12, a small group of African Americans were gathered in a room at the Emmanuel Family Life Center, focused on identifying the issues of importance to the Black community and starting a conversation about how best to address them.

The Washington State Commission on African American Affairs joined with the Spokane NAACP, the Spokane Minister's Fellowship, the Spokane chapter of the Links, and the Spokane chapter of the Deltas to host what was called a Unified Black Agenda, with the intention of acting as a catalyst to bring members of the African American community together to work collaboratively on identifying ways to uplift the Black community.

Pastor Walter Kendricks, Pastor of Morning Star Baptist Church and President of the Spokane Minister's Fellowship offered a welcome, followed by Ed Prince, Director of the Washington State Commission on African American Affairs, who explained the thought process behind the meeting and what the Commission was hoping to accomplish, before turning the meeting over to Sandy Williams, Eastern Washington's representative on the Commission, who acted as facilitator.

The goal was for the group was to identify and come to a consensus on four priority areas that the community should focus its attention on. After a good deal of lively and thoughtful discussion, five priority areas were decided on: Relationship Building/Communication; Education – from cradle to grave (both formal & informal education; Political Engagement; Economics; and Youth & Young Adults/Strengthening Families.

Barriers were then identified as well as concrete action steps. The group decided that it wanted to continue the conversation and future meetings are in the works.

For more information or to attend the next meeting, contact Sandy Williams at 509-795-1964,



THOUGHTS FROM A GRANDMOTHER



What a difference

By Evelyn Anderton

The past 14 years we have enjoyed visiting our daughter and family in Suffolk VA. My husband and I often talked about retiring and moving to the east coast. When he finally decided to retire in April and said we are leaving Spokane, I almost fainted. I tried not to get overly excited because he had been saying for years that he was going to retire and leave Spokane. However now that we have moved and reside in the city of Suffolk VA, it is overwhelming.

I am very happy and pleased we finally made the decision to relocate and move closer to our family. For the past 7 years I have been compiling my bucket list and moving to the east coast was on the top of my list, meeting President Obama, taking swimming classes and piano lessons, just to name a few more.

The road trip was a joyous time with the family and lots of sightseeing. It took 43 hours of driving (6 days), cov-

ering 2,671 miles, and visiting 9 different states. We stopped in South Dakota to give our grandson the opportunity to see Mt Rushmore. He asked me a question “do you think President Obama will be up there one day?” I answered vigorously, “I sure hope so”.

We saw Custer’s last stand, spent a few days in St. Louis visiting our son and family. We saw the great Arc and the longest Graffiti wall, which my grandson thought was cool. We crossed two great rivers, the Mississippi and Missouri, and saw the blue grass of Kentucky. The Cascades and Rockies are huge but driving through the Appalachians was awesome. We finally arrived in Suffolk after 8 days on the road, and it feels so good to be close to family. What a difference!

Everywhere we go the most frequently asked question is “Do you miss Spokane WA”? The first week my answer was “I haven’t been gone long enough to miss Spokane”; the second week my answer was “maybe a little bit”; the third week my answer was, “not really, I miss my awesome friends”; now that I’m approaching my fourth week, my answer is “what is a Spokane?”. (lol) What a difference!

Don’t get me wrong, this joy I have for the east coast has nothing to do with your lovely city of Spokane, which was my place of residency for many years. The joy I have is because for the first time in 45 years I will be living on the east coast closer to my family.

I now live in a city with my 2 daughters and 3 grandchildren, I’m only 14 hours from our son in St. Louis and about 12 hours from the state of Florida where my 4 brothers and sister live, not to mention only 4 hours from my brother in-law in Maryland. My family would always use two excuses for not visiting Spokane, it’s too far away and too cold. Now we are much closer and it’s not cold in Suffolk VA, so they have no excuses. What a difference!

We will always have a special bond with the Lilac City, because for 33 years it was our home and we have many friends that we miss. But most importantly, we also have our only granddaughter(Jillisa) and our only great grandson (Samuel) who presently live in Spokane. What a difference! Yes, there are numerous difference between the east coast and west coast, but it is up to you what the difference will be!



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Aging & Long Term Care - ADVOCACY. ACTION. ANSWERS

Black Wealth 2020

Continued From Page 7

“This is not just one organization, but this is a series of organizations that have come under one banner and will be about empowering Black people,” Weaver says.

