



North Dallas Gazette

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How zip codes relate to achievement gaps

By Akil Wilson

There's no question that education quality has an extraordinary impact on the future lives of students. As a parent of a new middle school student, I can personally attest to the importance of dedicated teachers, early childhood education and a focused, personalized approach to education. In numerous studies it has been shown that the quality of education, especially within the country's public school system, varies widely by location.

There are several factors that contribute to success in adulthood. However, routinely we find that early childhood education and the empowerment of excellent teachers plays a pivotal role.

Students from economically-disadvantaged areas of inner-city school districts have a plethora of obstacles to overcome, including but not limited to: lack of economic mobility, reduced health care options, and exposure to crime.

Where schools should provide some relief from these challenges, they often serve as a grim reminder of how difficult it can be to escape difficult circumstances.

Harvard University Economist Raj Chetti has researched this topic



Marie H. Reed Learning Center, an example of expanded educational resources and community partnership in the District of Columbia. (Photo: NNPA)

extensively, compiling data from millions of Americans, he found that education quality relates to economic and social mobility. According to Mr. Chetti's research, on average, "only about 7.5% of children from the bottom 1/5th of incomes will reach the top 1/5th of incomes nationwide. However, those odds tend to rise to 14-15% in rural areas and places with higher social capital. They sometimes decrease to below 5% in impoverished or socioeconomically-disadvantaged places."

Children in lower income brackets disproportionately tend to be the recipients of sub-par educational resources. As Mr. Chetti points out on NPR's 'Hidden Brain' Podcast, larger class sizes and less experienced teachers are all indicators that students are much less likely to obtain the cognitive and social skills necessary to advance themselves and their families.

The fact that these lower-performing public schools tend to be

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Keep the holiday magic safe for the little ones

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People In The News...



Craig J. Lewis



Don Rojas

On the GO??? But still need to be in the KNOW!!! Bookmark NorthDallasGazette.com on your phone or mobile device!!!



Craig J. Lewis

Gig Wage, a payments platform specializing in independent contractors, announced this week it has closed the first \$1 million of a \$2 million seed round. Revolution's Rise of the Rest Seed Fund, which kicked off its seventh bus tour in Dallas last May, has invested in Gig Wage. Revolution's Rise of the Rest Seed Fund is a \$150 million fund focused on emerging technology ecosystems. Gig Wage considers Revolution's investment confirmation the growing on-demand workforce expects an on-demand pay-



check.

"The Gig Economy is the biggest macro shift in the workforce in over 100 years. All four generations are working in the Gig Economy; Boomers, Gen X, Millennials and Gen Z," Craig J.

Lewis, the CEO, and Founder of Gig Wage said. "This shift is driven by economics, policy, technology, and cultural forces. This funding will allow us to issue payments of over \$1 billion to contractors and roll out our new API in 2019. We are excited to help power the future of work."

Gig Wage promises to save time and money for customers while increasing operational productivity. The tool will help businesses recruit and retain contractor talent, which is essential to compete in the modern workforce. A recent report from UpWork states 36 percent of the workforce is now

freelancing, which converts to \$1.4 trillion of personal income being paid to contractors. Google also announced for the first time in its twenty-year history, contract workers outnumbered direct employees. And, by 2020, experts forecast independent contractors will compromise 50 percent of the United States workforce.

"Current payment solutions for gig economy workers lack sufficient speed and accuracy. Gig Wage identified this pain point in the growing gig economy market and designed a solution to help employers better manage compensation for independent contractors,"

said J.D. Vance, Managing Partner of Revolution's Rise of the Rest Seed Fund. "It is another example of a great company addressing a global challenge in a city beyond the coastal tech hubs."

Gig Wage recently introduced new advisor Wade Burgess, former LinkedIn (LI) executive, and Shiftgig CEO. Burgess served as the head of LI Talent Solutions, which comprises 67 percent of LI revenue, and has first-hand knowledge of the enormous impact of the contractor.

"At LI we monitored the findings of talent thought leaders worldwide, and the data was popping off the

page. The Gig Economy is going to be the equivalent of the globalization of the workforce twenty-five years prior. This is a trend that cannot be ignored and the companies that empower the employer and the worker will win. Gig Wage is compelling for this reason," according to Burgess.

Gig Wage navigates the complexities of banking, payments and the IRS so companies does not have to. They offer software for businesses and contractors and APIs so developers can integrate with ease. Founded in 2014 by Morehouse College graduate Craig Lewis in Dallas.

Don Rojas

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Correspondent

A phone conversation with Don Rojas can easily begin with the subtlest of greetings – a friendly "hello," and good to hear from you.

But any conversation of length undoubtedly leads to a lively discussion about the Transatlantic Slave Trade, reparations, journalism, and of course Rojas' celebrated activism and the fight for freedom, justice and equality.

For Rojas, that fight



began at an early age and he waged war against injustice mostly with a pen.

"Since I was a young man, I always had an interest in writing and reporting and the spoken word,"

Rojas, now 69, said from his home in Maryland.

"I went to school in Grenada with (Grenadian revolutionary and leader) Maurice Bishop. He was captain of the senior debate team and I was captain of the junior debate team," Rojas said, chuckling about one of many historic members that ran through his thoughts.

During that time, Rojas became involved in student activism and joined a student newspaper and student-run radio station.

Later, he attended the University of Wisconsin where he honed his journal-

ism skills.

"That was in the late 1960s and I've stayed in the field of journalism and activism, alternating my time and energy over those many years between activism and journalism," Rojas said, noting that, "for me, there isn't a clear line of demarcation between the two, especially for those in the trenches with minority media."

Rojas has always been in the trenches.

He said he's viewed his work as part and parcel of a broader social and economic justice movement.

One of his first positions

was assistant director of communications for the National Urban League. Following his stint there Rojas became an assistant editor at a Black-owned paper in Baltimore.

Among the many legendary interviews Rojas conducted were with leaders from around Africa, including Civil Rights icon Nelson Mandela and singer Bob Marley.

Rojas' resume reads like a true activist and freedom fighter:

• He served as Director of Communications for Prime Minister Maurice Bishop, the People's Revolutionary

Government of Grenada.

• Editor of the *New York Amsterdam News*

• General Manager of WBAI, Pacifica Network, New York

• Executive Director of Free Speech Television

• Senior Advisor to Professor Sir Hilary Beckles, Vice-Chancellor/President of the University of the West Indies

• Director of Communications and International Relations, Institute of the Black World 21st Century

• Founder of the award-winning digital magazine,

See ROJAS, Page 6

NDG Readers Sound Off...

Former First Lady Michelle Obama surprise students at Dallas leadership conference

Wanted to go too, but the tickets were too much. going to see angie thomas in frisco, t.x. in february.

-- Nneka Esedebe via Facebook

Yes! The girls from that group were in the audience! She mentioned them in her talk. She said she doesn't worry about the future knowing there are girls like this ready to change the world. (Or something

like that)

-- Claire White Thomas via Facebook

Michelle is doing the thang!

-- Black Demographics via Facebook

Dallas-based minority tech company awarded \$1 million seed funding

I see ya big homey... keep making those moves

-- Robert Wiggins via Facebook

Inspiring for us all
-- Cameron Shaw

via Facebook

Growth, Knowledge, Respect

-- Darrick Taylor via Facebook

Breakthrough is a beautiful thing! Keep grind brotha!

-- Carl Dorvil via Facebook

you are on your way...I'm a believer in Gig Wage!!!

-- Lonnie Emard Craig via Facebook

Investors invest in you, your idea and your team.

Congratulations! You have been working hard in growing your company and I am glad the investor saw your passion and it makes great business sense to invest in your company! Way to go and keep creating jobs!!!

-- Nancy Hong via Facebook

Awesome!!! Congrats, man. Killin' it.

-- Brittani Wilkins via Facebook

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Trump, Law and Order, and a Merry Christmas



Straight Talk
Ed Gray
NDG Senior Columnist

The Donald J. Trump Administration is making former President Richard Nixon look more like a statesman. The Republican Party has campaigned and won elections on being the political party that has been for law and order. This is a concept that no one is above the law, which is not a concept, it is reality.

The investigations that have been conducted towards Trump also known as Individual 1 (by the criminal investigators of the Southern District of New York) report a troubling trend of possible criminal-

ity. For folks outside of New York, the Southern District of New York is the office that investigates the Mafia.

This is not saying that President Donald Trump is a criminal, it is saying they are investigating him like a criminal. Only a courtroom can convict, but with the shrinking popularity, maybe the Republicans who have sold out law and order for disarray and confusion.

Last week, Senator Jeff Flake, the Republican Senator from Arizona warned of threats to democracy from “within and without.” I don’t think that Senator Flake was talking about First Lady Melania Trump’s china selection. The purpose of his farewell speech was to warn, however while in office he could have been

more vocal. The mute, deaf, and blind Republican Party has sold out in favor of conservative values instead of American values.

