

THE
BLACK LENS
NEWS FROM A DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE

SPOKANETM



Darnella Frazier to be Honored with 2020 PEN America Benenson Courage Award



Quick-thinking High School Senior Filmed the Murder of George Floyd

(New York, NY) — The literary and free expression organization PEN America announced on October 27 that **Darnella Frazier**, the quick-thinking and dauntless young woman who filmed the murder of George Floyd, will receive the 2020 PEN/Benenson Courage Award. PEN America will bestow the award on the 17-year-old Frazier at its virtual gala celebration on December 8.

“With nothing more than a cell phone and sheer guts, Darnella changed the course of history in this country, sparking a bold movement demanding an end to systemic anti-Black racism and violence at the hands of police,” said PEN America CEO Suzanne Nossel, author of *Dare to Speak: Defending Free Speech for All*.

“With remarkable steadiness, Darnella carried out the expressive act of bearing witness, and allowing hundreds of millions around the world to see what she saw. Without Darnella’s presence of mind and readiness to risk her own safety and wellbeing, we may never have known the truth about George Floyd’s murder. We are proud to recognize her exceptional courage with this award.”

Frazier documented the death of the 46-year-old Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis police officers, one of whom—Derek Chauvin—pressed his knee against Floyd’s neck, well after Floyd lost consciousness. Frazier’s video quickly spread across social media and led to a wave of community outrage, a major investigation,

and Chauvin’s arrest, as well as the dismissal of the three other officers.

Prior PEN Courage Award honorees include Anita Hill; student activists from Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School; the Women’s March; Flint, Michigan contaminated water whistleblowers; and the surviving staff of the French publication *Charlie Hebdo*, honored in the wake of the murders of 12 of their colleagues.

“We would all do well to emulate Darnella’s grit in standing up to those with a monopoly on force and violence as we push for a stronger democracy, a more equal society, and a more just world,” said Jennifer Egan, author and president of PEN America’s Board of Trustees. For more information visit: pen.org.

ON MY MIND

THOUGHTS FROM THE EDITOR

by Sandra Williams

Anyway

Because of the role that I play as the publisher and editor of this newspaper, for the most part, I have done my best to stay publicly neutral regarding our upcoming election when I am representing the Black Lens. Now, that's not to say that I am actually neutral, because neutrality about politics, or anything else for that matter, has never been a word that could be used to describe me.

I have, however, been committed to a belief that most people are inherently wise and discerning, and most importantly, they are good. That if you simply provide people with accurate information, a depth and breadth and range of information, then they will use that information to make wise, healthy, and judicious decisions that are for the mutual benefit and upliftment of all people.

That sounds pretty polyanna-ish as I write it, but that is what I have always believed, despite evidence to the contrary. To be honest, though, as I write this, I am no longer sure that I still believe it.

In the days and weeks and months in the lead up to the November 3 election, I have been thinking a lot about my future grandchildren. I don't have any grandchildren right now, but I hope that someday I will. Like my ancestors before me, my parents and grandparents included, most of what I have done in my life has been fueled with the desire to make sure that this world is a better place for the generations that will come after me than it was for me.

I am sad and disappointed as I think about the world that it looks like my grandchildren are going to inherit. Sad and disappointed, that as hard as I, and so many others like me have tried, we have still arrived here, in this place, with our country as we know it, and our world actually, teetering on the brink of self-destruction.

So, screw neutrality. If my grandkids or my greatgrandkids, or even visitors from another planet, happen upon this issue of the Black Lens long after I have left this place, I want to make sure that they know exactly where I stood.

Let me start with what should be obvious to anyone who knows me. I do not support Donald Trump for president! Never have and never would. Not be-



cause he is a Republican. I released my ties to our two-party system of government a long time ago, and I have already shared in this paper my misgivings about the Democratic party and my frustration with those that I call "left leaning liberals", who at times seem more concerned with proving that someone else is in the wrong, than they are with working towards a shared goal.

I do not and would not support Donald Trump because he is an awful human being, as evidenced by his own words and actions. And awful is truly an understatement.

The publisher of Spokane's daily newspaper, the Spokesman Review, endorsed Donald Trump last week, describing him in the endorsement, among a long list of other negative things, as a "bully and a bigot" who "panders to racists". But vote for him-- anyway, the paper's wealthy owner implored. After all, voters in 2016 were aware of his character and still elected him to office, he said.

There is simply too much to peel back concerning that last statement than I have room for in this column or the energy to expend, so I will just say this, after decades of work addressing racial and social justice, I am no longer surprised at the lengths that people will go to in order to justify and defend and excuse and minimize and dismiss and rationalize behaviors that they know to be fundamentally wrong and morally bankrupt. Our country is built on it, as a matter of fact. Think about slavery. Lynchings. Reservations. Indian Boarding Schools. Jim Crow. Segregation. Internment camps and children being ripped from their parent's arms and locked in cages. Just to name a few.

Continued on Page 25

Dear Colin Kaepernick:
All You Had To Do Was
Play The Game, Boy.

By Hannah Drake (3/27/17)



Photo Credit: AP Photo/Marcio Jose Sanchez, File

All you had to do was throw the ball, boy.
We concealed this auction block well, didn't we, boy?
You didn't know you were on sale, boy?
Didn't we tell you to just run, boy?
Entertain us, boy.
Win championships for us, boy.
Stay in your place, boy.
Don't you dare get these other slaves, Black men, riled up, boy.
Didn't we pay you enough, boy?
Why can't you just be satisfied, boy?
Stand up and salute this flag, boy.
Honor your allegiance to the system, boy.
Didn't we give you enough money to entice you, boy?
How dare you reject your master, boy.
Didn't you like your name in lights, boy?
Didn't we stroke your ego, boy?
All you needed to do was play the game, boy.
Keep dancing for us on Monday Night, boy.
Make us rich, boy.
We don't care if you get hurt, boy.
Our job is to break bucks like you, boy.
Didn't you know boys like you come a dime a dozen, boy?
We can replace you with no thought, boy.
Make sure our new boy is a controlled boy.
Thought you knew we don't trust Negroes to be the quarterback anyways, boy.
We did you a favor, boy.
How dare you turn your back on us, boy.
If you are kneeling, it will be before us, boy.
Ain't this game your God, boy?
Don't you see how everyone else bows down before us, boy?
Don't you know what we do to Negroes like you, boy?
Back in the day, we let Negroes like you sway from the trees, boy.
Make an example outta you, so other Negroes will stay in their place, boy.
Don't you smell that strange fruit in the air, boy?
All you had to do was just shut up, boy.
We don't have to kill you, boy.
All we have to do is silence you, boy.



Hannah Drake is an author, activist and spoken word artist that offers a powerful, stimulating, and motivational message. In January 2017, Hannah started her blog, writesomeshit.com, offering commentary on politics, feminism, race, and social justice. "I am a Black woman with a pen, notepad, computer and an opinion and in this world that is a dangerous thing!"

THE BLACK LENS NEWS

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

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WEST CENTRAL STATEMENT OF INCLUSION

ALL ARE WELCOME IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD - ALL ARE WELCOME IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD - ALL ARE WELCOME IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD

All are welcome in the West Central Neighborhood regardless of: skin color, race, religion, culture, national origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, or disability.

We who live and work here value West Central especially for the diversity of its people. We refuse to let anyone take away from our commitment to create a safe community where all are welcome.

You may join the West Central Inclusion and Anti-Racism Response Group In our fight against hate by doing one or more of the following:

- Talk to young people about racism and bias and why it hurts all of us
- Reach out to your elected officials to support the SCAR Platform for Change (www.scarspokane.org/platform-for-change)
- Ask your children's school district about adding inclusive and racially accurate history curricula
- Consider joining and becoming active in the Spokane NAACP or SCAR (Spokane Community Against Racism)
- Create opportunities for diverse affordable housing options by asking your elected officials to fund affordable housing
- Contact the Spokane Human Rights Commission to learn about human rights and anti-discrimination protections in Spokane: my.spokanecity.org/bcc/commissions/spokane-human-rights-commission/

If you live, work, play, or otherwise participate in the life of West Central, please join us in amplifying our message using the hashtags #WeAreWestCentralSpokane, #BLM and #BlackLivesMatter on all platforms during our Social Media Campaign on October 25th and always!

For more information, follow us on Facebook @ We Are West Central Spokane

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YOU SHOULD KNOW

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

ART AND HISTORY *by Bertoni Jones Bey*

Sir Morien: Knights of King Arthur's Roundtable

The medieval history of Europe taught of brave knights in shining armor riding powerful horses into battle, of which the most famous were the fictional thirteenth century Legends of King Arthur and his Knights of The Roundtable, or the Arthurian Legends. The media and Hollywood have portrayed King Arthur's Knights as a society of almost strictly Caucasian people. What they seldom tell were the contributions or even the presence of dark-skinned people in Olde Europe.

One example of this is the Arthurian Saga of Sir Morien. According to legend, Sir Morien was a young Moorish knight of the Roundtable (Moor - Ancient Africans). His father, Agloval, was also a Moorish Knight of the Roundtable, who while searching for his brother-in-arms, Sir Lancelot, fell in love with a beautiful Moorish princess. Agloval promised to marry the pregnant princess, but by the knight's code, his oath to Lancelot must first be kept.

Morien's quest was to find his long lost father and bring him back to "the land of the Moors" in order to marry his mother and restore his knightly honor through marriage, and to regain the inheritance of family lands that were wrongly taken from his royal mother.

Of his physical appearance, the legend says that Morien grew to be strong, tall, and handsome with tremendous natural talent for combat: "He was all black, even as I tell ye: his head, his body, and his hands were all black, saving only his teeth. His shield and his armour were even those of a Moor, and black as a raven." It continues— "...for that his steed was so great, and he was taller even than Sir

Lancelot, and black withal". Also, "Though he were black, what was he the worse? In him was naught unsightly; he was taller by half a foot than any knight who stood beside him, and as yet was he scarce more than a child!"

In his quest to find his father, Morien encounters veteran Knights of the Roundtable, Sir Lancelot and Sir Gawain, challenging Lancelot to a duel. The battle is fierce and Morien is Lancelot's equal, but Gawain intercedes to keep the peace in what becomes a draw. While Morien explains his life circumstances, Gawain and Lancelot realize that this "black knight" is the son of their brother Agloval. Morien kneels and vows the oath for their knightly order and all three go their way.

Morien re-encounters Gawain wounded and captured by ambush and turns on his foes, saving the life of Gawain — "He defended him so well with his mighty blows that none might come at him to harm him; he felled them by twos and by threes, some under horses, some besides them."

Morien ultimately unites with his father Agloval and they both return and reclaim the land of their family heritage, making the Moorish princess "queen over all the kingdom of the Moors". Agloval and the Moorish queen wedded and for fourteen days they held a royal feast celebrating the unification of man and woman, of family, and their lands.

In the end summation, Agloval and Morien were the only known father/son Knights of the Roundtable. Also, Sir Agloval was the blood-brother of Roundtable knight Sir Per-



cevel of Wales, Morien's uncle, making all three family members of the Roundtable order.

This powerful piece of the Arthurian Legend has been completely omitted from contemporary story-telling which begs

the question — why was such a prominent story never told?

Sources:
ancienttexts.or/library/celtic/ctexts/morien.html; smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/not-all-knights-roundtable-were-white-180949361

The National Black Political Convention, Gary Indiana (1972)



Source: Blackpast.org, Contributed by: Euell a. Nielsen)

In 1972, Gary, Indiana hosted the National Black Political Convention. It had over 10,000 attendees and was the largest independent black political gathering in U.S. history.

Not since the National Negro Congress met in the 1930s had such a massive gathering of Black been held in one place, and organizers, who began planning two years earlier, had a difficult time finding a city that was willing to host an influx of politically engaged Black Americans not affiliated with either major political party.

The convention was held at Gary, Indiana's West Side High School from March 10 to March 12. Approximately 3,000 individual state delegates, composed of Socialists, Black Panthers, Republicans, Democrats, and Nationalists, gathered in hopes of creating a cohesive political strategy to advance Black civil rights.

Also in attendance were, Black Panther co-founder Bobby Seale, U.S. Presidential candidate Shirley Chisholm, Muslim leader Minister Louis Farrakhan, poet Amiri Baraka, and widows Coretta Scott King and Betty Shabazz.

Muhammad Ali served as Sergeant-At-Arms during for the convention, musicians James Brown and Harry Belafonte performed, and comedian Dick Gregory spoke to attendees about issues of policing and drug access. Armed civil defense personnel were also on hand due to bomb threats and violent acts surrounding the convention.

A "National Black Agenda" was proposed during the event, one that included a cohesive black vote and locating black candidates that would support that agenda. North Carolina representatives urged that Black men should receive Social Security benefits earlier than whites since their life expectancy was eight years shorter.

Indiana demanded that the United States dedicate more resources to the plight of Black Americans rather than the Vietnam War, while other attendees proposed a bill of prisoners' rights that included more humane treatment.

At times, tensions ran so high that sections of delegations walked out. Reverend Jesse Jackson pushed for the formation of a Black party, the Liberation Party, which drew criticism from the NAACP delegates who said such a move pushed continued segregation.

After intense debate, the "National Black Agenda," a 68-page document, was published on May 19, 1972, Malcolm X's birthday. The resolutions included a proposal for a guaranteed minimum income of \$6,500 for a four-person household, Black representation in Congress proportionate to the Black population in the U.S., and an end to national trade with countries that supplied the drug markets.

NAACP UPDATE:

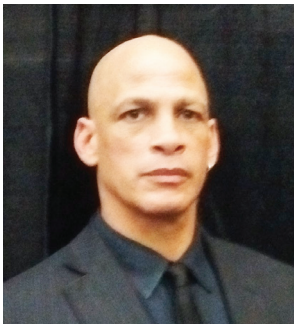
SPOKANE

NAACP

1919-2019 CENTENNIAL

http://www.SpokaneNAACP.com

By Kurtis Robinson
President, Spokane NAACP
Branch #1137



Greetings Spokane Family,
I greet you in this time of what many are feeling as troublesome, turbulent, scary, hopeful, uncertain and stressful. Although I have gone through this range of feelings myself, and like many of you probably so much more than these, yet I share with you where I have to land every time is that we have been here for 400 years. We are not going anywhere. We are more determined now than we have ever been and no matter what happens the spirit of our ancestors, those that fought, bled, died and survived for us to be here will not be extinguished or belittled by the outcomes of this national election. Either way, we get to carry on the legacy, the baton that we have been handed.

For me the question is not if that will carry on, it's how will I carry it forward? In my striving to increase common understanding in meaningful race equity work, expanding effectiveness in anti-racist real work and addressing the core issues of racism, anti-blackness and white terrorism, I find myself having to obviously take a break now and then. I was on one such experience when I ran across a TV show that carried this very powerful poem from Sonia Sanchez. This resonated and spoke volumes to me, may it do the same and more for you.

Before we get to that, here are the candidates that will be running unopposed for the intentional, next evolution of your local NAACP: **President:** Ms Kiantha Duncan, **1st Vice-President:** Mr. Kurtis Robinson, **2nd Vice-President:** Mr. Le'Taxione, **3rd Vice-President:** Ms. Nikki Jones, **Secretary:** Ms. Stacey Wells, **Assistant Secretary:** Ms. Elin Zander, **Treasurer:** Ms. Dorothy Webster, **Members-At-Large:** Reverend Jim CastroLang, Reverend Rick Matters and Mr. Charles Thomas.

Moving forward together.

Catch the Fire

By Sonia Sanchez

(Sometimes I wonder: What to say to you now in the soft afternoon air as you hold us all in a single death?)