• **The urgent need for economic growth:** “It’s a fact that more than half of all African- Americans in our country rent. It’s a fact that a homeowner’s net worth is 36 times that of a renter. And it’s a fact that the median income for an African-American household is \$35,000 compared to the national average of \$53,000,” says Marcia Griffin of HomeFree USA. “This is an unacceptable situation for our people, and Black Wealth 2020 initiatives are critical in reversing these statistics and rebuilding wealth in the Black community.”

• **Clear and positive vision:** “This is not an anti-White movement, this is not a reactionary movement. This is a very positive affirmation about Black love and Black support and it’s an acceptance of full responsibility of our economic survival,” says Grant. Despite the name, representatives of the Black Wealth 2020 movement say they have vision well beyond only three years from now.

“One of our founders thought we should call ourselves Black Wealth 2020 and Beyond. While we were definitely in favor of that concept, we felt the name was a little cumbersome,” Jim Winston chuckles. “So our goal, of course, is to continue beyond 2020. Building wealth in the African-American community is not an item that has a time line on it or a deadline on it...We just wanted to give ourselves a target where we can see some substantial improvements in that time frame.”



Ebonics

By Afaria McKinney



Super Soul.

What defines us is trust ...
we are classified
with the rhythm
that we can not function
without.

I love myself,
Know thy self,
put your haters on the
highest self.
I am the ass they put at the end of class,
I’m not here to harass you,
but to inspire you.

The blues is behind me,
it’s the only reason why I love red so much,
I try not to fly,
the inspiration of the African man,
is a better representation of the me
than I want to see,
not the image of a falsehood reality.

Each time that things go wrong
does not mean the evidence
can be or not be Concrete,
I’m just trying to give you the manuscript
to what I can actually see,
let’s build our future on what we see!
my eyes are filtered by the disguise of ignorance
it truly means that what I see is truly shit,
so when I close my eyes don’t wonder why
I sound so lit.

Dick Gregory

Continued from Page 4



In 2005, at a celebration of the 40th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act, he called the U.S. “the most dishonest, ungodly, unspiritual nation that ever existed in the history of the planet. As we talk now, America is 5 percent of the world’s population and consumes 96 percent of the world’s hard drugs.” As a protester, Gregory never stopped putting himself on the front lines: In 2004, at the age of 73, he was arrested while protesting against genocide outside the Sudanese Embassy in Washington, D.C.

In the 1970s, after moving to Massachusetts, Gregory became very interested in vegetarianism, nutrition and overall fitness, eventually advocating a diet of raw fruits and vegetables (this from a man who once weighed 350 pounds, drank heavily and smoked several packs of cigarettes a day). He was particularly opposed to the typical soul food diet, attributing to it much of African Americans’ disproportionate health challenges. In 1984 he launched Dick Gregory Health Enterprises Inc., which sold Slim-Safe Bahamian Diet, a very profitable weight-loss program. The business was shuttered, however, after a conflict with his business partners.

Gregory announced in 2000 that he’d been diagnosed with lymphoma, but he refused traditional treatment, instead turning to a nutritional regimen, exercise and other alternative therapies, and eventually declaring himself cancer free. “An Evening of Reflections with Dick Gregory,” a gala held at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., honored Gregory that same year. Celebrities in attendance included Bill Cosby, Cicely Tyson, Paul Mooney, Stevie Wonder and Isaac Hayes.

Gregory, who was a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, is ranked at No. 81 on Comedy Central’s list of the 100 Greatest Stand-Ups of All Time. He also has a star on the St. Louis Walk of Fame and received numerous awards for his civil rights and health activism. Despite his abbreviated career there, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale awarded him an honorary doctorate in 1989.

Monée Fields-White is a freelance writer and editor based in Los Angeles.

Houston Texas - Hurricane Harvey Rivals Katrina

Continued From Page 1

Lee and Congressman Al Green agreed that thousands of additional people could still be awaiting rescue. Congresswoman Lee estimated that the damages and rebuilding after the Hurricane will surpass \$150 billion across Texas.

President Donald Trump and First Lady Melania Trump flew into Corpus Christi and then to Austin. In Corpus Christi, they received a briefing from Texas Gov. Greg Abbott. The White House says the President did not fly closer to the worst disaster areas in Houston because he didn’t want to distract from rescue efforts.

Gov. Abbott thanked Trump for the advance preparations that had been going on for 10 days, saying “Texas has been tested. But our response to this challenge has been made much more effective because of the very effective way that the” Trump Administration has responded.