American values that promote diversity have been pushed aside to promote White Nationalism. If you think I’m exaggerating, remember President Trump, also known as “Individual 1” used the dog whistles of Charlottesville. The Charlottesville White Nationalist Riots resulted in the loss of life and injuries to anti-White Nationalist protesters. Trump made his stand like General Robert E. Lee. The statement “there are some very fine people on both sides,” gave approval of this in his 2017 Inaugural Speech, “American Carnage.”

“American Carnage”

means that there is a violence directed against our laws and order. “American Carnage” means that there is literally blood in our streets. “American Carnage” means that our economy is in the red. “American Carnage” means that law institutions such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation are threatened. “American Carnage” must end, as we turn our thoughts to a “Merry Christmas” and a “Happy New Year,” we realized that we survived yet another year. Let us end “American Carnage” and take back our country.

I am Ed Gray and this is Straight Talk.

Ed Gray is the host of *The Commish Radio Show* airing Saturdays 3-5 p.m. on FBRN.net, can be reached at eegray62@att.net.

White churches have a moral responsibility

By Rev. Jesse Jackson

In 2019, we will commemorate 400 years since the first 20 slaves were transported by ship from Africa by white slave traders and landed in Jamestown, Va.

Now four centuries later, race remains a central dividing line. Today, for example, the racial wealth gap exposes a stark difference. The median wealth of a white household (median means half are above and half below) is 12 times greater than that of a black household. The median wealth of a white household is \$134,430, of blacks it is \$11,030.

This is virtually all about equity in a home, the leading source of middle-income wealth. African-Americans still suffer from de facto segregation, after years of being red-lined from decent neighborhoods.

In the financial collapse, African-American households suffered the worse. Black unemployment rose twice as much as white unemployment in the Great Recession. Middle-class black families, lacking inherited wealth, were targeted for the most aggressive and leveraged home loans. When the bust came, they were the

most at risk and suffered the greatest loss of homes.

The wealth gap is not erased by educational attainment, by full-time employment, by getting the right occupation. The typical black family with a head of household working full time has less wealth than a white family whose head of household is unemployed. Median wealth for a black family whose head has a college degree is about 1/8 that of a median white family similarly educated.

African-Americans are constantly told to pull themselves up by their bootstraps. In the black church, for example, ministers repeatedly preach the need for discipline, self-reliance, faith and hard work. Yet even those who succeed still remain behind.

During the recent midterm elections, I was constantly asked whether African-Americans would vote in high enough numbers and margins for Democrats so that candidates white and black had a chance to be elected. Democrats seem almost satisfied if 20 to 30 percent of whites turn out to vote for black or progressive white candidates.

The nation is facing many

morally relevant social, economic and political crises — voter suppression, income and wealth inequality, criminal justice reform and climate change — that now pose an existential threat to the next generation. Why does the white church remain so silent in the face of these mounting crises and denial of justice and opportunity?

In Birmingham in 1963, with dogs biting children, high-pressure fire hoses knocking down peaceful protesters, bombers blowing up churches and Dr. King in jail, many white church leaders chose to attack Dr. King’s non-violent methodology rather than to fight for a non-discriminatory Public Accommodations Act.

One would have thought when the four little girls were bombed in the 16th Street Baptist Church, white churches would have at least held prayer services or services of reconciliation. Instead, most attacked Dr. King as an outside agitator, as if he had set the bombs.

Recently in Alabama, I witnessed a stark contrast. One extreme was the excitement in anticipation of the Georgia/Alabama SEC championship football game. When a young African-

American athlete, Jalen Hurts, replaced an injured Tua Tagovailoa at quarterback, every Alabamian of every political persuasion, right, left and center, was pulling for him.

With Hurts’ remarkable display of skill, Alabama won the game. He not only won the game, he arguably beat George Wallace and the legislators who earlier locked blacks out of the University of Alabama. He beat Bull Connor who unleashed the dogs on demonstrators and the KKK on Freedom Riders. He beat the KKK bombers who watched as the church was decimated and four little girls were murdered.

The other extreme was witnessed in Hoover, Ala., where E.J. Bradford was shot in the back by a policeman. That police officer is still on the payroll. The patterns and prejudices of the old South are hard to overcome.

Here once more, the white church has the opportunity and the responsibility to stand up, to serve as a Christian witness. White voices of moral authority and inclusive leadership are needed now as much or more than ever.

That is why the silence seems so deafening.

Parkland experts urge adults to remember the ABC's of holiday toy safety

The holiday season should be a happy time for children, but parents and caretakers need to ensure it's also safe. While new toys can bring joy and smiles, they may also present potential safety hazards. December is Toy Safety Month, and injury prevention experts at Parkland Health & Hospital System are offering tips to help with holiday toy shopping.

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), more than 240,000 toy-related injuries were treated in emergency rooms in 2016, the last year data is available. Of those, 39 percent of the emergency department-treated injuries were classified as cuts and bruises and 45 percent of the injuries were to the head and face. CPSC received seven reports of toy-related deaths among children younger



Chris Benson / Unsplash

than 15. Non-motorized scooters were the toys associated with the most injuries in children younger than 15 years old, accounting for 23 percent of injuries treated in emergency rooms.

"The statistics can be alarming, but taking a few precautions while you shop can help prevent spending the holidays in the emergency room," said Shelli Stephens-Stidham, Director of the Injury Prevention

Center of Greater Dallas, housed at Parkland. "While consumer protection groups, retailers and toy-makers work hard to ensure the safety of toys, it is equally important that parents and caregivers do the same."

Parkland safety experts advise that adults selecting toys should remember the ABC's of toy safety:

A: Avoid toys with small parts, as well as marbles

and small balls, for children under age 3. "Children can choke on small parts contained in toys or games," Stephens-Stidham said.

B: Battery-operated toys are much safer than those that must be plugged into an electrical outlet, but beware. "Button batteries and magnets can be potential threats if ingested," said Lizbeth Petty, public health educator with the North Texas Poison Center located at Parkland. "Besides being stuck in the esophagus, batteries can release an electric current that can severely burn the esophagus in as little as two hours," she said. "To prevent injuries, always look at the battery compartment and make sure the batteries are tightly secured with screws."

C: Check all labels. "Toys should be appropriate for the child's age and abilities because toys that are too ad-

vanced may pose safety hazards," Stephens-Stidham said. "Be sure to always follow the age guidelines and other safety information on packaging."

Experts also offer the following tips:

- Avoid toys with sharp points and edges.

- Dispose of strings, ribbons and other potentially dangerous packaging. These items may pose a strangulation hazard for small children.

- Get safety gear. With scooters and other riding toys, be sure to include helmets. Helmets should be worn properly at all times, and they should be sized to fit.

- Know your seller. Purchase toys from retailers you know and trust.

- Read all instructions carefully before buying the toy.

- If you think a child may have swallowed a button battery, call your local poison center immediately.

- Nationally, 55 poison centers provide service to all 50 states. Anyone who needs assistance anywhere in the country can dial the toll-free number 1-800-222-1222 and be connected to one of the centers.

"Having and sharing this information during the holidays can help save lives," Stephens-Stidham said.

Texas residents can visit www.poisontreatment.org for more information about poisonings, including the hazards of button batteries. For more information about the Injury Prevention Center of Greater Dallas, please visit www.injurypreventioncenter.org. For more information on services at Parkland, please visit www.parklandhospital.com.

Rep. Waters statement on Texas judge ruling Obamacare unconstitutional

WASHINGTON — Congresswoman Maxine Waters (CA-43) released the following statement in response to the ruling of a federal judge in Texas that the Affordable Care Act (Obamacare) is unconstitutional:

"I am deeply disturbed by the ruling of a federal judge in Texas — who was appointed by a Republican — that Obamacare is unconsti-

tutional. This court case was brought before the court by a group of Republican governors and state attorneys general who are continuing the Republican Party's relentless campaign to repeal Obamacare and strip away its protections for people with pre-existing conditions. The case is further evidence that Republicans will stop at nothing to strike down Oba-

macare and take away health coverage from millions of Americans.

"Ironically, this ruling comes barely a month after numerous Republicans stood for reelection while campaigning on the false premise that they actually cared about people with pre-existing conditions and were committed to protecting them. The American people

were not fooled by these disingenuous claims, and many of these Republicans lost.

"I applaud the announcement that the State of California, along with several other states led by Democrats, plans to appeal the court's ruling. Obamacare has already survived several court challenges initiated by heartless Republicans, and I

have no doubt it will survive this one.

"Democrats just won a big victory in the 2018 midterm elections, after proving time and time again that we are the party that truly cares about the health and well-being of working families, seniors, veterans, the disabled and Americans

with pre-existing conditions. As we take control of the House of Representatives, we will fight to protect the rights of all Americans to quality, affordable health care, and make certain that Obamacare and its protections for people with pre-existing conditions remain the law of the land."