I say—
Where is your fire?
I say—
Where is your fire?
You got to find it and pass it on.

You got to find it and pass it on
from you to me from me to her from her to him
from the son to the father from the brother to the
sister from the daughter to the mother from the
mother to the child.

Where is your fire? I say where is your fire?
Can't you smell it coming out of our past?
The fire of living...not dying.
The fire of loving...not killing.
The fire of Blackness...not gangster shadows.
Where is our beautiful fire
that gave light to the world?
The fire of pyramids.
The fire that burned through the holes of slave
ships and made us breathe.

The fire that made guts into chitterlings.
The fire that took rhythms and made jazz.

The fire of sit-ins and marches that made us jump
boundaries and barriers. The fire that took street
talk sounds and made righteous imhotep raps.
Where is your fire? The torch of life full of
Nzingha and Nat Turner and Garvey and DuBois
and Fannie Lou Hamer and Martin and Malcolm
and Mandela. Sister/Sistah Brother/Brotha
Come/Come

CATCH YOUR FIRE...DON'T KILL.
HOLD YOUR FIRE...DON'T KILL.
LEARN YOUR FIRE...DON'T KILL.
BE THE FIRE...DON'T KILL
Catch the fire and burn with eyes
that see our souls:
WALKING.
SINGING.
BUILDING.
LAUGHING.
LEARNING.
LOVING.
TEACHING.
BEING.
Hey. Brother/Brotha. Sister/Sista.
Here is my hand.
Catch the fire...and live.
live.
livelive.
livelive
live
live



#WeAreDoneDying

NAACP

NAACP.ORG

BLACK NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Local, State, National and Around the World

Compton Mayor Launches Universal Basic Income Initiative, "Compton Pledge"

(Source: Ashleigh Atwell, <https://atlantablackstar.com/>; Photo Credit: The City of Compton)

Compton is launching a universal basic income initiative that will give disadvantaged families a few hundred dollars a month with no strings attached.

Compton Mayor Aja Brown announced the program, titled The Compton Pledge, on Monday, Oct. 19. Brown partnered with Jain Family Institute, a research group, and several community organizations to give 800 low-income families a recurring monthly payment for two years. Researchers will monitor the recipients' spending habits to determine the initiative's effect on poverty.

"I recognized that there's a need for additional income, especially with the pandemic resulting in record high numbers of unemployment throughout the entire country," Brown told The Los Angeles Times. "This is a great opportunity to address inequalities for Black and brown people and also additional opportunities for upward mobility."

The exact amount to be awarded has not been revealed, but the families will be able to choose from different payment options. People without bank accounts will receive complimentary financial planning services.

The Compton Pledge will be the largest universal basic-income program in the country.



Former presidential candidate Andrew Yang included the concept in his campaign platform. He called it a "freedom dividend," which would have paid every American adult \$1,000 a month. Critics of UBI express concern about people using the money for nefarious purposes like drugs and alcohol.

However, a similar program in Stockton, California, found recipients spent most of the money on necessities like food, bills and car repairs, according to The Associated Press.

The Compton Pledge will launch later this year.

Jeanette Epps, First Black Woman Selected for Int'l Space Station Crew

(Source: <https://www.nasa.gov/>; Photo Credit: NASA)

NASA has assigned astronaut Jeanette Epps to NASA's Boeing Starliner-1 mission, the first operational crewed flight of Boeing's CST-100 Starliner spacecraft on a mission to the International Space Station. This will make her the first Black woman to live aboard the ISS.

The spaceflight will be the first for Epps, who earned a bachelor's degree in physics in 1992 from LeMoyne College in her hometown of Syracuse, New York. She completed a master's degree in science in 1994 and a doctorate in aerospace engineering in 2000, both from the University of Maryland, College Park.

While earning her doctorate, Epps was a NASA Graduate Student Researchers Project fellow, authoring several journal and conference articles on her research. After completing graduate school, she worked in a research laboratory for more than two years, co-authoring several patents, before the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) recruited her. She spent seven years as a CIA technical intelligence officer before her selection as a member of the 2009 astronaut class.

Epps will join NASA astronauts Sunita Williams and Josh Cassada for a six-month expedition planned for a launch in 2021 to the orbiting space laboratory. NASA assigned Williams and Cassada to the Starliner-1 mission in August 2018. The spaceflight will be the first for Cassada and third for Williams.

NASA's Commercial Crew Program is working with the American aerospace industry as



companies develop and operate a new generation of spacecraft and launch systems capable of carrying crews to low-Earth orbit and to the space station. Commercial transportation to and from the station will provide expanded utility, additional research time and broader opportunities for discovery on the orbital outpost.

For nearly 20 years, the station has served as a critical testbed for NASA to understand and overcome the challenges of long-duration spaceflight. As commercial companies focus on providing human transportation services to and from low-Earth orbit, NASA will concentrate its focus on building spacecraft and rockets for deep-space missions.

Kerry Washington & Co. Launch Racial Justice Fund

(Source: Cedric 'BIG CED' Thornton, blackenterprise.com; Photo Credit: Black Voices for Black Justice Fund)

A new initiative was launched last week to help support Black leaders fighting to build a fair, equitable, and anti-racist America. In announcing The Black Voices for Black Justice Fund, with the goal of raising over \$10 million, which will be used to support Black leaders as they seize this unparalleled opportunity to advance racial justice. It was launched with an initial \$2 million investment.

The fund is being co-chaired by actress Kerry Washington, Robin Hood CEO Wes Moore, and CEO of New Leaders, Jean Desravines.

According to its website, "The Fund was established to amplify clarion voices about racial justice; connect new and established Black leaders to one another; and support Black-led efforts to build meaningful economic and political power for their communities in the context of police brutality and the disproportionate impact of the pandemic along racial lines – including disparities in access to healthcare, jobs, education, justice, and the right to vote."

"The Black Voices for Black Justice Fund recognizes incredible leaders who have been on the frontlines working to dismantle the deep-rooted, racist systems that have plagued our country for centuries. Amplifying their voices and providing resources to these inspiring advocates is critical as we strive towards equity and racial justice in this country," Kerry Washington said in a written statement.

"The Black Voices for Black Justice Fund recognizes and supports the incredible



work that's being done by everyday heroes at the grassroots level," added Wes Moore, bestselling author, social entrepreneur and CEO of the Robin Hood Foundation and a co-chair of the fund. "In order for our communities to exceed the level of greatness we all aspire to, these voices must be elevated, supported, and heard."

Thirty-one recipients are Black leaders across U.S. cities including Minneapolis, MN; Tulsa, OK; Washington, D.C.; Brooklyn, NY, and Portland, OR, have been selected for the fund's first set of investments, encompassing a range of Black community leaders and organizers across the country who are working to address systems of oppression, violence, and inequality.

For more information about the Black Voices for Black Justice Fund, and to see the full list of awardees, visit www.black-voices.org.

HBCU President Dies of Covid-19, Just 3 Months After Being Hired

(Source: Dana Givens, blackenterprise.com; Photo Credit: Saint Augustine's University)

There has been a great deal of debate surrounding whether university campuses should re-open their doors considering where we are in the coronavirus pandemic, as some districts choose to reopen despite warnings from health experts.

This week, it was revealed that Dr. Irving Pressley McPhail, president of Saint Augustine University in Raleigh, North Carolina, has passed away after contracting the COVID-19 virus. The school made the announcement on its social media pages to alert students and faculty of the death.

"It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of the 12th President of Saint Augustine's University, Dr. Irving Pressley McPhail. President McPhail began his tenure on July 15, 2020," wrote the university on its Instagram page.

"In the short time he was the university's chief executive officer, he made a memorable and positive impact in moving the University in the direction of being



a 'Learning Centered' campus. The Saint Augustine's University community deeply mourns the loss of President McPhail and we wish to extend to his wife, Dr. Christine McPhail; his children, Dr. Kamilah McKissick and Mr. Ralph Bessard; family and friends left to cherish his memory our deepest condolences and prayers."

Members of the university community have come to campus to pay their respects to the late president since the news broke. A formal ceremony will be held in his honor on Oct. 27th.

BLACK NEWS HIGHLIGHTS

Local, State, National and Around the World

Alicia Garza Says FBI Foiled Plot By Suspected White Supremacists Who Had Her Name 'On A List'

(Source: NewsOne Staff, [newsone.com](https://www.newsone.com); Photo Credit: Craig Barritt / Getty)

One of the co-founders of the Black Lives Matters movement says she was notified by federal authorities about a possible violent plot targeting her. Alicia Garza tweeted Friday afternoon about the potential threat to her life and others and used it as a rallying call for voters to help get Donald Trump out of the White House.

The news followed recent reports of foiled plans to kidnap governors and overthrow state governments just days ahead of a presidential election that has a nation braced for an outpouring of anger no matter who wins.

Garza, who along with Patrisse Cullors and Opal Tometi founded Black Lives Matter in 2013, tweeted that the FBI paid her a visit to tell her the federal law enforcement agency had arrested a suspected white supremacist who was armed and has her name on a list.

"They arrested a man in Idaho on weapons charges who they believe was affiliated with white supremacist groups," Garza tweeted. "They found my name on a list in his home, alongside others."

There were no details about who else was on the list and what the people on the list had in common, if anything. But the news seemed to be the latest instance of the president — who infamously refused to denounce white supremacy and called on a far-right group with a history of violence to "stand by" during a debate earlier this month — inspiring vigilantes to plot politically motivated violence.

Garza made that same connection in a subsequent tweet that blamed Trump for the apparent threat against her life.

"This is why this President is so dangerous," Garza tweeted in part. "He is stoking fires he has no intention of controlling."



The FBI's visit to Garza came a little more than a week after it was reported that members of an extremist militia plotted to kidnap the Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer and Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam, both Democrats. Northam reacted similarly to Garza and placed the blame squarely on Trump.

"These threats and this rhetoric is not coming from another country," he said Oct. 13. "It's coming from Washington."

"We are voting for our lives this November. Black voters are saying loudly and clearly that they are unhappy with the country on every single level — with the direction of this country, Trump's presidency, and overall economic conditions — and that their votes can help to put our country on the path toward progress," Garza said as the poll's results were released Oct. 6.

Taraji P. Henson to Host Facebook Watch Series on Black Mental Health

(Source: Niki McGloster, [afrotech.com](https://www.afrotech.com); Photo Credit: Jamie McCarthy/Getty Images)

Facebook has announced several initiatives targeting mental and emotional health to connect more people around the world—and at the forefront is Taraji P. Henson.

According to FB's Newsroom, the award-winning actress is set to host a new talk show on Facebook Watch titled (for now) "Peace of Mind with Taraji." Co-hosted with Henson's longtime best friend Tracie Jade Jenkins, who is the Executive Director of Henson's Boris Lawrence Henson Foundation, the series will highlight mental health challenges the Black community faces every day.

"I've long been a mental health advocate for the Black community and created the Boris Lawrence Henson Foundation in 2018 that has provided resources to thousands of people who are struggling," Henson told Deadline. "I'm looking forward to bringing this new talk series to Facebook Watch, where I can continue to create a conversation around an issue that is near and dear to my heart."

In addition to resources and information through Henson's personal relationship with mental health, personal interviews with celebrities, experts, and everyday people, she will help provide support, bring awareness and help eliminate the stigmas of mental health issues.

"The work Taraji has done in the mental health space is inspiring, and we're thrilled to have her come to our platform to educate



and entertain around this incredibly important topic," said Mina Lefevre, Head of Development & Programing for Facebook Watch. "One of our strengths at Facebook Watch is building community and conversation around topics people care about, and we're looking forward to taking this journey together."

Along with Henson's show, Facebook is rolling out new features across its app to connect users with mental health experts, professionals, and crisis services. Also, Facebook and The Aspen Institute will collaborate to conduct advanced research on emotional health to help us understand areas like healthy social connections, loneliness, and mental health.

The Facebook Watch show is set to premiere later this year.

Alicia Keys Teams Up With the NFL to Launch \$1B Fund For Black Businesses and Communities

(Source: Njera Perkins, [afrotech.com](https://www.afrotech.com); Photo Credit: Instagram)

As the effects of the pandemic and current events continue to plague America, more artists are stepping up to use their platforms for racial and financial equity.

In conjunction with her performance of the Black national anthem at the NFL's Kickoff event for the 2020 season, singer/songwriter Alicia Keys announced her partnership with the NFL to launch a \$1 billion endowment fund for Black businesses and communities, Billboard reports.

According to Billboard, Keys stated that she wants to build off of the progress of the protests from the last few months to raise awareness about social injustice and systematic racism by creating a more tangible solution.

"We are already seeing the blatant injustices that are going on around us," Keys shared with Billboard. "As an artist, I'm always thinking about how can I use my platform to further racial equity. This fund is one of the answers and our goal is to empower Black America through investing in Black businesses, Black investors, institutions, entrepreneurs, schools and banks in a way to create sustainable solutions."

Keys also shared that the idea for the new fund was thought of to offer concrete actions to Black communities and businesses that go beyond a one-time donation.

"The initial goal of \$1 billion is to ensure a substantial commitment," she said. "Even with that it does not come close to clos-



ing the economic gap. The next steps are to reach out to different industries to invite them to invest in racial justice and create a multi-billion dollar endowment across business sectors."

The national call to help Black businesses across the country has skyrocketed since the uproar of protests in June, and the conversation continues to evolve as more place an emphasis on the importance of contributing to Black dollars.

"There is an urgent conversation that is happening across businesses about the importance of investing in Black America," Keys told Billboard. "I'm personally committed to holding corporations and institutions accountable, and in my conversa-

tions with the NFL, they reaffirmed their commitment to racial equity."

The NFL has faced a lot of backlash recently for their redirected stance on the Black Lives Matter movement and fighting against racial injustice after cutting ties with former San Francisco 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick back in 2016.

The organization just launched its season-long "It Takes All of Us" brand campaign as a means to align themselves with causes that support social justice.

They previously announced a deal with Jay-Z's Roc Nation last August to partner together on social justice initiatives through the league's Inspire Change nonprofit, among other ventures, according to Billboard.

Billboard reports that while additional partners beyond the NFL have yet to be announced, the goal for the initiative is to "create a multi-sector contributor field for the fund."

Furthermore, the hope for this endowment fund is to not only provide financial resources to Black communities and institutions but also inspire community members to start building generational wealth for the future.

"The prospect of true generational wealth for the Black community is long overdue and I'm grateful to express my purpose as an artist to advance that cause," Keys said. "I've been deeply inspired by the courage of Colin Kaepernick and the determination I have to see this through is meant to honor his commitment to social justice."

AFRICA NEWS

News Highlights From and About the Continent of Africa

#EndSARS: Nigerians Say Government Forces Surrounded, Fatally Shot Unarmed Protesters Demonstrating Against Police Brutality

Source: *theroot.com*; Photo Credit: *Sunday Alamba (AP)*

By Anne Branigin

Despite a 24-hour curfew imposed by the government, hundreds of young Nigerians gathered in Lagos to continue protesting against police violence in the country. As they had been doing for weeks, they waved Nigerian flags, danced to Afrobeats and carried signs with the slogan “#EndSARSnow.”

The Nigerian military threatened last week to take action against “troublemakers” at protests—a warning believed by demonstrators to be targeted at them, though they had more frequently been the target of violence. Still, organizers believed that if they demonstrated nonviolently, they could avoid being attacked. One video showed an organizer advising protesters to sit down as uniformed men with guns approached a crowd in Lekki, a suburb of Lagos, the country’s largest city.

Just after 7 pm, on October 20, as the uniformed men surrounded the crowd, the street lights suddenly went dark. In the darkness, gunfire rang out, followed by screams.