“This was of epic proportion. No one has ever seen anything like this,” Trump said in response to the governor’s remarks. “We won’t say congratulations. We don’t want to do that. We’ll congratulate each other when it’s all finished.”

FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) Administrator Brock Long referred to Hurricane Katrina, the disastrous Hurricane that killed nearly 2,000 people in New Orleans around the same week in August in 2005. In that situation, thousands died mainly due to old levees that failed to hold back New Orleans’ Lake Pontchartrain after the storm.



“This is not the Superdome,” said Long, referring to the New Orleans stadium where thousands gathered after Katrina and waiting for days before FEMA responded. Then President George W. Bush was strongly criticized for flying over New Orleans in a helicopter.

Houston is the fourth largest city in the nation, making it difficult for first responders to know where all the people needed help. Word went out for those needing to be rescued to hang large towels from their window.

Searches for family, loved ones and associates and co-workers continued throughout the week. Many depended on media to get the word out about missing loved ones.

The National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA), a national trade association for African American newspapers, blasted an alert to their editors and publishers showing one of their leading publishers, former NNPA Foundation Chairwoman Sonny Messiah-Jiles of the Houston Defender, being rescued by boat along with her family.

Houston Forward Times Publisher Karen Carter Richards, responded to a Trice Edney News Wire email saying she was thankful for “God’s Amazing Grace!!!” She added, “My family and I are good. No water in our homes, we’re safe and dry. My office got a little water but nothing major to even talk about. Keep praying!”

Many are praying because thousands of others are not as fortunate. At this writing, the death count was 24 people, but authorities expect that

will rise as recovery efforts begin once the water has receded. The stories of heroism, struggles and tragedies are harrowing as the elderly, sick and families with children desperately seek safety. One family of six perished when the van they were in sank as they tried to flee the waters. A police officer was also killed when his car sank in flood waters on his way to work.

The NNPA statement from Chairwoman Dorothy Leavell and President/CEO Benjamin Chavis issued an “urgent national call for support for all people who are being impacted by the devastating flood waters.”

The statement continued, “We have learned that one our NNPA member publishers, Sonny Messiah-Jiles, publisher of the Houston Defender, and her family were rescued yesterday by boat from their home as a result of rising flood waters in Houston.” Francis Page, publisher of the Houston Style magazine had not yet been contacted.

Millions of appeals for prayers and assistance continue across the nation this week as the recovery will no doubt take years. The NNPA statement said, “We are asking that all NNPA publishers across the nation keep all those affected by the flooding crisis in Texas in our concerned hearts and fervent prayers.”

Direct support for victims of Hurricane Harvey can be made through the Red Cross at 1-800-RED-CROSS.

OUR VOICES

Social Consciousness - A Call to Action!

By Ron Toston

The adoption of a social conscience, or Social Consciousness, implies a sense of responsibility or concern for the problems and injustices of society. I believe it to be a moral responsibility for all Americans.

Ethics of reciprocity/ Right or Wrong

From the beginning, the young couple taught me right from wrong as they believed it to be and clothed it in the ethic of reciprocity, otherwise known as the Golden Rule. To treat others as I wanted to be treated. I understood, and showed up on the world stage (outside of my home), equipped with the dogma assigned to me by Clinton and Cinderella, my loving parents.

On the first day, the third grader asked, if she could touch my face? I said yes, and Laura gently touched my face and my hair. “My turn,” I said. She allowed me to touch her face, and her hair. BFF! Enamored by her white skin and my black skin, we became immediate friends.

In 1970, the memo or email that the State of California would forcefully integrate the public school system was not readily available to the participants of the third grade, I never got it. What I did get was an explanation from my parents that I would not be going to the school three blocks from my family home, but my sister and I were “fortunate” to ride a school bus 10 miles away every morning to a school district containing some faculty and students that did not want us there, and made sure we knew it.

From a young age, I believed that people “should” treat me fair. Why? Because I treat them fair. I’ve recently learned that it is a false belief, for one to have an expectation that others “should” treat them fairly. The reality of a broken and fallen condition authorizes human beings to treat other human beings however they wish, even if it is contrary to the law, and often without recourse or remorse.

Still, I believe in doing what is right, and as a consequence have been granted a sense of responsibility for the problems and injustices of society.