ZIP, continued from Page 1

found in more impoverished or socially/culturally isolated areas is not a coincidence.

Prior to the implementation of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) in the 2017-2018 school year, education standards were largely determined by federal standards outlined in No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). This structure did very little to address the specific needs of the most disadvantaged communities.

ESSA seeks to improve students' chances at success

by encouraging a more personalized approach to students' needs, strengths and interests as well as improving and decreasing the emphasis on standardized testing. Much of the research suggests this approach will do more to advance specific, individual state school system goals and impact students' lives.

It's very important that parents, teachers, administrators and community members take strategic steps to address factors contributing to the educational shortcomings in some of

our schools while working with policy makers to equitably utilize all the tools and resources available.

The future is now, and if our community ever hopes to eliminate the disparities that are at the root of many of the issues we are often confronted with (i.e. poverty, mass incarceration, chronic unemployment) we have to begin with education.

By requiring states to identify and intervene with their lowest-performing schools and take a more tailored approach to their improvement, ESSA is poised to have a significant and

measurable impact on the state of public education in America.

There is a very real correlation between underperforming schools and generational poverty. If we wish to eliminate the latter, we must tackle education with a focus and energy that is specifically tailored to the needs of our communities.

Akil Wilson is a native Washington, DC-based, podcaster, and parent. He is a contributing writer for the Washington Informer in addition to providing broadcast commentary for a variety of media outlets.

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Reviewing the roots of the Kwanzaa celebration

Kwanzaa is an African American and Pan-African holiday which celebrates family, community and culture. Celebrated from 26 December thru 1 January, its origins are in the first harvest celebrations of Africa from which it takes its name. The name Kwanzaa is derived from the phrase "matunda ya kwanza" which means "first fruits" in Swahili, a Pan-African language which is the most widely spoken African language.

First, Kwanzaa was created to reaffirm and restore

our rootedness in African culture. It is, therefore, an expression of recovery and reconstruction of African culture which was being conducted in the general context of the Black Liberation Movement of the '60's and in the specific context of The Organization Us, the founding organization of Kwanzaa and the authoritative keeper of its tradition.

Secondly, Kwanzaa was created to serve as a regular communal celebration to reaffirm and reinforce the bonds between us as a people. It was designed to be an

ingathering to strengthen community and reaffirm common identity, purpose and direction as a people and a world community.

Thirdly, Kwanzaa was created to introduce and reinforce the Nguzo Saba (the Seven Principles.) These seven communitarian African values are: Umoja (Unity), Kujichagulia (Self-Determination), Ujima (Collective Work and Responsibility), Ujamaa (Co-operative Economics), Nia (Purpose), Kuumba (Creativity), and Imani (Faith).

This stress on the Nguzo

Saba was at the same time an emphasis on the importance of African communitarian values in general, which stress family, community and culture and speak to the best of what it means to be African and human in the fullest sense.

And Kwanzaa was conceived as a fundamental and important way to introduce and reinforce these values and cultivate appreciation for them.

Kwanzaa was created in 1966 by Dr. Maulana Karenga, professor of Africana Studies at Califor-

nia State University, Long Beach, author and scholar-activist who stresses the indispensable need to preserve, continually revitalize and promote African American culture.

Finally, it is important to note Kwanzaa is a cultural holiday, not a religious one, thus available to and practiced by Africans of all religious faiths who come together based on the rich, ancient and varied common ground of their Africanness.

(Taken from www.officialkwanzaawebsite.org)



The holiday season also brings Kwanzaa, a holiday created for African Americans and the diaspora to help connect them to their roots. (Image: Dallas Public Library website)

City Briefs

Addison

Experience the last colorful nights of **Vitruvian Lights** from Dec. 28 to Dec. 31, from 5 p.m. to midnight, at Vitruvian Park, in Addison. Roam through Vitruvian Park's 12 acres and view more than 550 illuminated trees wrapped in

1.5 million sparkling LED lights. The large number of single-color trees gives this display a modern flair.

Allen

Bring the kids out to **Swim with Santa** on Dec. 21 starting at 5:45 p.m. at Don Rodenbaugh Natato-

rium, in Allen. Join Santa for a swim and tell him what you would like for Christmas. Santa is available for pictures for those with their own cameras. Parents swim free with each paid child. Children six and under must be accompanied by an adult in the water.

Sesame Street Live - Let's Party will be held from Dec. 28 to Dec. 30, at 5 p.m. at Allen Event Center. Kids can sing and dance along with their favorite Sesame Street characters including Elmo, Big Bird and Abby Cadabby. The gang

discovers that planning a party is no easy task, but with some help from the audience, the cast learns that friendship and teamwork make anything possible. To purchase tickets, visit allen-eventcenter.com.

Arlington

Celebrate the last days of **Holiday in the Park** from Dec. 28 to Dec.31, at Six Flags Over Texas, in Arlington. The theme park is transformed into a winter

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Former First Lady surprises students at Dallas leadership conference

Former First Lady Michelle Obama stopped by the Margot and Bill Winspear Opera House to welcome students and help kick off the first annual Young Women's Leadership Conference: Leadership Lessons Learned through the Arts. The program, produced by the nonprofit AT&T Performing Arts Center, included 150 young women from nine North Texas high schools and organizations who – thanks to donors and underwriting – participated free of charge.

Mrs. Obama spoke briefly



Former First Lady Michelle Obama speaking at Young Women's Leadership Conference on Dec. 17, 2018 (Courtesy photo by Nate Rehlander)

to the full group. She also spent time with a small group of students during one of the conference's breakout

sessions, moderated by business executive Matrice Ellis-Kirk, Chair of the Center's Board of Directors.

The girls had all received a signed copy of Mrs. Obama's new memoir *Becoming* and attended her engagement at the American Airlines Center that evening.

Mrs. Obama previously visited the Winspear Opera House in March for "A Conversation with Former First Lady Michelle Obama" as part of #hearhere, the Center's popular speaker series.

"These young women have been studying Mrs. Obama's book in advance of the conference but did not know she would show up here in person, so you can

imagine the excitement," said Debbie Storey, interim president and CEO of the AT&T Performing Arts Center. "This conference leverages the arts to build creativity, improve educational outcomes and develop strong leaders. Having Mrs. Obama share her lessons on leadership was really one of the highlights of the day!"

The day-long program included a Women in Leadership Panel which featured Pat Smith, Founder & CEO of Pat Smith Enterprises; Matrice Ellis-Kirk, Dallas Managing Director of RSR

Partners and Chair of the Center's Board of Directors; Denise Lee, award-winning actress and singer; and was moderated by Debbie Storey, Interim President and CEO of AT&T Performing Arts Center.

The young women also participated in three breakout sessions, including Leadership Lessons Learned through Improvisation with Amanda Austin; The Art of Storytelling with actress Liz Mikel; and Effective Communication through the Voice and Body with Jenni Steck.

ESSA: A roadmap for achieving equity in education

By Elizabeth Primas
NNPA ESSA Awareness
Campaign Program Mgr.

States are in the driver's seat when it comes to improving their struggling schools. But how can we make sure they're not taking the "path of least resistance" when it comes to this important work, risking the academic prospects for stu-

dents of color.

Building on the work done by Bellwether Education Partners, which conducted independent peer reviews of all 50 states' and the District of Columbia's ESSA plans that were required to be submitted to the U.S. Department of Education for approval, the Collaborative for Student Success analyzed plans to

see which states are taking advantage of new-found flexibility regarding equity in education. The new report, *Check State Plans: Promise to Practice*, found that just 17 states met its threshold for even having enough public information to review. The report notes that the results are "sobering" in that "more than 9 million students attend

schools that do not meet anyone's standard for what is acceptable." This is particularly acute for students of color and who come from low-income families.

The fact is, achievement gaps between white and black students exist. We see this time and again in the National Assessment of Education Progress as well as on individual states' annual

assessments. Students who attend inner city public schools tend to fare worse than their peers in suburban public schools. The gaps are even more pronounced when we look at private schools that draw privileged students away from city institutions. These racial divides segregate communities.

A report from the Young

Invincibles examines these divides and developed three main findings: (1) minorities disproportionately enroll in for-profit and community colleges, which can condemn them to a vicious cycle of debt; (2) college costs hit minority students harder than their white peers; and (3) the achieve-

See ESSA, Page 12

ROJAS, continued from Page 2

The Black World Today, when the internet was in its infancy stages

• Director of Communications for the National Office of the NAACP

For the latter role, Rojas was recruited in 1993 by then-NAACP Executive Director, Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr., at that time the youngest NAACP leader in the storied civil rights organization's history.

Today, the organization still benefits from Rojas' input and his development of an extensive communications department.