The numbers of the dead are still unclear, with the Nigerian government saying little about the coordinated action taken against protesters or the fatalities and injuries that occurred as a result. Videos taken at the protests, as well as information pouring in through various grassroots organizations are helping many in Nigeria and across the world understand exactly what happened.

One anonymous person who was at the Lekki toll plaza told the Washington Post there was no warning before police began firing upon protesters; at least four people around him had died. Another unnamed witness told BBC News that soldiers fired directly at protesters. “They were firing and they were advancing straight at us. It was chaos. Somebody got hit straight beside me and he died on the spot,” he said.



Witnesses speaking to the Nigerian newspaper, The Premium Times reported about a dozen dead.

Lagos State Governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu gave a stunningly passive statement Tuesday night, blaming the shooting of protesters on “forces beyond his control,” the Premium Times reported.

“This is the toughest night of our lives as forces beyond our direct control have moved to make dark notes in our history, but we will face it and come out stronger,” Sanwo-Olu said.

In a statement, Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari did not refer to the shootings, calling on Nigerians to be patient as police reforms “gather pace.” Meanwhile, the army, which on Oct. 14 warned “all subversive elements” that it would “defend the country and her democracy at all cost” called media reports of the violence in Lekki “fake news.”

Curfews have been imposed beyond Lagos to other Nigerian cities.

The protests against police brutality in Nigeria have many parallels to demonstrations happening in the United States and elsewhere around the world, with young Nigerians calling for greater government accountability for years of corruption, poor governance and a lack of oversight and responsibility for systemic state violence. The movement in Nigeria, Africa’s wealthiest and most populous nation, is a decentralized one, with multiple grassroots organizations working to disseminate information, coordinate protests and raise funds.

The protests have primarily concentrated on the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) unit, which has long been accused of heinous crimes against young Nigerians, including extortion, unlawful detainment and extrajudicial killings.

Sources talking to the BBC reported never seeing their loved ones again after encounters with SARS officers.

Last week, President Buhari agreed to dissolve SARS but said it would be replaced

by a new unit, the Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) team. But protesters have largely rejected the reform, calling for more substantial changes to the country’s policing. As Time reports, there are five core demands circulating from organizers seeking reforms, including the immediate release of all arrested protesters, justice for all deceased victims of police brutality and additional compensation for their families, an independent oversight body that would investigate and prosecute all reports of police misconduct within 10 days and a requirement that all SARS officers undergo psychological evaluation and re-training by an independent organization before working with other units.

In response to the military crackdown, Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden called on Nigerian officials to cease the violence against protesters, writing, “the U.S. must stand with Nigerians who are peacefully demonstrating for police reform and seeking an end to corruption in their democracy.”

Celebrities like Rihanna and Nigerian soccer star Odion Jude Ighalo, who plays for Manchester United, also amplified the #EndSARS movement.

“I’m ashamed of this government,” Ighalo said in an online video, pleading with Nigerians to “remain safe, be indoors. Please don’t come out because this government, they [will] kill us, and they will keep killing if the world do not talk about this.”

Among the organizations raising funds for protesters are American groups like Abolitionists @ Northwestern University, who are raising funds for temporary safehouses for queer protesters in Nigeria, and a number of Nigerian organizations, among them the Nigerian feminist group Feminist Coalition, which is accepting donations in bitcoin. In New York City, a “March for Nigerian Lives” organized by #EndSARSNYC was being planned for October 21.

A 'Wind of Change' Could Block African Leaders Seeking 'Presidency for Life'

(TriceEdneyWire.com/GIN) - As British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan once said it, there’s a “wind of change” blowing through the African continent. “Whether we like it or not,” he said, “this growth of national consciousness is a political fact.” That was the ‘60s, as countries across the continent were lowering the British flag and raising their national one.

“I can still remember watching that flag,” recalled Francesca Emmanuel, a former federal permanent secretary in the new Netflix documentary Journey of a New Colony. “It was the British flag I was watching coming down, coming down, and the Nigerian flag, going up, going up.”

“It was beautiful,” she sighed. “At last, our great day has arrived... That feeling, it’s something you can’t describe.”

But 40 years later, the promises of independence are being challenged by postcolonial leaders unwilling to abide by their constitution when it’s time to step down. Rising impatience by young people to again “raise that flag” has sparked riots in the streets of Ivory Coast, Guinea, Cameroon and over a dozen other countries.

In Guinea, incumbent Alpha Condé, age 82, ordered a crackdown on protests to his bid for a controversial third term. It resulted in the deaths of at least 50 in less than a



year with “defense and security forces responsible for unlawful killings,” says Amnesty International. Voting took place this past Sunday.

Similarly in the Ivory Coast, protesters in the thousands filled the streets of the capital, Abidjan, when President Alassane Ouattara, in an about face, announced he would seek a third term in office. Five months ago, the 78 year old Ouattara had pledged to “transfer power to a new generation”. Voting is scheduled for Oct. 28.

“We need to adhere to the constitutional provisions of our countries, particularly on term limits,” Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari told his counterparts at a meeting last

month. “This is one area that generates crisis and political tension in our subregion.”

“The reluctance to giving up power is a growing trend across the continent,” writes Congolese freelancer Vava Tampa, “causing joblessness, conflict, corruption, economic decline, and human rights abuses.

Even Paul Kagame, the West’s standard-bearer for ‘good African leadership’, changed the constitution to cling to power. In fact, according to the Economist’s 2019 Democracy Index, more than half of Africa’s 55 countries are ruled by a ‘life president’ or – in the words of the report’s authors – ‘authoritarian regimes’.”

Other contested elections in the coming months include Tanzania, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Niger, Uganda and Central African Republic. Will a growing people’s movement again be a ‘wind of change’?

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

A Different View

with 



Photo Credit: Maddie Pearson

Betsy Wilkerson, Spokane City Council

Some days I just want to channel Marvin Gaye in asking “What’s going on?” A lot has happened in our community of East Central and City of Spokane, with our many challenges of crime, income, attainable housing, and chronic homelessness adding to just the day to day struggles. Yet through it all I still see opportunities; I still see hope. So, with that I want to talk about the vision for East Central. For a decade, the freeway design called for constructing additional roads to seamlessly merge with the interstate. The combined freeway, on and off-ramps, and side roads would have stretched across 19 lanes of asphalt at some points in East Central, running parallel to the north and south of I-90, intending to allow space for the North Spokane Corridor (NSC).

But that plan was abandoned. It was too expensive. So, in 2015, the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), who currently owns the land, changed course, shifting to a more modest and traditional design. That means that, theoretically, the State could release large swaths of East Central land for uses like attainable housing, public park spaces and opportunities for economic development.

The department says it has been partnering with local community members- and even Washington State University students to explore how to use the land.

The last time a new highway came to East Central, it practically destroyed the neighborhood. Historically, the area had the highest concentration of Black residents in Spokane. That fact didn’t just color how the neighborhood was seen; it shaped its fate. In 1937, the Federal Government’s Home Loan Corporation, for example, immortalized the

views of local real estate agents and banks by giving the East Central area of Spokane, just east of Liberty Park, an incredibly low “red” rating, penalizing the region for being the “melting pot of Spokane” and lamenting that even the nicer areas suffered “proximity to the largest Negro concentration of the city.” This practice known as “red lining” effectively made housing discrimination a federal policy.

So, in the late 1950’s, when planners had to decide where to plop down the new Interstate 90 freeway, nobody was surprised when they ran it right through the middle of East Central. Homes in its path were demolished. Liberty Park was torn up. The southern part of our neighborhood was cut off from services. An enormous chasm divided the community. You were either from the north of the freeway or the south of the freeway. When I was in elementary school, there was no Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center at East Central to unite the community, it was Edison Elementary to us back then. Then in middle school, when I went to Libby Junior High, the “cat walks” were built over the freeway so we could get to school.

WSDOT is well aware of the history. So this time, the agency’s community partnership director, Charlene Kay, says the department has sought out leaders in the local neighborhoods to sketch out how the NSC might look. According to her, it’s just not about the roads- it’s about bike trails, pedestrian crossings and other public spaces. If you haven’t already read it, Daniel Walters wrote a great piece about it in the October 8th issue of the Inlander.

As a longtime resident of East Central (my mom brought us up out of the Jim Crow South in 1963 in search for a better life) and now also as your City

Council Member, I am encouraged that WSDOT came to us at the beginning of this process. I think that’s pretty powerful to be invited in first and to me it shows their commitment to community engagement. But I believe that the loss of housing in the neighborhood over the years has added to our current housing crisis.

East Central continues to be the most diverse area in the City. Our numbers, as of February 2020, are 76.6% White, Latinx 7.5%, Black or African American 6.3%, Asian/Native-Hawaiian/Pacific-Islander 5% and American Indian + AK Native at 2.6%. This does not change the past but gives me hope and shows me how “rich” our community actually is. It is a sense of optimism about what our neighborhood could look like.

Just imagine: We want mixed income to change the way people self-segregate by socio-economic status (how little or how much you make). Not just by creating affordable housing, but by adding retail, restaurants, community spaces, the possibility is endless. Let’s imagine together. We are at the table that we weren’t invited to before. Let us seize the moment and shape the destiny of East Central together.

I encourage you to send your ideas to me at bwilkerson@spokanecity.org and plug into the conversation going forward.

In Solidarity,


City Council, District 2
bwilkerson@spokanecity.org



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





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VOTER AWARENESS STATEMENT

Preparedness for Election Day

From the Office of Councilwoman Betsy Wilkerson, District 2

Spokane—Election Day is coming up on November 3rd, and in preparation of one of the most anticipated general elections, Spokane City Council Member Betsy Wilkerson shares her guidance of attentiveness on proceeding with a safe and democratic voting process.

Article X of Washington’s constitution provides for the formation and maintenance of an organized state militia, under civilian control, for the defense of the state and its people. Washington State law provides that “[n]o organized body other than the recognized militia organizations of this state, armed forces of the United States, students of educational institutions where military science is a prescribed part of the course of instruction or bona fide veterans organizations shall associate themselves together as a military company or organize or parade in public with firearms... Any person participating in any such unauthorized organization shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.” RCW 38.40.120

WHAT WE CAN EXPECT:

- Due to a high volume of vote-by-mail ballots, it is likely that we will not learn election results on Nov. 3rd. In addition, intensifying rhetoric create concerns that groups may act-out whether in the period between a potential electoral loss and Inauguration Day.
- Many Washington State residents have already voted; however we anticipate higher volumes at drop-off boxes around the region.

WHAT WE CAN DO IN OUR REGION:

- As elected officials we recognize the importance of aligning civil society and local government to prioritize a free and fair election. In the last weeks of the election, we are working to assist our community partners in the following constructive ways:
 - o Believing in a country that includes everyone, and protects the right of every person to live, work, love, and worship free from fear and bigotry.
 - o Placing value in our accountable democratic practice and committing to working together to defend democracy and protect our democratic institutions.
 - o We value human rights, human dignity, and human life, and those values are more important than our ideology.
 - o Work towards unity and alignment among government leaders and the community.
 - o Plan for a response to political pushback. Strengthen relationships among community groups, faith communities, business leaders and elected officials.

The City of Spokane condemns the public presence of private armed militia groups, reiterates that their presence and organization is unlawful under Washington’s Constitution and Revised Code of Washington and wishes to make clear that none of these private armed militia groups have or shall receive any type of commission or sanction of the City of Spokane. Community members and organizations have asked the City Council for assurance that they will be free from intimidation and/or violence perpetrated by or threatened by armed private militias in violation of state law.

ONE FINAL THING:

Take a deep breath. Be patient. If you are feeling anxious, reach out and connect with people.

“Voting is something that should be safe and without limitation and with every vote counted. As a region made up of many municipalities, we should expect to unite with respect for one another and collective pride in our country”. ~Betsy Wilkerson

For more information, visit SpokaneCity.org/CityCouncil and follow us @SpokaneCityCouncil on Facebook.



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Veterans Day - November 11, 2020 - Honoring Our Black Veterans

A Time to Thank African American Veterans for their Determination and Service

By Jeremy Butler
(Reprinted from *militarytimes.com*)

Strangely enough, it didn't occur to me that I came from a military family until I was a veteran myself. I joined the Navy in 1999 and still serve in the Navy Reserves today. But my service was, and is, very different than that of my family. My father served in the peacetime Army in the 1950s and my uncle (my father's younger brother) was a Marine infantryman who served two combat tours in Vietnam. They each had very different military experiences, but both volunteered to serve in uniform for an organization steeped in racism in defense of a country that saw them as less than equal.

Perhaps the reason that I didn't see myself as being in a veteran family was that my path to service was largely inspired by my parents' very different volunteer national service — as members of the Peace Corps stationed in the West African country of Togo in the early '60s. I remember my father saying that, despite the challenges of being black in a racist Army, he was proud of his military service and the importance of serving his country. But it was also clear that he was equally proud of his Peace Corps service and, because it was how they met, the Peace Corps was literally responsible for my existence. I didn't get to know my Marine Corps veteran uncle well until after both my father's death and when I started working for IAVA (Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America). In that time though, I learned much more about his experiences during and after his service in Vietnam.

The more I learned from my uncle — about his experiences and his memories of my father's Army service — the more my eyes were opened to the service and sacrifice of my fellow minority service members throughout America's history. Now, as CEO of Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of



The Harlem Hellfighters of the New York Army National Guard's 369th Infantry Regiment arrive back in New York harbor on Feb. 12, 1919, after serving in France during World War I. (National Archives)

America, I draw from that appreciation every day. Part of what initially drew me to IAVA is the inclusive culture of the organization and its longstanding commitment to represent veterans from every background.

There are, at last count, about 18 million veterans in America; just over 2 million of them are African American. This is an incredible, and growing, number, and it is one that represents the opportunities for men and women of all backgrounds to learn the tremendous skills that a military career can impart.

According to the DoD, African Americans made up 17 percent of active-duty military in 2017; they represent 6 percent of IAVA's membership. These are vital statistics that deserve to be humanized. Every February, we have the chance to reflect on and celebrate the many contributions of African Americans in our history. Without a doubt, our military history is a point of pride for many Americans, but we rarely take the opportunity to thank the many minorities

and women who have helped it achieve the greatness it is known for around the world. For example, just over 100 years ago during World War I, the Harlem Hellfighters battled Germans abroad and racism at home, demonstrating a remarkable commitment to country. The 369th regiment spent 191 days on the front, more than any other Americans, and besides courageously fighting in one of the deadliest conflicts in history, its members also spread a love of jazz and American culture to Europe.

In 1941, the 926 all-Black Tuskegee Airmen carried out hundreds of escort missions during World War II, never losing a single plane to the enemy. In the same war, Oleta Crain was one of three Black women who entered officer training and the only female Black officer to be retained after the war. During her years in service and later as a civilian, she fought against racism and segregation in military training and was a trailblazer for both female and minority service members.

Because of the bravery of these and other people of color before us, the 2 million African Americans who have returned from our more recent conflicts continue to build on a military foundation that is increasingly diverse and inclusive. But not all of these heroes are able to come home.

In 2005, Sgt. 1st Class Alwyn C. Cashe suffered second and third degree burns while rescuing trapped soldiers from a burning vehicle in Iraq. Refusing to evacuate via helicopter until all other soldiers had been safely moved, his first words upon regaining consciousness later were, "How are my boys?" He died as a result of his injuries and posthumously received the Silver Star; there is an ongoing campaign to upgrade Cashe's Silver Star to the Medal of Honor.

In November 2011, David Hickman was thought to potentially be the last American service member to be killed in action in Iraq. Sadly, he was not.