Stand Together

It has been said that: “If you don’t stand for something, you’ll fall for anything.” Two and a half centuries ago Alexander Hamilton penned this inspirational quote about the value of Rising Above. At a crossroad marked by a tyranny of the majority more than two centuries later, Malcolm X reframed the adage, “A man who stands for nothing will fall for anything.”



In response, the so-called majority and minority Americans, “stood for” Civilized Rights for all Americans. The American landscape and its public policy would be changed forever, at least, we thought.

What does it mean to “Stand For”, rather than the opposite of sitting? It means to hold firmly to a particular opinion or belief. To stand for something means you give it your wholehearted support. Standing, is active. When you stand, you take action. That’s why “standing for” is associated with believing in and supporting a cause.

I will assert that active participation and engagement for a cause only has one must, the cause “must” have meaning for the individual. Without the cause having meaning for you, simply put, it is a waste of time, talent, and treasure.

We are not volunteering enough

According to the Corporation for National Community Service (CNCS), 25.3 percent of Americans volunteer, which is 62.8 million volunteers in 2016. We are not volunteering enough.

Charities need to do a better job keeping their volunteers engaged and loyal, say the authors of a new report released by the federal government. The report, from the Corporation for National and Community Service, says that more than one out of every three people who had volunteered in 2016 had

not done so in 2017. In 2016, in Washington State, 31% of residents volunteered, ranking the state 16th among the 50 states and Washington, DC. This is down from a high of 9th in the nation in 2013 and 6th in the nation 2007.

Who does Volunteer?

People who live in mid-sized American cities are more likely to volunteer than residents of big cities. The average volunteer rate for mid-sized cities was nearly 30 percent, three percentage points higher than the average for big cities. College towns are hotspots for volunteering. College towns tend to be home not only to many students with strong volunteering habits, but also a lot of highly educated adults. People who graduate from college and seek higher degrees tend to volunteer more than others, research has found.

Women volunteer more than men, and working women have the highest volunteer rate. About 29 percent of women volunteered last year, compared with roughly 23 percent of men. Women with children and women who work have higher volunteer rates than other women.

These findings about working women and mothers, along with newly analyzed data from the Census Bureau’s American Time Use Survey, contradict a commonly held notion about volunteering, that people with more time on their hands volunteer more often.

The truth? Is that the long held misconception that those who volunteer have lots of leisure time on their hands is just the opposite. The proof: The report notes a big difference between volunteers and non-volunteers in how much television they watch. In a typical week, volunteers spend about 15 hours watching television, while people who don’t volunteer watch an average of 23 hours. If the average person volunteered for their favorite charity for 3.5 hours a week, for 1 month there would still be 8 hours of leisure time to enjoy your favorite TV shows.

This is a call to action:

When I examine my own personal worldview, my prejudices, the dogma of Assumption, and what I don’t know, that I don’t know. I’m hard pressed to understand how and why the decisions and actions of some cause duress and suffering for others.

More importantly, I ask myself what can I do, and/or what should I do to help to change the quality of life for another? Ask yourself, What do I stand for? I’m so glad you are asking.

To be continued.....

If You Really Wanna Help Here Is What You Can Do

By Ron Smalls

I have attended more than my fair share of meetings, from the SRLJC (if you do not know what this is, I suggest you find out), to the local meeting with Fuse, PJALS, Ministerial Alliance, Keep Film in WA. My daughter and I went to Olympia to speak to State Representative Riccelli. Even went to the NAACP (do not get me started.) and not to mention the one on one meetings that I have had, but what all these groups seem to be missing is the willingness to empower the Black community.

Oh, I hear people say “we want to change things”, but if you want real change then empower the people you are trying to help. You see at these meetings I have heard white folks stand up and say “what can I do”, “how can I help change things?”, “I am a privileged white person what can I do?” Well I have an answer, one of many I might



add, that will empower those you say you would like to help.

Support Black businesses. It is that simple. It’s only one piece to a large puzzle but a very significant piece nonetheless. What Black business can you support? Well funny you should ask.

Miss Stephanie’s hair salon. I have seen countless biracial and Black children adopted by white families that have no idea how to care for Black hair. This is an answer to that question what can I do and it can help two fold. The child will have their hair done and you can get some insight into the Black culture.

Neither the music or the conversation is offensive at Miss Stephanie’s hair salon. She can braid hair of all types (that’s right she does white folk’s hair too) .

I have said to city council members and countless others, I don’t need white folks to speak for me, just turn my microphone on. So if you really want to do something, if you really want to change things, support Black businesses, like Miss Stephanie’s, or a local Black newspaper (Like the one you are reading, Hint Hint).