"Don Rojas has made major contributions to the struggle for freedom in Black communities across the globe. As the first communications director for the NAACP, he not only built the initial model of our communications department but created a vision for the way in which communications can be used as

a resource to support social justice movements," NAACP President and CEO Derrick Johnson told NNPA Newswire.

"There is no aspect of the movement untouched by his work as a communicator, journalist or advocate," Johnson said.

Also, while Rojas' accomplishments are exhausting, what remains a constant in all of his work is his role as a visionary, said Malik Russell, the current NAACP Communications Director and former director of Radio Operations for *The Black World Today*.

"Don is able to look beyond the present toward the possible. A good example is *The Black World Today* (TBWT). At TBWT Don spearheaded a comprehensive news media site geared toward uniting the African Diaspora. On the cutting edge of technology, we helped organize the State of

the Black World Conferences using online tools and broadcast it over the net using cell phones at a time when most folks were still in the analog age," Russell said.

"We were using audio editing software, which is now the standard in radio broadcasting to create TWBT's online radio network that had dozens of independently produced shows. Don's vision was simple, he was like the future is open, it's about who gets there first."

Rojas said after Chavis was installed as executive director of the NAACP, the organization began to thrive again, particularly because of an infusion of youth.

The first national convention under Chavis, who now serves as president and CEO of the National Newspaper Publishers Association, included a particularly important individual.

"The convention was held in Indianapolis and just

a few weeks earlier, Nelson Mandela was released from prison and the first thing we did was reach out to his people and issue an invitation to come and speak at the convention," Rojas said.

"We weren't sure it would work out, but we were able to secure his presence in Indianapolis."

Mandela's speech was his first and only to the NAACP.

The visit began at the United Nations in New York and, what Rojas called the most underreported news of the decade, Mandela was feted in Harlem by hundreds of thousands during an outdoor rally.

"I remember spending time with him and talking to him about the DNC and the NAACP and he drew parallels with the DNC being founded in South African in 1912 and the NAACP here in America being formed in 1909," Rojas said.

"There's a solidarity between the two organiza-

tions," he said.

Rojas, who remains dedicated to the global movement for reparative justice for former slaves, said America was built on the backs of African slaves and African Americans have never been compensated.

Today Rojas, who still stands as one of the leading progressive figures in recent history, is fighting another fight: one that involves his own life.]

After months of treatment for a chronic back ailment, Rojas was recently diagnosed with multiple myeloma, a particularly aggressive form of bone cancer.

He is undergoing heavy chemotherapy treatment which will continue in the weeks ahead, followed by the infusion of steroids and then bone marrow transplants.

The cost of his medical care is described as "astronomical" and much of it is not covered by insurance.

He and his wife, Karen, have been forced to unexpectedly place their home on the market to help cover the additional medical and relevant costs.

His friends, led by Chavis and actor Danny Glover, have launched a Go Fund Me campaign to raise the urgently needed funds to ensure that his wife and family have the resources to pay for the best lifesaving medical treatments available.

"Don Rojas deserves our support, prayers and our rigid solidarity in salute of his outstanding career as a global freedom fighter.

The encyclopedia contains a trove of information about Rojas' illustrious career at <https://www.encyclopedia.com/education/news-wires-white-papers-and-books/rojas-don-1949>.

To contribute to the campaign, visit <https://www.gofundme.com/help-don-rojas-in-the-fight-of-his-life>.

New study says Irving ranks among most affordable places to live, work

Irving is among three North Texas cities are among the most affordable places in the U.S. to work and live, according to a new study.

Fort Worth ranks highest, at No. 7, in business education website BusinessStudent.com's 25 Most Affordable Cities to Live and Work in 2019 report, which was released Monday. Irving follows at No. 21, and Dallas comes in at No. 22.

The study looked at 100 business-related jobs on Indeed.com and compared that to the average rent of a two-bedroom apartment on Rentjungle.com. Fort Worth residents reported having 82 percent of salary left over after rent based on an average salary of \$75,797 and average monthly rent of \$1,108.

Irving residents, who make an average salary of \$77,527, report having 79

percent of their paychecks left over after an average monthly rent of \$1,327. Dallas has the highest average rent in the study, at \$1,422 per month, but that balanced out with the highest average paycheck, at \$82,609. Dallasites report they have 79 percent of their paycheck left after paying rent.

Other highlights from the study:

- The average income left after rent is 81 percent

- Texas had five cities in the top 25

- The Midwest placed eight cities on the list

- Tulsa, which topped the list, also had the cheapest average monthly rent, at \$863 per month

BusinessStudent.com, based in Cardiff by the Sea, Calif., informs students and professionals on careers, courses, degrees and jobs available in business, technology and health care.



Carol M. Highsmith / Wikimedia

Carrollton invites ages 21+ to 'Totally Rad' '80s-themed adult prom

The City of Carrollton is bringing back the '80s so grab a date or a group of friends for a totally tubular trip down memory lane on Saturday, January 19, 2019, from 7:30 p.m. to 11 p.m. The Trinity Room at the Crosby Recreation Center (1610 E. Crosby Road) promises to send guests

back in time as it's transformed into a 1980s prom to remember.

Dig through those boxes of old polaroids, send in your own high school prom photo, and take a chance at being selected as Carrollton's First Annual Adult Prom King or Queen. Finalists will be voted on from

photos submitted, and the chosen prom court will be contacted.

Dress in your best '80s attire. Gals, grab the Aqua Net spray, tease up that hairdo, and puff up those sleeves. Dudes, get that powder blue tuxedo dry-cleaned and slip on a feathered mullet wig for a "Total

Eclipse of the Heart," 'cause "Girls Just Want To Have Fu-un."

If you only "... Wanna Dance with Somebody," rock out to the best '80s music with a live DJ. No need to spike the punch bowl, a cash bar with beer and wine will be available. Hors-d'oeuvres will be

served, and a photo booth will let you immortalize all that glitz and glamour.

Pre-registration is preferred to get an accurate headcount for refreshments. Prom-goers must be at least 21 years old to attend. Receive a \$10 early bird discount and pay only \$20 per person or \$30 per couple

when you register by Sunday, Dec. 23, or wait and pay \$30 per person or \$40 per couple at the door.

For more information, call 972-466-9816 and visit cityofcarrollton.com/events for a full lineup of Carrollton leisure activities in 2019.

NDG seeks Intern Video Producer

The North Dallas Gazette is a community-driven newspaper with a digital presence seeking a new Video/Audio Producer Intern for our new video platform and to assist with the growth of our media company through quality video production.

The Producer will be responsible for recording, editing and preparing final draft of our video content in our in-house studio. The producer will record and broadcast via Facebook weekly shows. Afterwards using Final Pro Cut and other related tools, the footage will be finalized and uploaded to our YouTube channel.

The right candidate will have the following skills:

- Experience using video and audio production and post production techniques and software for live streaming and final YouTube videos
- Experience using digital content software
- Basic graphic design experience
- Create content based upon agreed criteria
- Understand how to use various social media platforms for live video events
- Good time and project management skills
- Attention to detail as it relates to spelling and grammar
- Provide regular status updates to stakeholders and management