The family of 2nd Lt. Richard Collins III, commissioned into the Army just days before he was stabbed to death in what prosecutors say was a racially motivated attack, continue to fight for the right to bury their son with military honors. The son and grandson of military veterans, Collins was deemed not eligible for burial with military honors because he had not yet checked in to his first command and, therefore, not yet on active duty.

These are just a handful of the stories of heroism, determination and service African Americans have contributed to our military history. They serve as inspiration not only to other Americans of color who would pursue a career in uniform, but to all Americans who believe in the power and fortitude of the service members who devote their lives to protecting our country.

Jeremy Butler is the chief executive officer of Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America

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The Color of Coronavirus

COVID-19 Deaths By Race and Ethnicity in the U.S.

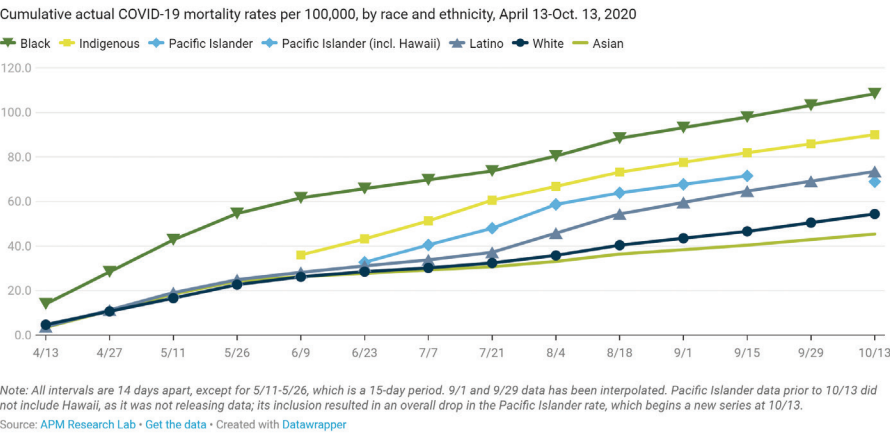
Source: [APMResearchLab.org](https://www.apmresearchlab.org)

The ongoing Color of Coronavirus project monitors how and where COVID-19 mortality is inequitably impacting certain communities—to guide policy and community responses to these disproportionate deaths. The coronavirus has claimed more than 217,000 American lives through Oct. 13, 2020—about 22,000 more than our last update four weeks ago, averaging nearly 800 deaths per day. We know the race and ethnicity for 97% of the cumulative deaths in the United States.

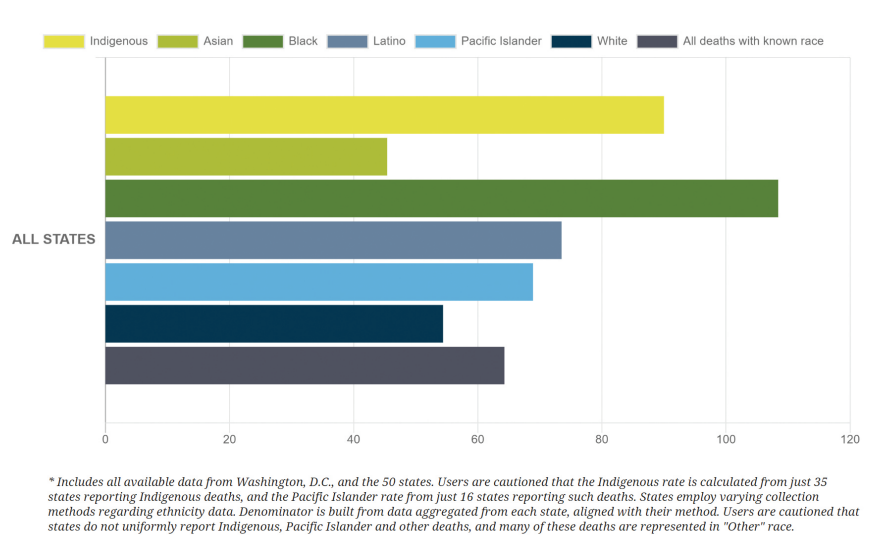
Our latest update reveals continued wide disparities by race, most dramatically for Black and Indigenous Americans. We also adjust these mortality rates for age, a common and important tool that health researchers use to compare diseases that affect age groups differently. This results in even larger mortality disparities observed between Black, Indigenous and other populations of color relative to Whites, who experience the lowest age-adjusted rates nationally. Age-adjusting elevates the mortality rate for Latinos more than any other group—revealing that COVID-19 is stealing far more Latino lives than we would expect despite this group’s relative youthfulness.

The APM Research Lab has independently compiled these death statistics. The result is the most robust and up-to-date portrait of COVID-19 mortality by race available anywhere, with a lens on inequitable deaths. We have been tracking these deaths

Black & Indigenous Americans experience highest death tolls from COVID-19



COVID-19 DEATHS PER 100,000 PEOPLE, THROUGH OCT. 13, 2020



for six months now, revealing COVID-19’s growing toll on all Americans, but with the heaviest losses among Black and Indigenous Americans.

KEY FINDINGS

(from data through Oct. 13):
These are the documented, nationwide actual mortality impacts from COVID-19 data (aggregated from all U.S. states and the District of Columbia) for all race groups:

1 in 920 Black Americans has died (or 108.4 deaths per 100,000)

1 in 1,110 Indigenous Americans has died (or 90.0 deaths per 100,000)

1 in 1,360 Latino Americans has died (or 73.5 deaths per 100,000)

1 in 1,450 Pacific Islander Americans has died (or 68.9 deaths per 100,000).

1 in 1,840 White Americans has died (or 54.4 deaths per 100,000)

1 in 2,200 Asian Americans has died (or 45.4 deaths per 100,000)

Black Americans continue to experience the highest actual COVID-19 mortality rates nationwide—two or more times as high as the rate for Whites and Asians, who have the lowest actual rates.

To learn more about the APM Research Lab and read the complete update report visit: <https://www.apmresearchlab.org/covid/deaths-by-race>.

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Cold and Flu Season During COVID-19



By Glenn Ellis

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - “Both COVID-19 and flu can spread from person-to-person, between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet). Both are spread mainly by droplets made when people with the illness (COVID-19 or flu) cough, sneeze, or talk. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.”

This statement from the CDC reminds us that, not only should we remember that we are still in the middle of a deadly pandemic, but we are also at the beginning of the 2020-2021 flu season. Because this is the first cold and flu season in the U.S. during the global pandemic, healthcare providers aren’t sure how our immune systems will react.

Truly, many of us, have reached our breaking points after more than 6 months of cabin fever; COVID fatigue; social distancing; face masks; promises of vaccines, and a long list of other COVID-related things. It is becom-

ing increasingly harder to accept all of the public health restrictions and the mandates that are actually winning the battle of taking away life, as we once knew it. Nevertheless, we cannot afford to forget how dangerous a period we are going into.

Don’t place all of your eggs in one basket, thinking that a vaccine on the horizon will come to our rescue, and save the day; realistically it would well into 2020 before there could be enough vaccines for everyone. Regardless of all of the, almost giddy, scientific and political rhetoric, there are still a lot of questions. A recent survey conducted by the Pew Research Center demonstrates how this sordid history and ongoing structural inequity could affect clinical trial participation: Even if a Covid-19 vaccine were available today and proven effective, only 54% of Black adults would be willing to take it, compared to 74% of white adults. The statistics would likely be equally dismal for participation in Covid-19 vaccine trials.

In spite of us being in the next wave of COVID-19, we are facing the start of the annual flu season. In the United States, most of the time flu activity doesn’t reach its peak until sometimes between December and February, but the ravages of the flu can last as late as May. The overall health impact (e.g., infections, hospitalizations, and deaths) of a flu season is scary to say the least. Like most others in the public health field, the thought of a flu season during the coronavirus pandemic is chilling. Hospitals and clinics already under strain from COVID are fearing an onslaught of new respiratory infections, including influenza and another seasonal

health issues that can cause serious illness in young children and the elderly

CDC estimates that in the United States each year, the flu results in between 9 million - 45 million illnesses, between 140,000 - 810,000 hospitalizations and between 12,000 – 61,000 deaths! We see what’s happening with the number of people infected with COVID-19 (over 6 million), and the number of deaths (almost 195,000), in just 6 months! You do the math on what it could look like when COVID-19 and the flu are on the prowl for a source of survival (you and me).

Let me begin by first reminding you all that a global pandemic, from a virus that is diabolical, and comes like a thief in the night with an endless appetite for victims to devour. It doesn’t behave like any other virus we’ve ever seen. It spreads through our respiratory system because there are receptors in our noses and throats—but then it goes through your entire body: blood vessels, the heart, every organ could be targeted.

Promising research from University of Manchester in the UK, suggests that the “common cold”, which is a member of the coronavirus family, having some degree of immunity also does not mean that people definitely won’t get by infected by COVID-19. At the very least, they may still experience mild symptoms, for example, as their immune system fends off the virus. any pre-existing immunity is limited.

COVID-19, Flu, and Colds all are infectious viral diseases. They are all viruses that can often spread to others by people, who are sick, before they, either, begin showing symptoms,

have very mild symptoms, or by those infected who are considered asymptomatic, meaning they never develop any symptoms, but are highly contagious.

As the weather gets colder, we’ll start spending more time indoors where it’s easier to spread viruses, like the flu and COVID-19. Since we don’t know how the flu will interact with COVID-19, it’s best to do all you can to keep yourself and loved ones healthy and do everything possible to reduce the spread of the flu.

It’s not as hard as you think. Just keep your primary goal in mind at all times: Take care of yourself; be as informed as possible with credible information; and know the symptoms of cold, flu and COVID-19.

Practice the healthiest habits you can, such as getting plenty of sleep and managing stress, as well as preventive care set up your body for success when confronted with incoming threats – whether it’s the common cold, the flu and even COVID-19. Just a few lifestyle changes can better prepare your body and immune system.

The information included in this column is for educational purposes only. I do not dispense medical advice or prescribe the use of any technique as a replacement form of treatment for physical, mental or medical problems by your doctor either directly or indirectly. Glenn Ellis, MPH is a Visiting Scholar at The National Bioethics Center at Tuskegee University and a Harvard Medical School Fellow in Research Bioethics and Narrative Writing. He is author of Which Doctor? and Information is the Best Medicine. Ellis is an active media contributor on Health Equity and Medical Ethics. For more good health information visit: www.glennellis.com

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Washington State Commission On
African American Affairs



Comments from Your Commissioner

Vote, then Act.

Hello again. I'm Walter Kendricks, Pastor of Morning Star Baptist Church of Spokane. I also have the honor of serving you as the Eastern Washington Commissioner for African American Affairs for the State of Washington.

The time of this writing is one week away from the 2020 election. This election, as do all elections, has consequences, local and national. Our foremothers and fathers risked their lives for the right to vote and by doing so paved the way for we their descendants to exercise our right to cast a ballot, thus voicing our opinion.

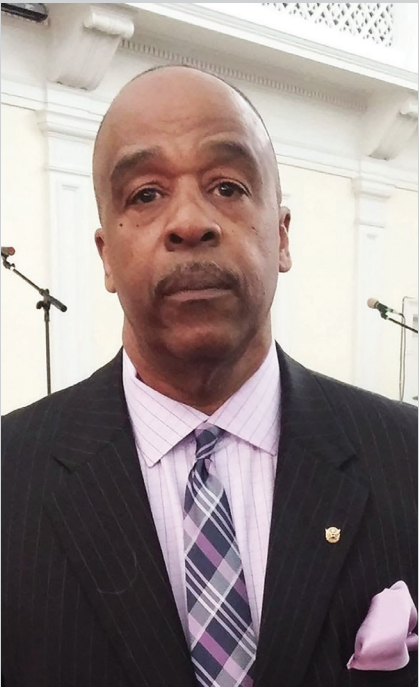
Whatever your choice, whatever your belief, whatever political party you belong to {if any} make sure you give voice to your opinion by voting. Remember, many of those who came before us risked their very lives for the right to vote. To honor them and the sacrifice they made, VOTE.

In March of this year, as the impact of, and the ramifications following the arrival of the COVID virus brought devastation financially, then death to hundreds of thousands, I began posing the question, "How much is a life worth"?

Life is something only GOD can give, yet humanity at our worst finds many ways to destroy that which wasn't given to them, for it was given to another. Humans kill one another with alarming frequency, in word or in deed. We have cheapened life to the point where when we hear about a needless death, we are oblivious to the fact that the person was important to someone. That person, now gone to eternity, was someone's Father or Mother, Brother or Sister, Auntie or Uncle, Son or Daughter. Then, we move on, relegating that death to yesterday's news. The hurt for the family involved though lasts a lifetime.

Humanity also kills one another through certain economic policies. {think slavery and its repercussions, then aftermath} Think about the deaths that could have been avoided in current times if everyone had access to affordable, quality health care.

This past Sunday an Editorial was printed in the local paper giving their endorsement of the current occupant of the highest office of the land. It is their every right to endorse whom-ever they may desire, for whatever office they deem appropriate. The Editorial Board of this paper consists of one person, that person being the owner of the paper. His paper. His opinion.



I mention this event for I discovered while reading this endorsement the answer to the questioned posed earlier, at least as far as American business society is concerned, "How much is a human life worth"?

We find the answer {for many, not all, but many} in the body of the endorsement. The following are quotes, by the way.

"Donald Trump is a bully and a bigot. He is symptomatic of a widening partisan divide in the country. We recommend voting for him anyway"

"This is an election that pits a wretched human being, whose policies and instincts for helping America thrive are generally correct, against a doddering, doting uncle who would hand out gifts the nation can't afford in order to win people's love. Given that choice, economic policy and principle should prevail".

There you have it. How much is a human life worth? Not as much as voting for a bully and a bigot. Not as much as voting for a wretched human being. Not as much as voting to keep our current economic, health care, and justice systems in place. After all, economic policy and principle should prevail, not the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Vote on Tuesday, November third. Vote as if your very lives depend on it. For in the belief system of those in power, they are counting on you not to vote. The lack of giving voice to your concerns by your vote is one reason life in this Nation is as it is.

Vote. Then act.

Until next time, take care of yourself. More importantly, take care of and watch out for one another.

Walter Kendricks
Pastor, Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church, Eastern Washington Commissioner for African American Affairs

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Serving Survivors of Crime in Spokane County

The Lutheran Community Services Victim Advocacy and Education team serves survivors of crime in Spokane County. We serve survivors of sexual assault, family violence, trafficking, elder abuse, bias crimes, and other crimes. Our advocacy services are free and confidential and our advocates are Washington State certified. Survivors do not have to report to law enforcement or go to court in order to work with us, they just have to identify that they are a victim of crime.

On the advocacy team, our goal is to help reduce barriers and provide support to survivors as they decide if they want to report to law enforcement, whether a protection order is right for them, or what resources they need to heal. If a survivor does choose to interface with these systems, we can help them understand what to expect and what the process is for an investigation or court hearing. We can also connect survivors to resources, like counseling, the Crime Victims Compensation Program, and more.

Criminal and civil justice systems can be difficult to navigate. We recognize that many of the barriers we work to overcome are rooted in systemic oppression, such as racism, classism, ableism, sexism, and heterosexism, and that the trauma of experiencing systemic oppression compounds the trauma of experiencing a crime. We try to make systems more accessible, whether that means assisting a survivor while they talk to a detective so they aren't alone, working with interpreters to overcome language barriers, or connecting someone to legal resources that may help with their specific situation.

We have assisted refugees who have difficulty navigating court systems not just because court forms, declarations, and proceedings are in English, but because courts are often inaccessible to women in their home countries so they have no former knowledge of how courts work. Some clients have difficulty meeting the expectations of child protective services due to poverty, lack of transportation, and past trauma. We have worked with clients who felt they couldn't access systems due to their immigration status and racist comments made by the courts, or because the abuse was caused by the system they were engaged with.