Or you can spend money donating to organizations that will do research to prove what we Black people already know, that we are not being treated fairly, our microphone isn’t on, and it seems our lives don’t matter. Or you can read another book like Waking up white... try waking up Black? Now that’s a book that is not for the weak of heart or mind. Now back to our regularly scheduled program, “Eyes Wide Shut.”

Coffee Anyone?

By Curtis Hampton

Since the election of Donald Trump, the divisive rhetoric has spiraled out of control. I have found myself becoming submerged in the swamp of nonproductive conversations that center on the current and past history of race relations.



The conversations can be considered non productive because everyone seems armed with their own set of alternative facts that do nothing to promote race relations. We all need to ask ourselves, do we want to be a part of the solution or do we want to add more fuel to the fire?

Personally, I have decided to step outside of my comfort zone and allow myself to be willing to engage in conversations with those that not only agree with my views of racism, but I’m also trying to communicate in “Agree To Disagree” based conversations with those of opposing views.

Over the weekend, I had the opportunity to participate in the Spokane Community Unity March and it was a wonderful experience to see all those people marching to celebrate our differences as well as our similarities. I hope that all of you going forward will work toward being a part of the solution and discontinue the promotion of hate. Coffee anyone?

OUR VOICES

Making Racism Bad for Business

By Dr. E. Faye Williams, Esq.

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - In 2015, CNN reported that 49 percent of Americans thought that racism was a big problem in the United States. Not surprisingly, people of color and whites had significantly differing views regarding the subject. 66 percent of Blacks and 64 percent of Hispanics thought that racism was a big problem, while only 43 percent of whites saw it that way.

In reflection, two thoughts come to mind. The first - the oppressor and the oppressed rarely see oppression in the same light. The second - logic and deduction suggest that, with the events of the past several years, the percentages of the population considering racism as a big problem have increased. The recent circumstances of Charlottesville, VA seem to support my second assumption.

Sadly, the person who most Americans have come to expect to shepherd our nation through situations of racial strife and division (the President of the United States) has proven himself impotent in the matter and incapable of making cogent decisions regarding the nature of human/race relations.

Although I consider him completely lacking, I won't attempt to debate #45's general

fitness for office. I will, however, state that I unequivocally consider him completely unfit to render reasoned judgment in race-based matters.

We're reminded that Maya Angelou stated, "When someone shows you who they are, believe them the first time." #45 has given us an ample number of opportunities to assess who he is:

In 1973, the Trump organization was charged with Federal housing discrimination. In 1989, when five Black and Latino youth were coerced into admitting rape, #45 was conspicuous in his condemnation. In 2016, after DNA testing exonerated them, #45 still called for their execution. And then there was the seven-year 'Birther' attack on President Obama. Few details remain undisclosed about that except that it provides great insight into the racial animus inherent in #45. That's why, when #45 tried to justify the actions of the KKK, neo-Nazis and Alt-Right in Charlottesville, I was not surprised.

What surprised me was the swift, almost immediate resignation of Merck CEO, Ken Frazier, from #45's Manufacturing Jobs Initiative Council. His bold and principled resignation demonstrated his refusal to turn

a blind eye to racism and hatred, and led to further CEO defections. This ultimately led to dissolution of both the Manufacturing Jobs Initiative and Strategy and Policy Forum. This series of events was a catastrophic defeat for #45's administration, political agenda and, more importantly, his fragile ego.

Although I will not question the altruism of Mr. Frazier's decision or those of any of the other CEOs, one lesson is clear. Racism and hatred are not good for business. They may satisfy the needs and ignorance of small, petty minds, but are counter-productive in business.

Collectively, the annual buying power of Blacks and Hispanics exceeds 3 TRILLION Dollars, and this does not include any of the other groups targeted by the hate groups in Charlottesville. The facts of OUR economic power does not go unnoticed to business or stockholders.

Legitimate business leaders recognize that their businesses cannot thrive in an environment that supports discrimination and division. Moreover, they realize that violence and the lack of social order are destructive to their businesses and our nation's future.



The greater lesson taught by this experience is that OUR DOLLARS MATTER. Next to our votes, our dollars matter most. Our challenge is learning how to best leverage political, public or corporate opinion and action with our economic power. You've heard it before, but it's worth repeating - we must support those businesses that support our interests AND we must let them know why we support them.