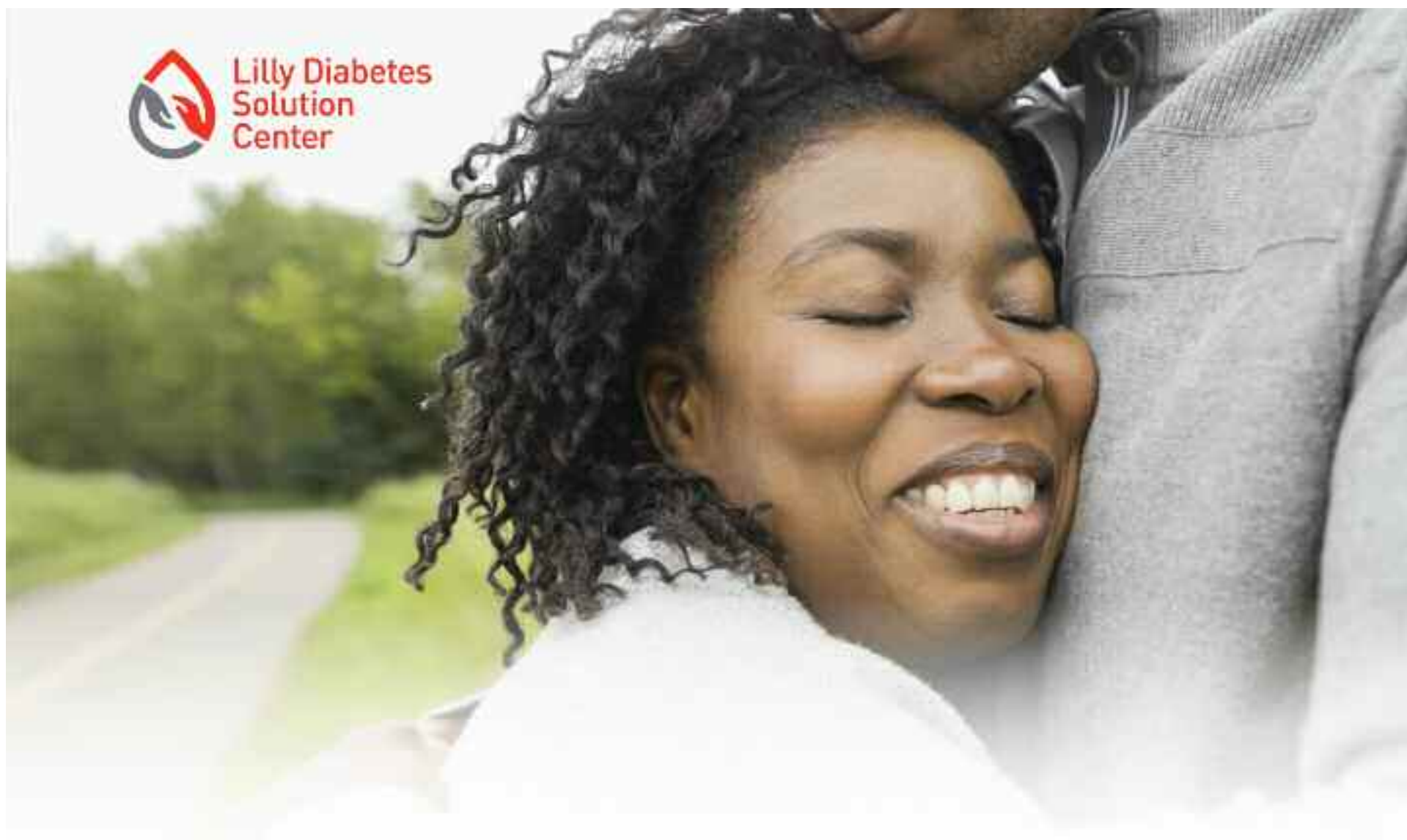
The work will be completed at our studio located at Regal Row & Stemmons with a schedule of up to 15 hours a week. Pay rate is \$12-15 per hour.

Resumes must be sent to ngarcia@northdallasgazette.com to be considered.



North Dallas
Gazette





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The Lilly logo, featuring the word "Lilly" in a red, cursive script font.

Indy shutout leaves Dallas Cowboys fans deflated

By Dwain Price
NDG Sports

FRISCO – That champagne that is expected to be flowing whenever the Dallas Cowboys clinch the NFC East title will have to remain on ice for now. That's because the Cowboys had something happen to them on the road that no one thought could happen.

They got shutout, 23-0, by the Indianapolis Colts this past Sunday.

Making a slew of bonehead plays and simply getting out-played by the Colts, the Cowboys saw their five-game winning streak go up in flames as they were shutout for the first time since Nov. 16, 2003 when they were shutout by the New England Patriots, 12-0.

It was one of those no-show games by the Cow-



Keith Allison / Wikimedia

boys, who went into the game against the Colts as the NFL's hottest team. But they came out of it with their heads hung low.

"That was a very embarrassing performance by us," running back Ezekiel Elliott said. "We can't go out there and do that. We cannot."

"That is not us at all. That's embarrassing."

The embarrassing loss dropped the Cowboys'

record to 8-6 and left them just one game ahead of the Philadelphia Eagles (7-7) and Washington Redskins (7-7) in the NFC East race. If the Cowboys win one of their remaining two games, or if the Eagles and Redskins each lose one of their remaining two games, the Cowboys will be crowned champions of the NFC East.

Sunday's loss was one of those "if anything could go

wrong, it did go wrong" kind of days for the Cowboys. They simply couldn't put their right foot in front of their left foot without falling flat on their face.

"All the things that you do to lose a game, we did," said quarterback Dak Prescott, who was 24-of-39 for 206 yards and an interception. "The way we didn't give ourselves a chance just pisses me off -- pisses everybody off."

"We knew what was on the line. It's been on the line. It'll be on the line next week, so we've got to go and get better."

The Colts schematically took away wide receiver Amari Cooper and made the other Cowboys receivers try and beat them. Cooper, who has been shredding defenses for over a month since coming to the Cowboys in a

trade with the Oakland Raiders, was limited to just four catches for 32 yards.

Cooper, however, knows the Cowboys must show what they're made of when they host the Tampa Bay Bucs on Sunday at noon at AT&T Stadium.

"You have to be a resilient football team if you want to be a good football team," Cooper said. "You have to know how to deal with adversity, and we didn't really show that we know how to handle that (Sunday)."

Ironically, some of the Cowboys were saying that this loss may be a blessing in disguise after they went through a challenging stretch of games that included two emotional wins over the Eagles, a huge victory over the red-hot New Orleans Saints, and wins over Atlanta and the Red-

skins.

"That win streak had us feeling like we were bigger than what we are," defensive end DeMarcus Lawrence said. "This game right here was just a game to show us that we got to get back to the basics and keep working."

"When you're on a winning streak you'll think you're better than what you are until somebody kind of hit you in your mouth. I'm glad we got hit in the mouth (Sunday). I can't wait to hit our next opponent in the mouth."

Even Elliott was somewhat docile in defeat.

"A loss like this was very much needed," said Elliott, who rushed 18 times for 87 yards. "I think it's better for us in the grand scheme of

See COWBOYS, Page 12

NDG Entertainment Guide: Holiday fun, theater and dance on slate in DFW

By Tiffany Gilbert

Don't miss out on **Treats of Christmas** benefiting the North Texas Food Bank on Dec. 22, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. level one between Macy's and Dillard's and level two between Nordstrom and Macy's, at NorthPark Center. Join NorthPark Center for the ultimate holiday bake sale benefiting the North Texas Food Bank. Presented by the Dallas Chapter of the Texas Chefs Association, dozens of premier chefs from area restaurants and catering companies provide an assortment of gourmet cakes, sweets, pies and cookies available for purchase.

Don't miss out on **A Bronx Tale** on Dec. 26, from 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. at AT&T Performing Arts Center Winspear Opera House. Broadway's hit crowd-pleaser takes you to the stoops of the Bronx in



the 1960s – where a young man is caught between the father he loves and the mob boss he'd love to be.

Bursting with high-energy dance numbers and original doo-wop tunes from the songwriter of *Beauty and the Beast*, *A Bronx Tale* is an unforgettable story of loyalty and family.

Join America's Sweethearts for a one-day dance camp this holiday break at **Holiday Youth Camp: DDC Dance Academy** on Dec. 30, at Ford Center at the Star in Frisco. Join Dallas Cowboys Cheerlead-

ers Dance Academy for a one-day skills and drills camp. This is open to dancers ages 6-16. For more information and registration visit <https://www.dallas-cowboys.com/fans/Youth-Academies>.

Come out with friends to see **Playboi Carti** perform live at Gilley's in Dallas! Playboi Carti is scheduled to perform live in Dallas. He will hit the stage at the South Side Ballroom at Gilley's on December 21. Doors open at 6:00 PM and the show starts at 7:00 PM. Tickets on sale at topevent-promoter.com.

Enter to Win! Ticket Giveaway

NDG Entertainment Ticket Giveaway!!! Visit us on Facebook to win tickets to the the hottest events in Dallas/Fort Worth!!!!

NDG 2018 Christmas Gift Guide

Still don't know what to buy your loved ones (or yourself, it's OK we won't judge) for Christmas? We have put together 15+1 ideas to consider for the teens, ladies and favorite gents on your shopping list.

Sometimes you get an email promising, "trust me this is a great holiday gift" and think to yourself, "OK whatever." Sure the target market is men who love their military and survivalist toys, but it is just as much fun for the female who want to be "mission ready" or enjoying camping and other outdoor activities. First you select your subscription level and then you will get a monthly **Crate Club** box filled with items recommended by Navy Seals, Army Special Forces and other Special Operation Professionals.

The box I received included a small but powerful flashlight that is heavy enough to knock out one of those Frisco coyotes if neces-



Copper Cow Coffee is a unique gift idea for the Java enthusiast on your list. (Courtesy photo)

sary and small hatch to finish off the job. Seriously, I think it is intended to cut wood for your campfire, and these amazing pre-cut stainless steel punch out cards which if you are smart enough you can assemble a pocket survival stove. The one drawback is there are no directions but the photo makes it seem easy to assemble. So, I am ready if ATMOS let's me down. Visit CrateClub.us to see the different membership levels.

The 100 percent wool **Rosemary Cowl in Black & Snow** will make a great gift to keep her warm on those five days it gets cold in Dallas. Handmade, it is easy to pull around your neck to block the chilly winds slipping in at your coat collar. When it warms up, as it always does in Dallas, just stuff in your pocket and go. Visit indiegoodz for more details and great designs from this independent small business.