We know there is no "one size fits all" approach when serving victims of crime and each survivor knows their needs best. Our services are client-driven and we work to meet people where they are at in their healing. This means that clients get to decide when and how we help them. We may not always have the answers and may not be able to understand the full scope of the trauma someone has experienced, but we are committed to doing whatever we can to assist them.

If you would like to speak with a victim advocate about sexual assault, you can call our 24/7 sexual assault crisis line at 509-624-7273. If you would like to speak with a victim advocate about another crime, you can call Spokane's Crime Victim Service Center during business hours at 509-747-8224 and ask to speak with an advocate.





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Children up to age 19 in a family of four earning up to \$50,000 a year or more might be able to qualify for free or low-cost medical coverage through Medicaid or CHIP

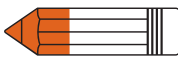
MOST UNINSURED CHILDREN ARE ELIGIBLE

Children with Medicaid and CHIP have access to immunizations, check-ups, eye exams, dental visits, mental health care, prescriptions, and other health services

WHO USES MEDICAID AND CHIP?



87%
Nearly 87% of all eligible uninsured children are school-aged

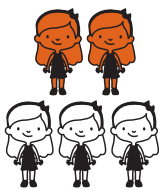


37%
ALL STUDENTS



79%
STUDENTS LIVING IN POVERTY

Percentage of school-aged students (ages 6-18) that receive health coverage through Medicaid and CHIP



Almost 2 out of 5 school-aged children received their health coverage through Medicaid and CHIP in 2016.

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Tongues of Fire

By Beverly Spears

WWJD?



As I’m writing this column, the National Election is exactly two weeks out. By the time some of you read this, November 3rd will be history. We may or may not have results of many of the down-ticket races, and short of a landslide victory, we will not know for certain who the next President of the United States will be for weeks or possibly months. The almost unfathomable reality is that if decency, reason, and commitment to the common good win the day, there is a real possibility that our victory will come at a price most of us couldn’t have imagined four years ago.

A few days ago, I received an email from the Senior Minister of my church. He was sharing a meeting invitation he had received and asking some of the social justice advocacy leadership of the congregation if we were interested in attending a Zoom gathering with him. The invitation had gone out to several organizations, including Faith communities. The message read:

“In conjunction with the Sonoma County Non-violence Training Collective, The North Bay Organizing Project is hosting a conversation for member organizations to prepare for various post-election possibilities, up to and including an attempted coup by the President or other forces.” The meeting was to give leaders the tools to organize members into “whatever form of mobilization the situation might demand.” Its subject line was, “Preventing a Coup.”

I’ve written about the possibility of violence in the wake of the November elections, but in that moment, I realized it had really only been a hypothetical consideration. Here in my little Blue corner of a big Blue State, organizations including communities of Faith, are mobilizing for a non-violent response to the possibility of localized violence in the wake of the 2020 National Election. It just got real!

I read the email through a couple of times. I could feel the muscles in my back and shoulders

tightening; my anxiety level ratcheting up. Okay, this is an overreaction – right? But that quickly gave way to; OMG! I’m living in a time in America where there is a real possibility that an American President might instigate violence, because he loses a free and fair election. Sitting by myself in front of my computer, I exclaimed out loud, how is it even possible that we’re having this conversation?!

I hope it’s an overreaction, but it’s not unwarranted fear. The President has made it very clear that if he loses it will be because the election was rigged, and he will not go quietly. He has openly warned that there will be civil war in the streets if he loses. He has repeatedly been given the opportunity to publicly give a full-throated condemnation of white supremacist groups. On the contrary, he told them in a public debate to, “stand back and standby.” That is not a dog whistle. That is quite literally a clarion call to right-wing militias across the country to defend him—or perhaps it’s more apt to say, it’s a call to avenge him.

Apparently, these groups are heeding that call, and have been preparing for just such a time as this. In October, the FBI announced it had arrested 13 suspects accused of plotting to kidnap and execute Gretchen Whitmer, Governor of Michigan, and violently overthrow the Michigan state government. The suspects were tied to a paramilitary militia group that call themselves the Wolverine Watchmen. Days later it was revealed by the FBI that members of the same self-styled militia group had also talked about potentially abducting Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam.

Nate Snyder, a former Obama Administration counterterrorism official, recently reviewed an FBI bulletin sent to law enforcement agencies across the country in August warning about the probable escalation of political violence heading into the election. The FBI document said, “Domestic violent extremists across the ideological spectrum likely will continue to plot against government and elec-

tion-related targets to express their diverse grievances involving government policies and actions”

The November issue of The Atlantic features an investigative, in-depth news story about the Oath Keepers, a pro-Trump militia group, whose leader Stewart Rhodes has been putting out a call for his followers to protect the country against an “insurrection.” Rhodes showed reporters ample evidence that he has recruited thousands of police, soldiers and veterans for what Rhodes called the impending civil war.

All this leaves me with two overarching thoughts. The first thought is; even if the worst never materializes, all of this is an unfortunate distraction from the real work of ending systemic racism and economic inequity in this country. It takes away the momentum and hard-won forward movement generated by recent outrage and organizing over police brutality and violence. It distracts from the growing realization by white people in America that Black lives haven’t ever truly mattered in this country, and that it is long past time that they as white people acknowledge that reality and change it. It’s a well-played game of misdirection by Donald Trump and the oligarchs who own and control this country. It vindicates and legitimizes white supremacists and white supremacy. Scared, threatened, clueless people sigh with welcome relief, because now they can maintain the comfortable lie of American superiority and white dominance.

My second thought surprisingly resurrects a popular trope of Christian consciousness in the 1990s that spread far outside the Faith tradition. What Would Jesus Do? We wore t-shirts and colored plastic band-bracelets that read simply, WWJD? As a follower of The Way of Jesus, what is my moral imperative in this situation?

Jesus was non-violent, but contrary to popular interpretation, he was not passive. Author Daniel C. McGuire writes, “He was killed because he resisted unjust aggression non-

violently with searingly harsh invective and with civil disobedience. He blasted evildoers in a way that makes our toughest pundits today seem timid, calling them “hypocrites,” “vultures,” and “blind fools” ... looking respectable on the outside, but inside full of the fetid stench of “robbery,” “hypocrisy,” and “crime.”

And there is my answer. This is where I stand. I will be non-violent, but I will not be passive. I attended the “Preventing a Coup” organizing meeting. It was a well-organized gathering of savvy, grounded people; diverse in age, race, ethnicity, and gender identification. I learned a lot, including the fact that on three separate occasions during local rallies and protests in early spring, vehicles waving American flags and pro-Trump signs had plowed at high speed into crowds. Although the incidents were videoed by witnesses from several angles and given to police, no charges were brought against the perpetrators. There were several instances of civilians pointing guns at protesters. A few weeks ago, several pick-up trucks waving pro-Trump signs and large American flags had paraded in a circle surrounding a popular, local LGBTQ-owned coffee and brew café. The list goes on.

I committed to a mobilization. Between Election Day and Inauguration Day, I’ll be organizing masked and socially distanced candlelight prayer vigils in the town square. I’ll coordinate with other people of Faith and goodwill to be a visible, outspoken, prayerful presence in the resistance of tyranny and chaos, however it arises. I’m nervous about what’s to come in the next three months. Donald Trump doesn’t just stoke the fires of fear and hate in his supporters, he stokes them in all of us. I refuse to let anyone’s fear win the day. It’s the very least of what Jesus would do.

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



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BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

Jillisa Winkler: Vintage Vending

Jillisa Winkler is the owner of Vintage Vending and the co-owner of Blissful Balms and Bath, two small businesses located in Spokane.

Tell me a little bit about your background.

I was born in 1990 and was mostly raised in Spokane. I spent a year or two in Seattle, like in 5th or 6th grade, but then mostly in Spokane. I went to Lewis & Clark and I went to school at WSU for a year. I didn't love it. So then I went to Old Dominion in Virginia. I studied Psychology and Biology. I moved home in 2013 and have been living here since then.

What was your experience growing up in Spokane?

I don't think I had a real love or hate relationship with Spokane until I got to high school, and then you kind of get that I want to leave this small town kind of feeling. But growing up, I felt comfortable. I was around a lot of people. My grandma had me around a lot of people and so I did feel comfortable growing up. But when you get to high school you're like, this place is so small and just wanted to leave.

What were you thoughts about what you wanted to do when you were younger?

At first I kind of wanted to do therapy, to be a therapist. And then when I was in school, I really liked rehab and the ideas behind helping people who have addictions. So, I went down that road a little bit.

What led you to Old Dominion?

I wanted to get away. When I went to WSU, it still felt the same as Spokane. I really wanted something different. My aunt was teaching in Virginia and living there and she said why don't you come and stay with us for a little bit and try it out over here.

How was it?

It was very different. It was almost a shock to be around so many Black people when you grow up in Spokane. When you're here and you grow up in it, you don't really pay attention to it. But, to be there, it's like the opposite almost. That was very cool. I did a lot of growing up. I was away from my family. It was good and I enjoyed it.

What year was it that you went there?
2010

Were you always an entrepreneurial type person?

It kind of runs in my family actually. My great grandpa was a part of a cement business with his family that is responsible for a lot of the streets downtown, the William



Winkler Cement Company. He was blinded in an accident and after that he started a broom factory and a broom store. That was my mom's grandpa. So, she always had that example. And then my grandpa was a teacher and after he was a teacher, he ran a tow truck company and then he started a courier company that me and my mom ended up working for. So, it kind of just runs in the family. Working for ourselves and for each other.

How did you get started doing the vending machines?

We lost our contract with the courier business and my grandpa was getting older and wanted to retire anyway. He kind of said, we'll just let it go. So, my mom and I were trying to hit our bath company pretty hard. At the beginning of the year, that was our goal and then COVID hit and it got a little more difficult.

Tell me about your bath company?

My mom and I started it in October of 2018. It's called Blissful Balms and Bath. We make all natural bath and body skin care at affordable rates. So, it's for everybody.

My mom had been making the bath stuff for my family for a long time. I have eight siblings. So, you might as well make this stuff instead of buying it. And make it better than what you can by. She started giving

it to friends and they said, wow that was better for my skin than anything I have ever tried. You should sell it. She waited a few years and then I said, we should do it. We kind of pushed each other into it.

How did you get into the vending business?

I met the lady who previously owned the vending machines when she purchased some of our products to put into her machines. That's how I originally met her. During COVID, she and her husband bought an RV and began renovating it. They decided to hit the road earlier than expected, so she needed to sell her company. She posted it on Instagram and I saw the post. It had been four minutes and I kind of just jumped on it. I was like, is it a little over eager to ask the details so quick, but I asked her and she wanted to work with me and it ended up working out.

What was your thought process when you reached out to her?

With our other business, we weren't super successful during this whole time, and I didn't have any extra money. So, I had no idea when I reached out to ask her what are the details of you selling your business, I really didn't have a plan to even pay for it. So, I would just say, shoot your shot and ask the question, because sometimes people are willing to work with you because of something for them. Then I wrote up a little plan that I brought to my partner and

my grandpa and was like will you help me do this. So, I really didn't even know how I was going to do it.

Explain the business.

The business is called Vintage Vending. It's what they call a creative vending machine. Unlike a typical vending machine, with snacks and sodas and things, it's got fun stuff in it. There's some vintage products like books and cassette tapes and CDs, where you just kind of get whatever random one is there in front of you. Then there is handmade stuff like earrings and key chains and all kinds of little things from artists and makers. I make some of it. Right now, there's also things like masks. Things that people need.

How does the business work?

We pay a small rent for the location. We usually pay a percentage of the profit from the machine. And do a contract that says either party can get out of it with 30 days notice. There's no strings attached.

How many machines do you have?

I have five machines. Three of them are running right now. One of them is stuck inside a bar that is closed because of COVID restrictions and another one is in my garage, waiting for a home. I'm really interested in the 5th Avenue district if anyone wants one.

What are your long term plans?

I have a couple of goals. I want to have more bipoc makers (Black, Indigenous and people of color) with products in my machine. There's a lot of potential there for artists to make little things. It's not usually a lot of money that you can spend in the vending machine, but there's some really cool things in there, so I would like to include some more stuff. Also, one of the machines is in the bus terminal downtown and I was thinking about making half of that machine free, so that people in need can come and grab a pair of socks or whatever. I think I'm going to work on that too.

Long term, I would like to have more machines in more locations. I think that would be fun to kind of have them all over the place. And then really long term, I'd like to pass the business on to my siblings. So I'm just kind of getting it started and up and running.

Anything else you want to add?

I don't have a degree or any real training. So, I would say, I just go for it.

For information about Blissful Balms and Bath visit: <https://blissfulbalmsandbath.com>. For information about Vintage Vending visit vintage-vending.com or e-mail vintagevendingspokane@gmail.com.

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Pictured: Black London's
on West Second Ave



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Seven Reasons to Live Local

We all know the happiness we feel walking into Chicken-n-More to a smiling face behind the counter, or hearing the banter hit us as soon as we open the door at Black London’s barbershop.

But what we might not always totally appreciate is that when we go to a local business for the joy it brings us, or because we found a great deal, we're helping more than just that business owner. We're making our local economy stronger in a hundred tiny ways.

Here are a few examples:

1. A Stronger Local Economy

Money spent with local businesses circulates in the community rather than being sent to corporate headquarters or distant shareholders. When you support local, it provides more resources to revitalize communities.

2. Shared Local Interests

Buying from local owners creates a network that makes our neighborhoods better. Local businesses use the economic power we give them to advocate for things like parks, libraries, and other amenities that make our neighborhoods more vibrant. Small businesses also donate 250% more to community causes.

3. Diverse, Unique Products and Services

National companies have one major fault — they’re the same everywhere. Having lots of options shaped by local voices gives Spokane a unique flavor we can take pride in. That special local vibe also draws people to Spokane, boosting the local economy even more.

4. Expertise

Entrepreneurs often start businesses they’re passionate about, so when you choose a local business, you



benefit directly from the expert who started it. That’s why small businesses are often more able to provide personalized customer service that better meets your needs.

5. Opportunity & Equality

The American dream was always about shaping our own destinies and doing things we truly care about. In a thriving local economy, that dream becomes more accessible to everyone and it results in more skilled local jobs. That’s why communities with more small businesses have less income inequality.

6. Community Connection

Buying locally supports the livelihoods of our neighbors, making us more connected to one another. When

we expand our community spheres, we build trust and independence that makes us more resilient.

7. Eco-friendliness

Shipping produces 1 billion metric tons of CO2 each year. So, while we strengthen and enrich our community by buying products made and sold close to home, we also decrease our carbon footprint.

To make it as easy as possible for our neighbors, a coalition of Spokane business organizations partnered to launch Live Local INW to help the community rally around independent businesses.

Last week, Live Local INW launched with a business directory and online marketplace at livelocalinw.com, where you can now discover local, independently owned businesses, all in one place.

This effort is made possible through the partnership of the Spokane Independent Metro Business Alliance (SIMBA), AHANA, North Monroe Business District, Inland Northwest Business Alliance, Garland Business District, Spokane Arts, and South Perry Business and Neighborhood Association, funded by the City of Spokane CARES Act.

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Wealth Gap Costs Over Last Two Decades: \$2.7 Trillion in Black Income, \$16 Trillion to U.S. Economy

By Charlene Crowell

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - America’s persistent racial income and wealth gaps are the result of four intertwined factors: housing, education, business ownership and access to credit. Closing these gaps would facilitate inter-generational wealth creation for Black America and also expand the nation’s economy by \$5 trillion over the next five years. These findings come from an extensive report newly-released by a major bank.