While not solving all of the social ills we face, our effective control of our resources will take us a long way in that direction.

Dr. E. Faye Williams is President and CEO of the National Congress of Black Women, Inc. www.nationalcongressbw.org. 202/678-6788

Confederate Statues are Falling, But Not Economic Racism



By Julianne Malveaux

(TriceEdneyWire.com)

Cheers to New Orleans Mayor Mitch Landrieu, one of the first mayors to take Confederate statues down and to make the strong point that these statues represent nothing but oppression. (Watch his May speech at <http://www.marketwatch.com/story/watch-new-orleans-mayor-mitch-landrieu-defend-removal-of-monuments-to-heroes-of-a-four-year-historical-aberration-2017-08-15>).

More cheers to Baltimore Mayor Catherine Pugh who had statues removed in the dead of night to avoid Charlottesville-type con-

frontations between racist white supremacists (also known as "good people" according to 45) and those who oppose them.

And though he does little that I agree with, in the interest of equal praise, I must lift up Maryland Governor Larry Hogan, who had the statue of Roger Taney removed from the Maryland state house. Taney was an especially vile racist who authored the Dred Scott decision in 1857. He wrote that Black people had no rights that whites were bound to respect, and provided justification for enslavement even as many in the rest of the nation were clamoring against the unjust institution.

As the statues are falling, economic racism is not fading. African Americans still earn just 60 percent of what whites earn. We have just 7 percent of the wealth that whites have. We have double the unemployment rates. Even with equal incomes, we find it more challenging to get mortgages or other access to capital. And our economic rights are being challenged every day.

It is important to note that these statues were not erected immediately after the Civil War. The South was too broke to build statues. They were still trying to recover from the devastation of the Civil War. How did they plan to recover? They needed a captive labor force to work their fields, just as enslaved people had been before the war. So they ensured quasi-captivity through intimidation. That need was partially responsible for the emergence of the KKK. They inspired fear, suppressed resistance, and, through Black Codes and Jim Crow, engineered the near-re-enslavement of Black people.

I challenge those who would tear down the statues and take down the flags to show equal zeal in tearing down the walls of economic racism.

- Julianne Malveaux

Black people who wanted to leave the South after the end of Reconstruction had to do it in the dead of night. Black people who had land were often forced to concede it or be killed. The Emergency Land Fund, a now-defunct organization that documented the Black loss of land, indicated Black folks lost as much as 90 percent of their accumulated land by 1970, at least partially due to trickery and intimidation.

The origins of the wealth gap lie in this loss of land, and in the intimidation that kept African American people in near-slave status in the South. Confederate statues, flags, and Klan activity appeared whenever there was resistance - during and after the reconstructions, in the 1920s after the Red Summer of 1919 and the return of Black men from World War I, men who were men, and men disinclined to step off sidewalks or defer to white people.

Again, we saw the rise of this activity, these statues and these flags, in the 1950s as the Civil Rights Movement pushed hard for equality. When people talk about taking "their" streets back, what they really mean is they want Black people (and other people of color) in their place, in their economic place. And that place, for them, is subordinate.

So while Confederate statues are falling (not quickly enough - there are more than 700 of these odious symbols still standing), and Confederate flags are waving less frequently, the economic racism the Confederacy established is alive and well. Just ask the young Black couple redlined away from a banking opportunity, or the innocent arrested person who can't pay bail. Ask the Black student whose loan burden is nearly twice that of her white counterpart, or the Black woman who pays more, and at a higher interest rate, for a car loan.

Sure, we have come a long way since those ugly days of enslavement or stark segregation, but some power comes from the Benjamins. And, according to some estimates, it will take more than 200 years to close the wealth gap. The statues may be falling, but economic racism is alive and well.

While I commend Republicans Lindsey Graham, Tim Scott, John McCain and so many others for condemning their President for his abject and ugly racism, I wonder if any of them would be so forceful in condemning economic racism, or in advocating for reparations. Absent their willingness to do that, they are making very important stylistic points, but they do not seem prepared to change the harsh realities of Black life in our country today.

I challenge those who would tear down the statues and take down the flags to show equal zeal in tearing down the walls of economic racism.

Julianne Malveaux is an economist, author, and Founder of Economic Education. Her podcast, "It's Personal with Dr. J" is available on iTunes. Her latest book "Are We Better Off: Race, Obama and public policy is available via amazon.com

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Put our experienced team to the test!