A few quick beauty must ideas include Proactiv **Hello Kitty Cleansing Brush Kit**, available exclusively at Ulta this holiday season to help keep her skin clean and complexion clear. It will also help keep her from using your brush kit. **Elizabeth Arden My Fifth Avenue** features a floral citrus fragrance which is lovely and not overwhelming, perfect for the office or when on the go for the week-end.

Just when you think there is not anything new coffee ideas left, **Copper Cow Coffee**, a Vietnamese-style coffee, proves you wrong. The dark-roast Vietnamese coffee they insist is not instant, but you simply pour hot water and enjoy the nutty brew. They even include sweetened condensed milk.

This woman-owned business pay attention to the details in presentation in the lovely black, white and gold box. It feels like an experi-

ence to savor even before you try the coffee.

For your year-end holiday parties, we will have more info on our website soon, but three favorites are **Cashmere Black**, a red wine with undertones of cherries, coffee and vanilla; **Dos Ron 16 Year Rum** hold the fruit juice and experience this neat or on the rocks, it is a grown-up rum; and **Dulce Vida Añejo**, a Mexican handcrafted tequila aged for 24 months, another one to simply enjoy neat or on the rocks.

Whether it is your son's bedroom wall or your husband's cubicle, any guy is going to love the beautiful photos in the **Ford Mustang** or the Art of the **Corvette 2019 Calendar** you can find both at Barnes & Noble.

Your teen daughter who is always thirsty, but fashionable so, will love **Liberty**

London Fabrics & S'well's beverage bottles. Not only are the eco-friendly stainless steel bottles pretty, but they do actually live up to the promise to keep your ice tea cold for up to 24 hours, and your latte hot for 12. Not sure why you would want to drink it 12 hours later, but at least you have options. Visit swell-bottle.com to see all the designs.

While Sheryl waits to receive her insurance check from her burned down she shed, the **MUST HAVE** gift for her is **She Sheds Style: Make Your Space Your Own** by Erika Kotite. This beautiful coffee table book is filled with great ideas to build her personal backyard sanctuary. Or she can gain inspiration from a **She Sheds 2019 Calendar**.

Finally, when looking for books, consider two titles **See GIFTS, Page 15**

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Will a new Consumer Bureau director heed the agency's mission?

By Charlene Crowell

In her first news conference as a Senate-confirmed Director of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB), Kathleen Kraninger's remarks sounded a lot like Mick Mulvaney, her former boss at the Office of Budget and Management (OMB). On December 11, just one day into a five-year term of office, Kraninger told reporters she would continue the business-friendly work begun by Mulvaney.

Days earlier on December 6, Kraninger was confirmed to the position by a 50-49 party line vote. However, a broad and diverse coalition comprised of national and state organizations have pledged to valiantly stand up for consumers and their financial rights.

Labor advocates like the AFL-CIO and the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), as well as civil rights stalwarts NAACP, Unidos US (for-

merly the National Council of LaRaza) and the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, and consumer advocates like Americans for Financial Reform and Center for Responsible Lending are all among the advocates lending their names and influence on the effort.

"She won't answer questions. She won't release documents. She let industry attend her swearing in but not the public. Now she's forcing important members of the media out of the room during her first press availability as CFPB director. What is Kathy Kraninger hiding," asked Karl Frisch, executive director of Allied Progress.

"This is not how a CFPB director committed to transparency and accountability operates. We deserve better," added Frisch.

Kraninger arrives to CFPB's top job with no experience protecting consumers nor in financial regulation. Neither does she bring experience in direct-

ing a large government agency. While at OMB, she was considered a mid-level appointee.

Earlier and in a series of replies to questions from the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs, one of the questions posed was, "Can you identify any actions he [Mulvaney] has taken that you disagree with and explain why you disagree?"

Kraninger's response was, "I cannot identify any actions that Acting Director Mulvaney has taken with which I disagree."

Under Mulvaney's leadership, the CFPB was transformed from a vigilant consumer advocate into a servant to corporations. Just a few of the anti-consumer actions taken by Mulvaney include a lack of enforcement of the nation's fair lending laws, rollbacks of consumer protections, and suppression of the CFPB's Student Loan Ombudsman report that found how high fees were charged to college students by major banks.

Most importantly, even in the handful of cases brought under Mulvaney, financial actors who defrauded and abused consumers, next to nothing was paid in restitution — monies that could help make consumers whole financially. Instead of enforcement, many consumer activists would view that lack of action as simply a business-friendly pass.

For the nation's consumers, however, financial fairness — rules that eliminate debt traps including payday loans, as well as restitution from lawsuits that earlier returned nearly \$12 billion to those who had been financially harmed — could seem like CFPB's history but not its current focus.

What happens over the next five years will test the mettle of those who fought to create an agency given the mission to protect consumer finances against profiteers who argue that baseline protections for consumers are an unnecessary burden to business.

"[Donald] Trump and his appointees have done everything in their power to undermine the Consumer Bureau. Mick Mulvaney, who Trump installed to serve as Acting Director of the agency, dropped lawsuits and investigations into abusive payday lenders, took away the Office of Fair Lending and Equal Opportunity's enforcement powers, fired the members of the agency's Consumer Advisory Board, scaled back enforcement actions against bad actors, sought to slash the agency's budget, and apparently made it his mission to help out bad actors," said Congresswoman Maxine Waters.

This long-time California Representative is expected to chair the House Financial Services Committee in the new Congress. In the current Congress, she serves as the Committee's Ranking Member.

Some consumer advocates prefer to give Kraninger the benefit of the doubt, hoping that the new

Bureau Director will do the right thing.

"If Kraninger plans on taking her public duty seriously, she should commit to implementing the Payday Rule as written and put the CFPB back on the track of protecting consumers from financial misconduct," said Yana Miles, Senior Legislative Counsel with the Center for Responsible Lending.

"Kraninger has a clear choice to make," noted Jose Alcott, Payday Campaign Manager at Americans for Financial Reform, "she can faithfully uphold the mission of the consumer bureau to protect families from the financial industry's worst abuses or she can continue Mulvaney's playbook of catering to predatory lenders at the expense of the 99 percent."

Charlene Crowell is the Center for Responsible Lending's Deputy Communications Director. She can be reached at: Charlene.crowell@responsible-lending.org.

BRIEFS, continued from Page 5

wonderland with millions of twinkling lights and a festive LED light show. Take a slide down the snow-sledding hill and warm yourself by fire pits and toast s'mores. Stroll through the Merry Marketplace and visit Santa's Outpost to meet Santa, Mrs. Claus and the elves. Encounter fun furry friends at Johnson's Creek Critter Corral. There'll also be seasonal performances, caroling, a 60-foot Christmas tree and, of course, rides.

Carrollton

Come and Celebrate **Kwanzaa** on Dec. 28, from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. at Carrollton Public Library, in Carrollton. Stop by for Kwanzaa art, snacks and more. For more information visit Cityofcarrollton.com.

Dallas

Join the **The Phantom of**

the Opera's opening night on Dec. 21 starting at 7:30 p.m. at Music Hall at Fair Park, in Dallas. Cameron Mackintosh presents a spectacular new production of Andrew Lloyd Webber's classic musical about a mysterious masked man who lives underneath the opera house and becomes obsessed with the beautiful soprano who has just been cast. Critics are raving that this breathtaking production is bigger and better than ever. The beloved story and thrilling score will be performed by a cast and orchestra of 52, making this one of the largest productions now on tour.

Come and join the **Winter Solstice Celebration** on Dec. 21, from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m. at Labyrinth Walk Coffee House, in Dallas. Celebrate the first day of winter and herald the return of

light at this enchanting indoor-outdoor ceremony that will include yule log burning, labyrinth walk, earth loom weaving, story tellers, song chanters, drummers and craft vendors. Activities will include a solstice ceremony with Kathy Kauffman KinKaid, walking meditation at the Labyrinth, decorating the Earth Loom, warming by the Yule log and performances by Twice Upon a Time Story Tellers, UUCOC Chanters and Drums Not Guns.

Join the Dallas Public Library system to celebrate **Kwanzaa: A Harvest Celebration** on Dec. 26, starting at 10:30 a.m. at Bookmarks Library, in Dallas. Celebrating cultural traditions of the African diaspora in America, Kwanzaa runs Dec. 26-Jan. 1 and focuses on unity, creativity and faith. In Kwanzaa: A Harvest Celebration, children will be enchanted with stories, songs

and the history of Kwanzaa accompanied by African drum beats. Presented by griot storyteller Afiah Bey.