According to Closing the Racial Inequality Gaps: the Economic Costs of Black Inequality in the U.S., published by Citi Global Perspective and Solutions, centuries of bias and institutionalized segregation have generated grave societal and economic losses that reverberate throughout America. Had these gaps been addressed 20 years ago, the report finds that the nation could have:

Generated an additional \$13 trillion in business revenue;

Created 6.1 million jobs each year if Black entrepreneurs had access to fair and equitable lending;

Enabled Black America to earn \$2.7 trillion more in income; and

Resulted in 770,000 more Black homeowners and boosted the economy by \$218 billion.

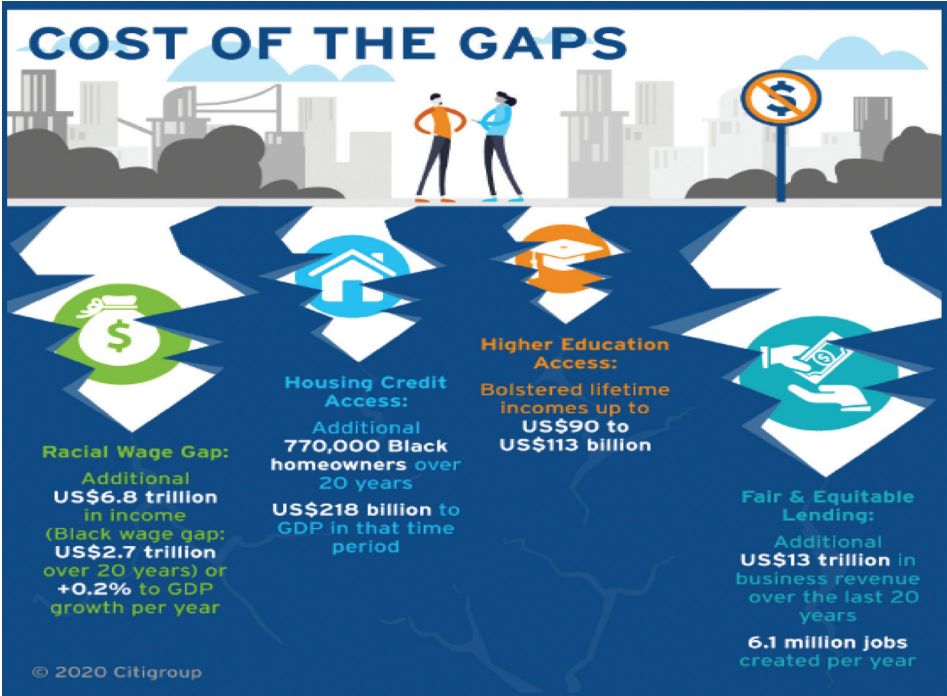
Its foreword, written by Raymond J. McGuire, Citi’s Vice Chairman and Chair of its Global Banking and Capital Markets addresses recent deaths from the pandemic and from police violence against communities of color.

“My two brothers and I were raised in Dayton, Ohio by our single mom and her parents, who had migrated from Georgia to escape the injustice and terror of Jim Crow. They worked tirelessly as janitors, social workers, and leaders at our local church to give us every opportunity.”

“Yet even today, with all those credentials and as one of the leading executives on Wall Street,” wrote McGuire, “I am still seen first as a six-foot-four, two-hundred-pound Black man wherever I go — even in my own neighborhood. I could have been George Floyd. And my wife and I are constantly aware that our children could have their innocence snatched away from them at any given moment, simply for the perceived threat of their skin color.”

McGuire’s forward weaves his personal journey with startling findings of the untold and unmet quest for financial justice that suppresses all of Black America – including how the current public health and economic crisis make this quest much harder to achieve.

Last year, 2019, data cited by the report shows Black families remained the most likely racial group to be denied a mortgage



for home purchase or refinance. Denial rates for Black applicants seeking to refinance their mortgages to a lower interest rate were more than double that of Black applicants seeking to purchase a home. The rate of rejection on home purchase was slightly over 15% and rejections to refinance was 35%.

By comparison, denial rates for White mortgage applicants were respectively 5% and 15% for home purchase and refinance. The higher denial rate for Black families, according to the report, was due to: higher debt-to-income ratios, poor credit histories, and incomplete applications.

This finding mirrors an analysis of 2019 Home Mortgage Disclosure Act data by the Center for Responsible Lending (CRL) that found the share of home purchase loans made to Black and Latino borrowers remained below their population share. Although Blacks comprise 13.4% of the population, they represented 7% of loans. Similarly, Latinos are 18.3% of the total population but received 9.2% of loans.

Nationwide, 16 states have a greater than average percent of the total Black population, and include: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Delaware, Georgia, Illinois, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, New Jersey, New York, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia.

“Traditional banks in predominately Black neighborhoods, tend to require higher initial opening deposits, and higher minimum balances,” according to the report. “This translates into Black account holders needing to deposit a higher percentage of their paychecks into accounts to avoid fees or closure.”

Further, with many Blacks segmented into lower-paying jobs and professions, the ability to save for a home is also diminished. Citi found that Black workers are overrepresented in occupations frequently paying less than \$25 per hour, and under-repre-

sented in careers usually paying wages of at least \$40 per hour.

Asserting that multiple initiatives will be required to reverse these and other long-standing trends, Citi’s report authors call on government at all levels to share a part in progressive change.

For example, Citi’s report calls for the Federal Reserve, the nation’s central bank, to include reducing racial inequity as part of its mission. About the same time as the report’s release, the Fed published its own 2019 Survey of Consumer Finances which showed that the gap between mean and median wealth for White and Black families has grown even wider. Again, all of these metrics occurred before the onset of the current deadly and economically devastating pandemic.

Nikitra Bailey, a CRL EVP, notes that the Fed has a key role to play in updating the Community Reinvestment Act, commonly known as CRA. The CRA is a civil rights law designed to address financial opportunity and the legacy of discriminatory lending practices like redlining. This law requires banks to meet the credit needs of the same communities in which they are chartered.

“The Federal Reserve should ensure that updated regulations account for the harsh realities of discrimination that still plague today’s financial marketplace,” noted Bailey recently. “CRA was designed to undo the injustices created by the horrific practice of redlining and to expand financial opportunity, equity, and help spur investments in underserved areas.”

“Our nation’s most recent reckoning with racial injustice has elevated the recognition and urgency to enact significant reforms to address structural racial barriers and provide opportunity to low-and-moderate income (LMI) families and people of color,” Bailey continued. “CRA must be one of the major tools to provide these long overdue reforms.”

In late September, the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve took the first step toward reforming how the CRA regulates the banks it oversees.

Earlier in May, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency finalized its version of a CRA, which civil rights advocates say will reduce already limited opportunities for LMI people. To date, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), the third regulator charged with implementing CRA, has not supported either proposed rule, or offered yet another version.

Hopefully the three federal regulators will reach consensus on an updated CRA that is true the law’s legislative intent.

This column recently shared an update on the future of federal support for more COVID-19 assistance. At press time, the House Majority version, known as the HEROES Act, remains in debate with White House advisers. Instead of moving this proposal forward, the Senate has chosen to place its attention and effort to push the new Supreme Court nomination to a floor vote in 2020. Readers may recall that when the late Justice Antonin Scalia passed in February of an election year – 2016 - President Obama’s nomination was ignored, and never received a hearing. Instead the Senate waited over 400 days until President Trump took office and a different nominee was eventually confirmed.

Meanwhile, consumer advocates have proposed a range of policies to both address the current pandemic and economic crisis. Their shared goal is to correct policies that perpetuate today’s racial wealth gap and include reforming housing finance, direct federal support for Black businesses, broad-based student debt cancellation, and strong regulation of financial services and products.

There are also important roles for corporate America to increase equity and opportunity. Equal pay and enhanced opportunities for professional development are crucial and must include financial institutions that have contributed to the nation’s inequality gaps. Specifically, banks must invest in Black entrepreneurs, and do more to equitably bring more mortgage-ready Black homebuyers already identified by Freddie Mac into the marketplace. Increased mortgage lending would include 1.7 million millennials now left out, according to the Urban Institute, a DC-based, non-profit think tank.

The common thread of all these proposals is an essential and measurable commitment to eliminate racial income and wealth gaps. How well America embraces this challenge will determine whether our collective financial futures will be better than our history.

Charlene Crowell is a Senior Fellow with the Center for Responsible Lending. She can be reached at charlene.crowell@responsiblelending.org.

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Key Factors to Consider as You Cultivate Your House-Hunting Wishlist



When searching for your dream home, it’s easy to become swept away by a property’s beauty and make a buying decision based on your emotional reaction. However, as one of the most significant purchases you’ll ever make, it’s important to approach the house-hunting process with a clear idea of the non-negotiable characteristics you need—versus those that you merely want.

As you get ready to showcase your home to potential buyers, here are a few ideas for creating an enticing outdoor living space

- As you cultivate your wishlist, here are the top factors to consider
- **Budget.** No matter how much you love a property, owning it will quickly become a burden if it strains your finances. As you set a budget, consider not only how much you will need for a down payment and monthly mortgage payments, but also closing costs, private mortgage insurance (if you’re planning on a down payment of less than 20% of the purchase price), and an emergency fund for any needed repairs or maintenance. A helpful rule of thumb is to only target properties that cost no more than three times your annual household income. However, this will vary based on your circumstances, so be sure to consult a mortgage professional to get a realistic idea of how much you can afford.
- **Neighborhood.** You’re probably familiar with the old real estate adage, “location, location, location.” Location is, indeed, one of the most important qualities that will govern how much you enjoy your home. As you search for your ideal neighborhood, consider factors like the school districts, crime rates in the area, and proximity to your office, transportation, and amenities.
- The minimum number of bedrooms and bathrooms you’ll need, taking into consideration whether you tend to host lots of guests or are planning to grow your family in the future.
- **Style.** In addition to deciding between single-family homes, condos, or townhouses, consider the architectural styles you like, and whether you’d prefer newer construction or could handle a home that needs some improvements.

Source: southbayresidential.com





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Nielsen’s 10th-Year African American Consumer Report Explores the Power of the Black Community

By BlackPress USA

NNPA Newswire - CHICAGO – October 2020 – For 10 years, Nielsen has been dedicated to telling the story of the power of Black consumers and their diversity, long before the call for social justice sounded. According to *“The Power of the Black Community – From Moment to Movement,”* the 10th annual report in Nielsen’s Diverse Intelligence Series on African American consumers, Black influence on the economy and pop culture continues to drive not only significant moments in history, but drive change across industries and digital platforms.

From video streaming, radio listenership and podcasting to buying Black and staying connected to social movements through social media, African Americans are leading the conversation with an unprecedented impact on brands, policies and what the country watches, buys and listens to.

“African Americans are calling out systemic racism while at the same time creating opportunities for growth across social platforms and businesses with various levels of innovation,” said Cheryl Grace, Senior Vice President of Consumer Insights and Engagement, Nielsen. “African Americans have historically navigated these imperfect structures— but this current global reckoning brought on by a unique confluence of moments, proves the power of the Black community and its incredible influence.” Grace is also the founder of Nielsen’s Diverse Intelligence Series of annual reports about U.S. multicultural communities.



Key findings from the report include:

- There has been an overall increase in buying power across the community, and also where and what African Americans are buying.
- In the last decade, there have been more successful Black brands, Black-owned businesses, and investment in expanded economic opportunities for African Americans.
- African Americans have been at the forefront of the COVID-19 crisis, as they’re more likely to be employed as essential workers.
- Podcasts have become a central stage for Black voices.

- Black consumers are the No. 1 ethnic group in watching live TV, playing game consoles, smartphone media consumption, and streaming audio.
- This time of racial reckoning has placed great responsibility on Hollywood and other media publishers to be more inclusive in the stories and characters they tell.
- For the first time, Nielsen this year created an Inclusion Opportunity index, which we use to study the most popular programs on broadcast, cable and SVOD to determine how representative they are of different demographics.
- In the past decade, there’s been considerable growth in African Americans’ popula-

tion, buying power, education and income.

- With smaller households and younger children, Black grandparents are filling the role of caregivers.

For more details and insights, download the full report at <http://www.nielsen.com/africanamericans>.

ABOUT NIELSEN’S DIVERSE INTELLIGENCE SERIES - In 2011, Nielsen launched the Diverse Intelligence Series, a robust portfolio of comprehensive reports that focus solely on diverse consumers’ unique consumption and purchasing habits. The series has become an industry resource to help brands better understand and reach ethnic customers. To learn more about Nielsen’s Diverse Intelligence research series, visit <http://www.nielsen.com>.

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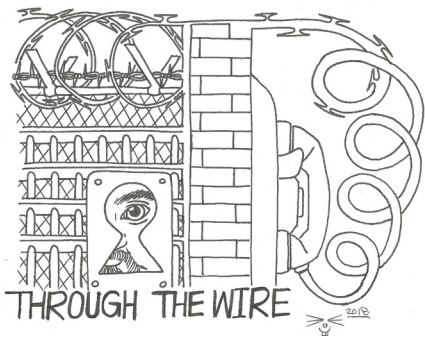
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We Gon Be Alright!

By Harry “Brocq” Whitman

As I write, we are three weeks away from Election Day. Seven million of you have already voted, while 215,000 of our friends and family are no longer with us. More than 30,000 of whom are African American. Unemployment is up. The economy is in shambles and the world as we've known it is in an uncertain flux.

How did we get here?

Well, in short, many of us basking in the aftermath of eight years of Obama became complacent and believed that it was okay to take a collective vacation from voting and left it up to others to elect Hillary Clinton in 2016. Our central mistake in 2016 was to assume that people would have a collective interest in doing what is necessary to achieve that outcome . We were wrong and the result was Donald Trump.

At the time you are reading this article, it is Election Day or shortly there after, and all of you have voted for Joe Biden “like your lives depended on it,” as Michelle Obama implored you. As a result of your actions, I pray that as a parcel of time the nightmare that has invaded our consciousness for the

past four years has ended. But even if it hasn't, **We gon be alright!**

Now, we must begin the long arduous task of coming to terms with how much guilt, if any, we as voters have to bear that as a result of our electoral slumber in 2016 Donald Trump was elected, many people died and the landscape of the country resembles a decimated battlefield.

In a way, this is not hard to grapple with, because it does not really end for any of us. We will always carry those four years with us, a wound that aches when it rains. **We gon be alright!**

We gon be alright! That phrase is about faith. It has sustained us from the shores of

the Homeland in the belly of the slave ship to the jubilation of the first African president in the house that slaves built . Yes, **We gon be alright!**

For it is only in faith that we can believe in something we cannot see. And it is about love, for in love an only love, will we ever know the joy of selflessness. And it is about family, the African family, for without them we know nothing about being accepted just as we are. And it is about eternity, from the creation of the mother and father of civilization in the garden in the Homeland, to the day of judgment. Without eternity yesterday is forgotten, today is taken for granted and tomorrow never comes.

We gon be alright!!!

Black Students are Also Dying from COVID 1619

By Dr. Jawanza Kunjufu
(TriceEdneyWire.com)



Why do so many Black students associate being smart with acting white?

Why are 41 percent of Black students in special education, but only six percent in gifted & talented and advanced placement?

Why is the NBA 75 percent Black, but only 2 percent of the doctors are Black?

Are Black students more confident in sports than in science?

What has been the impact of racism on the Black psyche?

Are many Blacks suffering from Post-Traumatic Slavery Disorder?

What exactly is meant by good hair and pretty eyes?

What are four benefits of darker skin?

Why do Blacks only spend 3 percent of their income with Black businesses? Why is white wealth 10 times greater than Black wealth?