SEPTEMBER EVENTS

SEPTEMBER 8

FASCISM: WHAT IT IS AND HOW TO FIGHT IT

Want to know more about anti-fascism? Read "Fascism: What It Is and How to Fight It" by Leon Trotsky and join us in discussing it. The book can be viewed for free here: <https://www.marxists.org/archive/trotsky/works/1944/1944-fas.htm>

6pm - 8pm

Community Building - Lobby
35 W. Main Street, Spokane

SEPTEMBER 14

JUSTICE NIGHT

Justice Night is a walk-in legal clinic, no appointment necessary. Free legal information in the following areas: Family law, Consumer Protection, Housing, LFO/expungement, Police and Government Accountability.

5:30-7:00pm

Community Building - Lobby
35 W. Main Street, Spokane

Questions? Call the Center for Justice at 509-835-5211

SEPTEMBER 15-17

INTERTRIBAL COMMUNITY ENCAMPMENT

Kalispel Tribal Pow Wow Grounds
Usk, WA, Volunteers needed

For more information contact Jacob Johns at 509.768.6057 or email studio-1eleven@yahoo.com

SEPTEMBER 16

MIXER FOR FRIENDS OF THE BLACK LENS

Calling all Friends of the Black lens, join us for a community mixer to celebrate and support the work of The Black Lens and get to know each other a little better. Happy hour snacks and prizes.

4pm - 7pm

Reserve Lounge
120 N Wall, Spokane 99201

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

SEPTEMBER 16

SPOKANE MINISTER'S FELLOWSHIP MUSICAL FUNDRAISER

The Spokane Minister's Fellowship is hosting a musical fundraiser to raise funds to sponsor four local families for the holidays. We will also be raffling off gift baskets and a 32 in flat screen tv. Raffle tickets are 3 for \$10.

6pm

Morning Star Baptist Church
3909 W Rowan Ave, Spokane

For more information contact Rev. Donnie Stone at (509) 534-4878

SEPTEMBER 18

NAACP MONTHLY MEETING

Join the NAACP for our monthly general membership meeting

7:00pm

Community Building - Lobby
35 W. Main Street, Spokane

For more information contact the NAACP at 509-209-2425 (ext 1141) or <http://spokane-NAACP.com>

SEPTEMBER 23

COALITION OF COLOR 2017 CANDIDATE FORUM

Coalition of Color includes the Asian and Pacific Islander Coalition of Spokane, the Hispanic Business/Professional Association and the Spokane NAACP.

10am - 1pm

Spokane Community College - Lair
1810 N. Greene St., Spokane

SEPTEMBER 25

SCAR (SPOKANE COMMUNITY AGAINST RACISM)

SCAR is a Multi-Racial Community Coalition that was formed to address ongoing racial disparities in Spokane.

6pm

Morning Star Baptist Church
3909 W Rowan Ave, Spokane

Transitions People Who Care October 5, 2017

Working to end poverty and homelessness for women and children in Spokane.



Thursday, October 5, 2017

Breakfast - 7:30-8:30 am

or Lunch - Noon-1:00 pm

Red Lion Hotel at the Park

303 W North River Drive

Featuring keynote speaker
Sandy Williams,
editor of Black Lens Newspaper

RSVP today! Visit our website
www.help4women.org/People-Who-Care

Questions? Email pwc@help4women.org
or call 509-328-6702.



SAVE THE DATE

Spokane NAACP #1137

98th FREEDOM FUND BANQUET

"Steadfast and Immovable"

Special Guest Speaker:

Honorable Donald Haley

Retired King County Superior Court Judge

October 14, 2016

6pm - No Host Social Bar 7pm - Banquet & Keynote

Northern Quest Resort & Casino

100 N Hayford Rd, Airway Heights, Washington 99001

Tickets are \$55 a piece - Tickets available on Eventbrite - Ticket Sale Deadline Sept. 13
Proceeds benefit the Spokane NAACP Scholarship Fund - Sponsorships are welcomed and encouraged.

For tickets or information contact SpokaneNaacp@gmail.com or call (509) 838-2605

Sponsored by Friends of the Black Lens

COMMUNITY CAR WASH TO SUPPORT THE BLACK LENS



**Proceeds
Benefit
The
Black
Lens
Newspaper**

**Saturday, September 23
9am - Noon**

Car Wash Plaza, 417 S. Thor St, Spokane

For more information contact The Black Lens at 509-795-1964, blacklensnews.com