Farmers Branch

Come and experience **From Prairie to Posh: Christmas Structure Tours** on Dec. 21 and Dec. 22 at Farmers Branch Historical Park, in Farmers Branch. Celebrate the season with guided tours of the "From Prairie to Posh" Christmas exhibit. The exhibit offers a glimpse into the mid-late 19th century and spotlights how the average citified urban versus country rural family celebrated Christmas. Guests will be able to compare the similarities and differences in the decorations, gifts, entertainment and attire. For more information visit discoverfarmersbranch.com.

Celebrate **New Year's at Noon** on Dec. 28, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at Farmers Branch Historical Park. Let

your little ones celebrate the New Year at a reasonable hour. Join Miss Samantha for a morning of crafts, snacks, dancing and celebrating at the Dodson House as we ring in the New Year at noon. Party snacks and juice will be provided; water bottles are encouraged. Please contact the instructor if your child has food allergies. The event is open to children ages 5-12 (4-year-olds are accepted, provided they have an older sibling present.) Space is limited and pre-registration required.

Grapevine

'Tis the season for Legoland Discovery Cen-

ter's annual **Holiday Bricktacular** on Dec. 22, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at LEGOLAND Discovery Center, in Grapevine.

Expect loads of brick-tastic holiday fun with activities that include a meet and greet with jolly old Lego Santa, one-of-a-kind holiday Lego quilt build with the Master Model Builder, a scavenger hunt through Miniland to help Lego Santa find his lost toys, and the new giant nutcracker on display made out of 9,500 Lego bricks. Holiday activities are included in the price of admission. To purchase tickets, visit <https://dallasfw.legoland-discoverycenter.com/>.

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EPA pushes for more coal-fired power under the Trump Administration

By Lauren Poteat
NNPA Washington
Correspondent

A new proposal carved out by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), might be the jumpstart some companies looking for more energy independence may be looking for.

During a recent press conference held at the Environmental Protection Agency, acting EPA Administrator, Andrew Wheeler, a former coal lobbyist, announced more rollback regulations on coal-fired power plants.

The revised "New Source Performance Standards" (NSPS), a provision under the Clean Air Act, established in 2015, would loosen an

Obama-era restriction on how much carbon dioxide new coal power plants would be able to emit and could potentially rescind the requirement for new coal plants to install carbon capture technologies—a method Wheeler believed, to be costly and disingenuous.

"Consistent with President Trump's executive order promoting energy independence, EPA's proposal would rescind excessive burdens on America's energy providers and level the playing field so that new energy technologies could be a part of America's future," Wheeler stated. "By allowing the genius of the private sector to work, we can keep American energy reliable and abundant."

If the new proposal, signed Dec. 6 passes, coal plant emissions could be relaxed from the previous limit of 1,400 pounds of carbon dioxide per megawatt-hour, to 1,900.

During the EPA conference, the National Black Chamber of Commerce President, Harry Alford, also in support of the agency's new proposal, gave way to a recent study, conducted by the NBCC, surrounding the 2015 Clean Power Plan.

"The last administration's war on coal was poised in increased spending cost, having negative impacts on low income groups and minorities, including individuals, families and minority-owned businesses," Alford stated.

"In fact, the NBCC did a study on the impacts on the so called 'Clean Power Act,' Alford continued. "And found that the rule alone, would have increased Black poverty by 23 percent and spending poverty by 26 percent, resulting in cumulative job losses of seven million for Blacks and 12 million for Hispanics."

Heavily believing in the benefits that these new energy practices could bring to minority-owned businesses, the NBCC president also went on to pen an open letter, further expressing his views on the use of coal energy.

"Every now and then we, Congress, gets it right. When I worked at Procter and Gamble, we practiced a manage-

ment tool known as "Management by Objectives—MBO." The Clean Air Act is an example of that," Alford wrote.

"When things go wrong, we have a common "boogeyman" known as "Climate Change," Alford continued. "In a way, it is like how the singer Stevie Wonder explained Superstition: 'When you believe in things you don't understand; You suffer! Superstition ain't the way.'"

However, despite all of these claims, many organizations such as the American Public Health Association, the NAACP and the Hip Hop Caucus, strongly disagreed.

"Wheeler's pollution rule rollback is yet another example of the Trump Administra-

tion putting polluter profits ahead of the American people, especially low-income communities and communities of color," Senior Vice President of Climate, Environmental Justice, and Community Revitalization for the Hip Hop Caucus, Mustafa Santiago Ali stated.

The EPA is set to take comment on the proposed Standards of Performance for Greenhouse Gas Emissions from New, Modified, and Reconstructed Stationary Sources: Electric Utility Generating Units, for 60 days after publication in the Federal Register and hold a public hearing.

Details on the public hearing are set to be available shortly.

COWBOYS, continued from Page 9

the season.

"I think we needed to get put in check. I think we needed a reality check."

But a shutout?

"The shutout definitely hurts, the shutout pisses you off," Prescott said. "Especially when you're down there and you're down there

in the red zone and you have an opportunity to score and you don't."

After the Colts blocked Brett Maher's 48-yard field goal on the Cowboys' opening drive, and on their ensuing possession turned it into a 1-yard touchdown dash by Marlon Mack, Dallas

marched right back down the field and reached the Colts' 3-yard line.

But on third-and-1, full-back Jamize Olawale dropped an easy TD pass from Prescott. And on fourth-and-1 from the 3, Elliott was trapped and lost the ball on the Indianapolis' 5-yard line.

"Playing behind the

chains, penalties, sacks, whatever it may be -- incompletions -- we just hurt ourselves from the beginning all the way to the end," Prescott said. "I don't know if we thought we were too hot to trot during our five-game winning streak, but we simply got beat in every facet of the game."

The Cowboys also were

penalized nine times for 74 yards, and many of them came at crucial times of the game.

"Obviously a lot of different times in the ballgame when we got behind the chains on offense, or when we made a conversion, it seemed like it came back because of a penalty," coach Jason Garrett said. "When

we got off the field on defense it seemed like it came back because of a penalty.

"Those things will come back and haunt you."

The Cowboys just hope they don't get spooked when they host the Bucs on Sunday in a game where, afterwards, they anticipate the champagne will be flowing in the locker room.

ESSA, continued from Page 6

ment gap is racially divided. While 36.2 percent of white students completed four years of college in 2015, just 22.5 percent of black students could say the same, according to the analysis. While that's much better than the 1974 numbers in which just 5.5 percent of black students finished four years of college compared to 14 percent of white students, that progress leaves little cheer.

State education chiefs and their in-state partners at teaching and research institutions plus educators on the front lines have a real chance to make a difference for black students and other minorities. But do they have the courage to make the necessary changes?

The Collaborative's report is a good starting point, and it provides a roadmap written by education and

policy leaders who are displaying the courage necessary to create bold plans that prioritize equity. Low-performing schools must be identified as such and be given real plans with real accountability measures to improve. There have to be consequences for students who don't make the grade, but for too long, our education system as a whole has punished students by not giving them the tools they need to succeed. We have to look at the institutions and root out systemic problems.

As such, the Promise to Practice reviewers evaluated state plans based on a rubric that included whether the state has a coherent vision for improving student outcomes, whether there is a strategic use of funding and alignment of resources, the use of evidence-based interventions, and how well

state leaders engaged stakeholders. That last component is perhaps one of the most interesting aspects of ESSA — federal lawmakers required states to gather input from a wide range of groups outside of traditional education. Civic groups, business leaders, parents and community activists were given a seat at the table.

We watched excitedly as several NAACP groups got involved from the very beginning, helping policy and lawmakers understand community and even neighborhood needs for the betterment of students. Still, it disheartening to learn that just 17 states are ready to identify and provide the kinds of supports that low-performing schools require. Other states can look at Colorado, which has developed a clear menu of school improvement items for districts to choose from, or Ne-

vada where districts have to describe how their strategies for addressing equity gaps in funding applications. Nevada is also using equity-oriented data like behavior and attendance to understand schools' challenges.

There's so much anger and divisiveness in our society today, but the importance of education equity should be among the things on which we can all agree. Every single student in every single school, no matter where that school is located or what kind of home life the child has, must be given the tools and knowledge to succeed. We shouldn't have to fight for this right — the right to an education. And yet we find ourselves year in, year out looking aghast at assessment scores that prove achievement gaps are still there. Thought-provoking analyses like that done by

the Collaborative for Student Success will help close those gaps until they are well and truly gone.

Elizabeth Primas is an educator who spent more than 40 years working to

improve education for children. She is the program manager for the NNPA's Every Student Succeeds Act Public Awareness Campaign. Follow her on Twitter @elizabethprimas.

Paid Internship opportunity for writers, college students in the Dallas Area

The North Dallas Gazette has an internship position available. The goal is to provide students and aspiring writers an opportunity to gain published clips, experience and professional feedback. The position is for up to 20 hours a week at \$8.00 per hour. Applicants must have reliable transportation.