What months are white history taught? Black history?

What has been the impact on Black youth starting their history in1619 on a plantation?

What can Blacks learn from the Jewish community and their mantra; Never Forget?

We know 6 million Jews were killed. Do you know how many Blacks died during slavery?

I believe the best way to address the use of the N word is to ask our ancestors. If we asked Nat Turner or Harriet Tubman, what would be their response?

If we asked John Lewis when he marched from Selma to Montgomery, what would have been his response?

If we asked Frederick Douglass on July 4, 1860, what would have been his response?

Concerning reparations, why did the United States government pay Asians and Native Americans and not African Americans?

What is the cost of 5 million Africans working from 1619 to 1865?

Black youth must be taught how to overcome racism.

What drives racism? Fear of differences and power.

People who are secure are comfortable with differences.

Power concedes nothing without a struggle.

Whites have no problems having conferences on diversity, equity, race relations and multiculturalism. What they do not want to discuss is the equitable distribution of power.

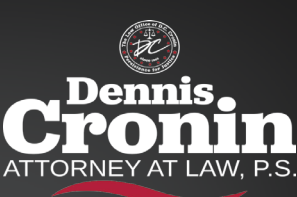
I would encourage you to give all your students grades 3-5 and 6-12 COVID 1619.

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"I Think It's Safe to Say All Parents and Teachers Share a Desire to Keep Our Children Safe and Healthy"

By Nikki Lockwood

I think it's safe to say all parents and teachers share a desire to keep our children safe and healthy. Comprehensive health and sex education is a proven way to do just that.

What's disappointing to see, are parents and community members fighting against the new and improved sex education guidelines for public schools. This past spring, in the height of the coronavirus outbreak, without adhering to precautions from medical professionals to prevent the spread of COVID-19, these same people gathered enough signatures to put sex education up for a vote on our ballot, known as Referendum 90.

As a parent, and longtime volunteer in our schools, I have worked with our school community to forge an agreement on what a health and sex education curriculum should look like for our students. I know well how this issue triggers strong emotions.

In a perfect world, conversations about changing bodies, relationships, and yes, sex, should happen between kids and their parents or guardians. The truth is, those conversations just don't happen in every home. Some parents don't feel comfortable, or well-equipped enough, to have those conversations.

I'm grateful for a community that partners with families by preparing educators with the expertise and training to deliver this information, so kids don't resort to getting it from their peers in the hallway, slang language, or worse, from Google.

Studies show that states with comprehensive sex education have lower rates of unintended pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections, and child sexual abuse. Stud-

ies have also shown that students who receive comprehensive sex education wait longer to have sex.

In Washington, we've been fortunate to have sex education guidelines in place for 15 years. However, it turns out only about 60% of schools were providing sex education for students. So earlier this year, the state updated the law to make it a requirement that all students have access to the information and the tools they need to live safe and healthy lives, no matter their zip code..

Under the new law, all schools must provide a curriculum that is medically-accurate and age-appropriate, choosing materials available through the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction or creating their own to meet their community's needs. And updates were made to include lessons on consent and bystander training for older youth, and social emotional learning standards for K-3rd graders on how to identify and manage feelings and how to engage in healthy friendships.

Approving Referendum 90 will ensure all students have access to accurate information about human development, healthy relationships and tools to prevent sexual assault, reduce unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections. Sex education enables students to make good decisions, protecting their health and their futures. Without sex education, students do not have the tools to identify and avoid abuse, sexual assault, and human trafficking, or the skills to understand personal boundaries, and how to say and receive a “no.”

I had my own experience with sexual assault as a minor, without the language or direction to address it until much later in life. I'm also a daughter of three generations of women who had their first child at 15, the same year in the Mexican tradition that girls have their quinceanera, to celebrate the transition to womanhood. These smart, ambitious women who came before me had limited options for their futures, being at the intersection of racism and becoming parents at such a young age.

Systemic racism and structural inequities result in health disparities, such as Black youth disproportionately facing reproductive and sexual health challenges. For example, the pregnancy rate for Black teens has been 2.5 times higher than that of white teens. Ensuring every student, students of color, differently abled students, and LGBTQ+ students, have access to quality sex education is an equity issue.

As an education advocate, I know the importance of every child feeling valued and having a sense of belonging -- regardless of skin color, sexual orientation, physical abilities, or other differences. Society at large isn't fully accepting of some of our children. Sadly, society doesn't show love for some of our children. A vote to approve R-90 can show that love through curriculum and policy that helps all of our kids be seen and acknowledged along with giving them the tools to be safe.

I will be voting to Approve Referendum 90 first and foremost because I'm a parent of two daughters, whom I hope can meet their full potential and dreams and have safe, loving relationships.

Written by Nikki Lockwood. She is a parent of Spokane public school students and serves as a Director on the Spokane School District Board. These are her personal views and do not represent the views of the School Board.

Safe & Healthy Youth Washington Top 5 Contributors: Planned Parenthood Votes NW and Hawaii | ACLU of Washington | Washington Education Association | Group Health Foundation | SEIU Initiative Fund



On My Mind: Anyway

Continued From Page 2

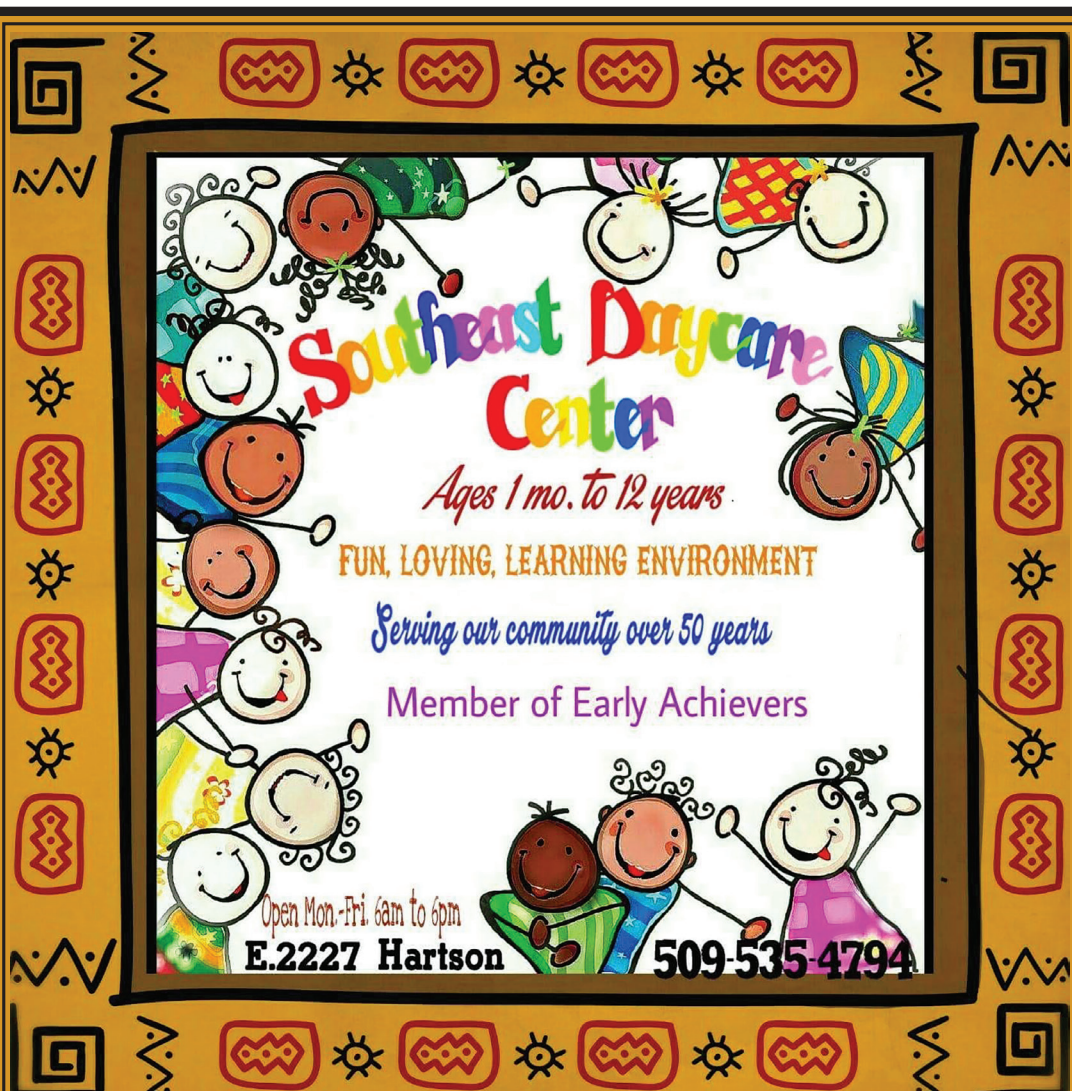
In the same way that Americans were aware of Trump's reprehensible and loathsome character and still voted for him, citizens of this country have been aware of these atrocities as well, and most have simply gone about their business. Living their lives-- anyway.

I wish I could believe the Spokesman Review's Trump endorsement was an anomaly. I wish the owner of the Spokesman Review was an outlier. Just one out of touch rich guy who has his wires crossed. But I don't believe either of those wishes to be true and that has me worried for this election.

I believe the owner of the paper was speaking directly to so many others like him in this country, I call them the Spokane nice crowd, who are desperately in search of a reason, any reason, to support Donald Trump--anyway. Because of what I believe he represents to them. A victory for whiteness. American whiteness. A desire to turn the clock back to a time when America was "great" for them. When people felt comfortable unashamedly basking in their whiteness. When nobody made you think about how being white made your life easier, it just was. When if you were poor, even dirt poor, at least you had your whiteness to fall back on. At least there was that.

So, I'm afraid this election has become a political superbowl of sorts. Trump may be a pussy-grabbing, pathological liar, who is marching this country towards a cliff, but his victory in 2016, and possible victory in 2020, holds the possibility of returning team Trump to a place of unadulterated superiority, and for that they seem to be willing to give up just about everything, including our democracy.

As for me, I am hoping for the best, but preparing myself for the worst, and I'm praying that there will be a world left for my grandchildren to enjoy. Am I excited about a Joe Biden presidency? Not really. But damn, he's not a horrible, despicable human being. Can the left give him some bonus points for that? I know, I did. I also know that Black people have been through so much more than whatever the outcome of this election will turn out to be and we will get through this as well. One way or another. Mostly, though, even if Joe Biden wins, I'm wondering, when all is said and done, how many of my neighbors, my co-workers, my fellow Americans, will have decided, like the Spokesman Review's owner, to ignore and disregard and rationalize in order to support Trump—anyway, and I wonder how long it will take this country to recover from that? If we ever do.



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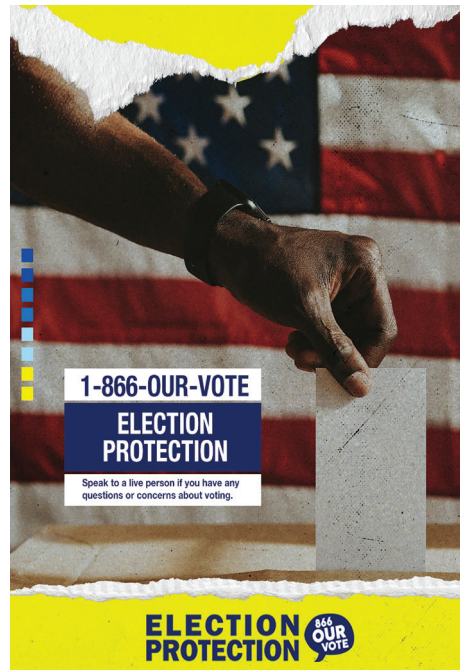
The Power of Protest and the Power of Our Ballots

By Kristen Clarke

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - In a year defined by distress and tragedy, no one has felt that chaos more painfully than the Black community. We've seen the coronavirus pandemic tear through our neighborhoods at a devastating rate. Job losses have surged, evictions are looming, and economic damage has mounted. And the deaths of Breonna Taylor and George Floyd and the shooting of Jacob Blake have brought the crisis of police violence into stark, horrifying relief for the broad American public.

Yet at the same time, we have also seen a nearly unprecedented explosion of protests in virtually every American city. In the face of militarized, mobilized opposition, we have seen our community take to the streets and demand justice for victims and reform of broken systems.

As Election Day nears and tens of millions of Black voters head to the polls to turn those demands into reality, we may have one more obstacle to overcome: voter intimidation.



Our community has been forced to deal with legal (and illegal) hurdles on our path to the ballot box since the very moment we won the right to vote. No matter what it said on paper, our ability to vote has never been guaranteed. This year, we should expect to see desperate 11th hour attempts to stifle and silence our voices.

The reason is simple: Our votes matter and they can make the difference in races all across America. The power of our collective ballots is just as strong as the power of our collective protests.

Those are the tools that -- together -- will bring about the change and transformation we want to see.

Of course, the outcome of the presidential race will have profound impacts on our community. But, so too will countless down-ballot races. On November 3, we will elect District Attorneys who will make decisions about how to enforce laws in our communities. We will elect sheriffs who run jails and make decisions about policies like solitary confinement and how to treat those who are incarcerated. We will elect mayors who will choose who leads our police departments. We will elect City Councilors who determine the budget size for local police departments. We will elect local and state judges in some states who help determine who are charged with ensuring equal justice under law. Simply put, the ballot is an important vehicle to promoting accountability and addressing demands for criminal justice reform that have been at the heard of this year's historic protests.

Just as we saw during the Civil Rights Movement, our movement today must be fought on the streets, in the courts, and through the power of our ballots.

That is why my organization, Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, leads the Election Protection program today. Election Protection is the nation's



largest and longest-running, non-partisan voter protection program, anchored by the 866-OUR-VOTE hotline. And, given the extraordinary challenges that we face during the pandemic, it's why we have more than quadrupled the number of legal volunteers supporting that hotline to 23,000 legal volunteers, seven days a week.

Since the pandemic, we have mounted nearly 3 dozen voting rights lawsuits to ensure that Black voters and all voters will be able to vote this season. We have successfully sued to defeat restrictions such as notary and witness requirements for absentee voters, we have fought to ensure that voters will receive notice and an opportunity to cure any issue that might arise with an absentee ballot and we have fought to ensure that absentee ballots would be available to all voters, without limitation. We have worked to beat back the efforts of operatives who are trying to limit access to drop boxes and more.

Since July 1, we've received more than 100,000 calls from voters seeking help

with vote by mail, those wondering whether the rhetorical claims that vote by mail is not safe or secure are true, and voters seeking information on drop box options for returning ballots and more. We've also requested some reports of voter intimidation and voter suppression, which are not uncommon during the 11th hour of an election season and which are, far too often, targeted at Black voters and voters of color. Robocalls seeking to frighten voters, social media posts imparting false information, and disinformation campaigns targeting Black voters with inaccurate information about vote by mail. We see these thinly veiled schemes for what they are -- attempts to deny Black people voice in our democracy. They haven't stopped us in the past and should not stop us now. We are here to help.

This election is one of the most consequential elections of our lifetime. It is a capstone to a year marked by historic protests and an unprecedented pandemic -- two events that raise profound questions regarding systemic racism, and the health, safety and quality of lives of Black people in our country. As this year comes to a close, the power of our ballots will prove to be a critical tool in our arsenal as we seek to ensure that Black Lives Matter and achieve those goals aimed at elevating the standing of Black people in our democracy. The collective might of Black protests and Black votes are forces to be reckoned with.

With just several days remaining in this election season, let's use the ballot to underscore, in no uncertain terms, that Black Lives Matter.

Kristen Clarke is president and executive director of the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, which leads Election Protection, a non-partisan voter protection program anchored by the 866-OUR-VOTE hotline.

The Michigan Coup Attempt

By Bill Fletcher, Jr.

(Blackcommentator.com) - Mainly described as an attempted kidnapping of Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer, the alleged actions of the apparent white terrorists are better described as a coup attempt. The allegations went far deeper than attempting to kidnap Whitmer. The allegations included efforts to spark a civil war through an attack on the state legislature. It has also been alleged that the same group had an interest in kidnapping Virginia Governor Ralph Northam.

Leaving aside for a moment that the Trump administration has largely brushed aside this act of right-wing bravado in the name of going after political forces on the Left, the actions of this alleged terrorist group are worth noting. If the allegations are proven, their actions amount to the equivalent of the Nazi Munich Beerhall Putsch in 1923, a precursor to their rise to power in 1932.

In 1923 the Nazis attempted an uprising in the city of Munich (in Bavaria). It failed and Hitler was jailed (where he went on to write Mein Kampf). The Nazis were not taken very seriously and as opposed to being crushed as a political force, were allowed to grow. By the time of the Great Depression the Nazis were well-positioned to fight for power. Part of their literal arsenal were paramilitary units known as Sturmabteilung, otherwise known as the SA or the Storm Troopers. Much like the paramilitary units set up by Benito Mussolini in his march to power in Italy during the early 1920s, the SA was a large 'gang' that intimidated - if not terrorized - political opponents and Jews. In many cases the SA received the cooperation of the German police.

The reference to the SA is not to lead anyone to believe that there is an identical comparison with our own situation. What is important, however, is that mainstream media in both Germany (of the 1920s and

early 1930s), and in the USA - historically - has tended to downplay the paramilitary extreme Right-wing. Each time this is underestimated, there is disaster. In the aftermath of the crushing of Reconstruction, white terrorists ran roughshod throughout the South, destroying most evidence of the great advances that took place after the Civil War. In the Southwest during the latter part of the 19th century and early 20th century, white vigilante gangs were used to terrorize Native Americans, Asians, and Mexicans, often stealing their land from under them. In 1898 in Wilmington, North Carolina, an armed white supremacist coup overthrew a legitimately elected multi-racial progressive, populist government.

Those charged in the apparent coup attempt and kidnapping in Michigan were not wild-eyed crazies who like to play with guns. They are part of a right-wing populist movement that has received active and steady encouragement from the Trump administration to taunt those who believe in democracy.



If you ever had any question as to what is at stake November 3rd, that has, hopefully, now been settled.

Bill Fletcher, Jr., is the executive editor of *globalafricanworker.com*, former president of *TransAfrica Forum*, and a lifetime trade unionist. He is a Senior Scholar with the *Institute for Policy Studies*, and the author of *"They're Bankrupting Us"* - And Twenty Other Myths about Unions and the novel *The Man Who Fell From the Sky*. Other Bill Fletcher, Jr. writing can be found at *billfletcherjr.com*. Contact Bill Fletcher by e-mail at *at billfletcherjr@gmail.com*.

OUR VOICES

We're All Living in a Future Created by Slavery

By Ameer Hasan Loggins

(Source: Blackagendareport.com)

The carceral class is made up of persons of African descent who are systematically stigmatized as unfit for freedom and deserving of the dehumanization that comes with being incarcerated.

When I was 19 years old, I was arrested.

Instead of a dungeon, I was held in an overcrowded holding cell. Instead of being shackled and transported across the ocean on a floating prison, I was handcuffed, sitting shoulder to shoulder with another young Black male being hauled across the county on a prison bus.

During intake, I was stripped of my clothes, forced to stand naked as officers stripped me of both my pride and my dignity. I tried to cover my genitals. It was my last grasp at holding onto my humanity. I was commanded by officers to remove my hands. They had guns. I had nothing. I complied. The officer barked, “Lift up your nut sack.” I had no choice. I was ordered to “squat down and cough.” When I was finally handed a pair of state-issued boxer shorts, I was so desperate to have on anything to cover my exposed body that I did not give a damn that the underwear had been passed down, circulated among others who had been stripped naked before me.

Author and scholar Saidiya Hartman once wrote , “I, too, live in the time of slavery, by which I mean I am living in the future created by it. It is the ongoing crisis of citizenship.” I echo her pain as I think about — and live through — the ongoing crisis of carcerality and those affected most by its existence.

I think about the African diaspora. I think about my family. I think about myself.

In the summer of 2017, I visited the continent of Africa. While there, I basked in the beauty of the lively Ramadan nights in Morocco. I stood in the searing sun of Egypt. I took pictures with the great pyramids as my backdrop, mimicking Malcolm X during his visit in 1964. When I made it to Ghana, I visited the final resting place of Kwame Nkrumah. While standing at his tomb, I thought about Nkrumah writing , “All people of African descent whether they live in North or South America, the Caribbean or in any other part of the world are Africans and belong to the African Nation.” I stood there thinking about the divide between being identified as African and being of African descent. I was in the homeland of my ancestors, and yet I knew none of their names or faces.

But I did know why they were forced to leave. I had reached a point where I could not return home to the United States without experiencing the carceral castles on Ghana’s Gold Coast.

My feet were firmly planted, affixed to the weather-beaten ground of the Castle of St. George in Elmina. I stood in front of a cell, designated for incarcerated Ashanti, Mandinka, Hausa, Wolof, Fula, and Susu from various kingdoms who had been deemed as deserving of death because they fought to live in freedom. I stood there in front of a thick black wooden door hauntingly marked by a human skull and a set of crossbones carved into stone.

Behind that door was a darkness I never experienced.

In the 7x10 prison cell, there was a total absence of light. There was also an abject emotional darkness that came with knowing folks, wrapped in the same skin that I’m in, were left there to starve and rot in death.

The captives imprisoned at the Castle of St. George were a part of what I call the carceral class. I am a member of this class.

The carceral class is made up of persons of African descent who are systematically stigmatized as unfit for freedom and deserving of the dehumanization that comes with being incarcerated. It is essential to the idea of Black people being framed as the locus of crime and Blackness as being synonymous with criminality. As a classification, the carceral class denotes that, at any given time, your freedom can be ripped from underneath your feet. That you can be torn away from the people you love and the places you love to be.

Although he didn’t name it, Malcolm X knew about the carceral class too.

In Malcolm X’s blistering 1963 speech, “Message to the Grass-roots ,” he spoke of the systemic condemnation of Black folks in the United States. He lasered in on the uncomfortable common bond of being Black in America. Malcolm made it plain and uncompromising. “We are all Black people, so-called Negroes, second-class citizens, ex-slaves,” he said. “You are nothing but a ex-slave. You don’t like to be told that. But what else are you?



You are ex-slaves. You didn’t come here on the Mayflower. You came here on a slave ship — in chains, like a horse, or a cow, or a chicken.”

I wrestle with what Brother Malcolm said. Not because I disagree with the troublesome truths that he spoke, but because I feel his analysis can be built upon.

His words still ring in my mind on a loop.

“You are nothing but an ex-slave.”

You are nothing but a slave.

You are nothing.

You are a thing.

Malcom’s speech takes me back to Achille Mbembe’s On the Postcolony. In it, Mbembe lays bare his views on what it means to be branded, burned with the mark of being a slave. He viewed slave as the “forename” one must “give to a man or woman whose body can be degraded, whose life can be mutilated, and whose work and resources can be squandered — with impunity.”

I think about a time before enslavement. Before Africans were ensnared in the wretchedness of having both their labor and their lives exploited from can’t see in the morning to can’t see in the evening, they were prisoners of a particular kind.

Those who were captured and eventually enslaved were regular folks: commoners, farmers, wage workers, domestic servants, and artisans who worked with their hands. Two-thirds of those held captive were young African men. As Marcus Rediker recounts in The Slave Ship: A Human History, slave raiders targeted “‘the roughest and most hardy,’ and avoided the privileged ‘smooth negroes.’” The class-based vulnerability of the common folks figured centrally in their capture and confinement. Rediker continues:

“Second to war as a source of slaves were the judicial processes in and through which African societies convicted people of crimes ranging from murder to theft, adultery, witchcraft, and debt; condemned them to slavery; and sold them to African traders or directly to the slave-ship captains... Many Africans and (abolitionist) Europeans felt that judicial processes in West Africa had been corrupted and that thousands had been falsely accused and convicted in order to produce as many tradeworthy bodies as possible.”

A judicial system of injustice had waged war on African commoners, criminalizing them into a world of carcerality.

And again, Brother Malcolm was correct.

We did not willingly travel to the Americas on the Mayflower. We were forced here on the White Lion and the Clotilda . It is not hyperbole to suggest that the slave ship was an aquatic prison. Its European captain was the warden. Its European crew were the prison guards. And in handcuffs and leg shackles were the formerly free Africans, eaten alive, buried in the belly of vessels of mass incarceration.

The largest wave of forced African diasporic movement was anchored to punishment and carcerality. Everywhere the descendants of the Middle Passage were forced to find footing, carceral-class status and the struggle for liberation followed.

Malcolm knew the global connectedness of Black folks’ oppression. He knew that in the West, the African diaspora’s carceral-class status is still branded to our being.

Forty percent of the 10 million incarcerated Africans brought to the Americas and sold into chattel slavery ended up in Brazil. Today , it is estimated that 75% of Brazil’s prison population are Brazilians of African descent. In the country’s capital Brasília, Afro-Brazilians make up 82% of those incarcerated. Although only 11% of the country’s total population is between eight and 24 years of age, this age group represents approximately one-third of those imprisoned.

In the United States, Black adults are 5.9 times as likely to be incarcerated than white adults. As of 2001, one out of every three Black boys born in that year could expect to go to prison in his lifetime. While 14% of all youth under 18 in the United States are Black, 42% of boys and 35% of girls in juvenile detention facilities are Black. Among Black trans folks, 47% have been incarcerated at some point in their lives.

The criminalization of Black folks in the United States is both a pathologizing and totalizing practice. No group is spared. No group is left unvictimized. These are progeny of the commoners, prisoners of war, and freedom fighters who made up the original carceral class.

Malcolm also knew that as a Muslim, “There is nothing in our book, the Quran, that teaches us to suffer peacefully.”

On Christmas Day in 1522, 20 enslaved Muslims, wielding machetes, attacked their Christian masters on the island of Hispaniola. It was the first recorded enslaved African revolt in the Western Hemisphere.

Four years later, enslaved African Muslims rebelled against the Spanish on the coast of present-day South Carolina. It was the first rebellion by enslaved folks in the history of North America.

In 1729, Granny Nanny , a self-liberated African Muslim leader and warrior, led her army of Maroons in Jamaica into the battle with the British — and crushed them in combat. On August 14, 1791, an enslaved African Muslim named Dutty Boukman led other enslaved folks in an uprising against the French. This rebellion and the death of Boukman are marked as being one of the sparks that lead to the Haitian Revolution. On the 27th night of Ramadan in January 1835, a group of enslaved African Muslims in Salvador of Bahia, Brazil, organized one of the largest slave rebellions in the history of the Americas. After being forced aboard on June 28, 1839, Sengbe Pieh, an enslaved African Muslim, led the aquatic revolt on the Amistad .

For members of the carceral class, resistance is in our blood. Resistance is a binding component of our collective experience. Resistance is in our history. This is the history of Black folks like Safiya Bukhari, Iya Fulani Sunni-Ali , Kamau Sadiki, Jamil Al-Amin, Mutulu Shakur, and Russell “Maroon” Shoatz .

This is why we resist to this day.

In the end, I return to where I started, thinking about Saidiya Hartman’s words. We live in a time created by the original mass incarceration — the transatlantic slave trade. The “peculiar institution ” that is rooted in carcerality. Malcolm X knew this. Political prisoners in the United States today, who need to be freed, know this. I, too, know this.

There has not been a point in my life where I have not been intimately impacted by the carceral state. We know this because we have all been subject to and subjugated by the carceral state. It is this experience of knowing that informs my fight to abolish the carceral state.

Ameer Hasan Loggins is a 2007 graduate of UC Berkeley, with a bachelor’s degree in African American Studies. Ameer also holds a Masters in African American Studies from UC Berkeley and is currently working towards earning his doctorate in African Diaspora Studies. His research explores Reality Television as a social phenomena, and how its effects on the perception of African Americans outside of a televisual space. Ameer has conducted research for Harvard University’s Du Bois Institute for African and African American research (The Hip-Hop Archive) and currently works with Harvard University’s Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race and Justice on a series of summer forums. Ameer also received the University of California Berkeley 2011 Graduate Council Advisory Committee for GSI Affairs, Outstanding Graduate Student Instructor Award.

This article is part of Abolition for the People , a series brought to you by a partnership between Kaepernick Publishing and LEVEL , a Medium publication for and about the lives of Black and Brown men. The series, composed of 30 essays and conversations over four weeks, points to the crucial conclusion that policing and prisons are not solutions for the issues and people the state deems social problems — and calls for a future that puts justice and the needs of the community first.



AHANA Helps Multi-Ethnic Businesses Survive the Pandemic.

As the only multi-ethnic business association in the Inland Northwest, AHANA has become the primary source and trusted messenger for outreach and technical assistance to ethnic and culturally diverse businesses in Spokane.

We help micro and small businesses apply for local, state, and federal business grants and loans during COVID-19, including the Wa. State Small Business Resiliency Grant.

We also council businesses on how to expand or pivot in order to survive, and we are working to ensure that multi-ethnic businesses have the same opportunities when it comes to contracting and finance.

If you own a multi-ethnic or multi-cultural business and need help, please give us a call. If you would like to get on our mailing list to be informed of grant and other COVID-19 funding programs, please send us an email or visit our website.

Contact:

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www.ahana-meba.org



NOVEMBER EVENTS

NOVEMBER 11
FUSE DIVERSITY BOOK CLUB
Unapologetic: A Black, Queer and Feminist Mandate for Radical Movements
By Charlene Carruthers

A manifesto from one of America’s most influential activists which disrupts political, economic, and social norms by reimagining the Black Radical Tradition. Drawing on Black intellectual and grassroots organizing traditions, including the Haitian Revolution, the US civil rights movement, and LGBTQ rights and feminist movements, Unapologetic challenges all of us engaged in the social justice struggle to make the movement for Black liberation more radical, more queer, and more feminist.

6:30pm-8pm
Virtual Discussion
Visit the Fuse Book Club Facebook Page:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/fusediversity>

NOVEMBER 16
NAACP GENERAL MEETING

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

VIRTUAL GROUP

A Cup of Culture

Saturdays at 12:30pm



Join Me For A Cup Of Culture

SHARING TIPS & INSIGHTS ABOUT DIVERSITY

Saturdays at 12:30 PM PST

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facebook.com/groups/racial-reconciliationwithdrwilburn

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Andy Warhol, Campbell's Soup II: Cheddar Cheese (II.63), edition 174/250, 1969, screenprint. Collection of Jordan D. Schnitzer © 2020 The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc. / Licensed by Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

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Stephen Pitters Releases 7th Manuscript

Stephen Pitters, local artist and producer of KYRS Radio program Poetry Rising, releases his 7th manuscript titled: Virus.

Currently available locally and on Amazon and Kindle.

Stephen is reading excerpts from the manuscript on Thursdays, streaming live on his FB page at 11am.



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REMEMBER TO VOTE BY NOVEMBER 3

You can still register to vote in WA all the way up to election day at the county elections office.





Community Essentials

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At Spokane Transit, our essential employees are dedicated to maintaining public transit in our community.

Read our stories at [SpokaneTransit.com/CommunityEssentials](https://spokaneTransit.com/CommunityEssentials)