Send resume and writing samples to:
businessoffice@northdallasgazette.com

Upcoming DFW area job fairs

Dec. 20 Route Delivery Driver Job Fair

The Route Delivery Driver Job Fair will be held on Dec. 20 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Nestle Waters North America, in Dallas. Start time is between 7 a.m. and 8 a.m., Monday through Friday flexible to work Saturdays as needed throughout the year and with the schedule as needed.

Qualifications: You'll need the ability to get a CDL class B license with airbrake endorsement and have a clean driving record, ability to work in all kinds of weather while working out on your own with limited supervision, ability to obtain a DOT medical card for the purpose of working for Nestle Waters, a clean driving record means in the last three years, and must be 21 years of age or older. To apply visit nestlewaterscareers.com.

Jan 8 Hospitality Hiring Event

The Hospitality Hiring Event will be held on Jan 8, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at 3020 N Westmoreland Rd, in Dallas. Goodwill is hosting a hospitality hiring event at Goodwill Industries of Dallas. Charleston and Dallas Methodist Hospital Systems are hiring for hospitality positions: Cooks, food service workers, and general utility worker. For more information, and to register visit Eventbrite.com.

Jan. 9 Dallas Sales Job Fair

The Dallas Sales Job Fair will be held on Jan. 9, from 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at 4099 Valley View Lane, in Dallas. Hosted by HireLive, this is a national career service company specializing in Sales, Retail and Management Career Fairs, and has more than a decade of experience in connecting job seekers with industry leading companies that are currently hiring. This is your opportunity to interview face to face with 15+ Fortune 500 and Industry Leading companies seeking



talented, experienced and enthusiastic sales, retail and management candidates. To learn more visit Eventbrite.com.

Jan 12 Profession Pursuit Job Fair

The Profession Pursuit Job Fair will be held on Jan. 12 from 11:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. at the center court in Irving Mall. Sponsors will include: Desoto ISD, UPS, Fedex, Active LLC, YesThrive, and more. For more information visit Eventbrite.com.

Jan 24 Dallas Job Fair

The Dallas Job Fair will be held on Jan 24 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Double-Tree by Hilton Hotel Dallas Market Center, in Dallas.

Open the doors of opportunity when you meet and interview with the top hiring companies in Dallas. This career fair will allow you to learn about the businesses that are hiring and what their hiring needs are. Tired of sending your resume over the web to get no responses back? Put a face with a name and make a great first impression. Register today at Eventbrite.com and you could get hired live at our next career fair in Dallas.

Jan 31 Dallas Career Fair

The Dallas Career Fair will be held on Jan. 31 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Plano Event Centre, in Plano. You'll meet face-to-face with hiring decision-makers from some of the areas top employers. Dress professionally and bring plenty of resumes, because they're here to hire. Walk in and start interviewing, it's that simple. Save time, money and effort interviewing with

multiple companies in one day at one location. Many of these companies have several openings and are eager to meet with you. You're no longer just a piece of paper. Attend the career fair and get in front of decision makers. To register and for more information visit choicecareerfairs.com.

Feb. 13 Arlington Job Fair

The Arlington Job Fair will be held on Feb. 13, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Holiday Inn Arlington NE-Rangers Ballpark, in Arlington. Open the doors of opportunity when you meet and interview with the top hiring companies in Arlington. This career fair will allow you to learn about the businesses that are hiring and what their hiring needs are. To register and find out more, visit Eventbrite.com.

March 30 Teacher Job Fair - Plano ISD

The Teacher Job Fair will

be held on March 30, from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. in Plano. Candidates must complete an online application to register for the event on the Plano ISD employment website. All 72 elementary and secondary campuses in

the District will be there with staff to speak to those interested in teaching and other professional opportunities. To receive an entry ticket to the job fair. Visit <https://www.pisd.edu/page/5495> for all the details.

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Merry Christmas Everyone from NDG Staff Jesus is the Season!

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December 23, 9:45 a.m.
Please join us in our quiet time, "Prayer and Meditation" followed by Morning Worship. You will be blessed and inspired as we celebrate service to God, our community and all mankind.

December 26, 7 pm
Join us in Wednesday's Prayer and Bible Study Class with Senior Pastor Woodson, Pastor Larry Gardner and others conducting a new book study with "Boundaries" when to say yes or how to say no by Dr. Henry Cloud and Dr. John Townsend with supporting chapters and verses. Spiritual maturity is God's desire for you; it's Time to Grow in the Word of God.

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December 26
Join us in our Wednesday's 12 Noon-Day Live, Prayer and Bible Study class and/or our Wednesday Night Live, Prayer and Bible Study at 7 p.m. to learn more about God's Word. Be encouraged by God's plan for your maturity and His glory; and most of all; be prepared to grow.

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December 21, 8 p.m.
All men are invited to

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**December 23, 10 a.m.
(Every 4th Sunday)**
Please join us for Youth Sunday; this is a time where IBOC's youth and millennials get real about their faith. And, don't forget to invite family and friends to join us for our Morning Service as we celebrate our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

December 24, 7 p.m.
You are invited to Monday School to see what God has to say to us, this Christmas Eve.

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**December 23, 8 a.m.
and 10 a.m.**
You are invited to join us for our Morning Worship Services in our 8 am and/or our 11 am Worship Services. Sunday School will start at 8:30 a.m. We would love to have you at all our worship services.

Our church ministries offer

opportunities for motivation and growth; join us and see. Be blessed of the Lord.

December 26, 7 p.m.
You're invited to our Wednesday's Bible Study class; you will learn what God has to say to us. Come to be encouraged by God's plan for your spiritual growth and His glory.

Dr. Isaiah Joshua, Jr.
Senior Pastor
920 E. 14th Street
Plano, TX 75074
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Church Happenings is a weekly calendar of religious services produced by the North Dallas Gazette. To make additions or corrections to the calendar, contact: religion@northdallasgazette.com

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Precious deaths



Sister Tarpley

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"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints." - Psalm 116:15

The Bible often speaks of death as a requirement of living a life in Christ. This death is not a physical death, but a spiritual death. It is a death of the old so the new can be raised. It is the life of Christ that is raised in us. However, this death can be painful if we do not choose to willingly allow this "circumcision of heart" to have its way. If we are not circumcised of heart, we do not enter into God's promises. Moses was called to deliver a people from slavery. But when he was about to return to Egypt to begin what God called Him to do, God almost killed him. He had failed to take care of the details of obedience. In this case, it was that all the males in his family were to be circumcised.

GIFTS,

continued from Page 10

from local authors. First, you will never hear there is nothing to do when you have **100 Things to Do in Dallas-Fort Worth Before You Die** by Tui Snider. Rediscover your hometown or it is a great gift for someone new to the area.

Also, *I Miss You, Papa* is a heartfelt story to help a child facing the holidays and new year without a loved. One of the greatest gifts we can give a child is time, and this book will perhaps give a voice to how they are feeling and provide an opportunity for them to open and talk about it. Sharon Jones-Scaife also has a new title out this month, *Mrs. Hughes is Missing*.

All these titles and those spotlighted throughout the year on *NDG's Bookshelf* are available at Amazon or your favorite local retailer.

This oversight on Moses' part almost cost him his life. Imagine that - God prepared a man 40 years, and yet, he was almost disqualified because of an oversight. "At a lodging place on the way, the Lord met Moses and was about to kill him. But Zipporah took a flint knife, cut off her son's foreskin and touched Moses' feet with it..." Exodus 4:24. None of us will ever enter the Promised Land of full blessing with God unless we have this same circumcision of heart. The psalmist above accurately describes the process of circumcising the heart.

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints. O Lord, truly I am Your servant; I am Your servant, the son of Your maid-servant; You have freed me from my chains." Psalm 116:15-16.

We cannot be free to be God's servant until this death takes place in each of us. When this death takes

place, we become free - free from the chains of sin that held us back from becoming completely His. Oh, what freedom there is when this death takes place. No longer are we held to the sin of materialism, fear, self-effort, or anxiety, for we are dead to these things.

The Bible speaks of the seed that must die in order for it to spring up and give new life. I tell you the truth,

unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life **John 12:24-25**.

Each of us must ask the Lord if our seed has died. Is it in the ground now, yielding the fruit of brokenness

before Him? This is the great paradox of a life in Christ - the circumcision of heart and the death process. Ask God to free you to become all that He wants you to be today.

Present your body as a living sacrifice unto God. Ask God to help you to be holy and acceptable, which



is your reasonable service (as God's Word exhorts in **Romans 12:1**). Ask God to guide and direct you, to protect you from harm, evil and shine through your life to influence the world around you for Him. May God be glorified and may the lost be pointed to Jesus through the testimony of your life.



In Memory of Mr. Eugene H. and Mrs. Euphemia (Phemia) Tinner, may they both rest in God's wonderful Peace for lives well-lived to the glory of God.

NDGtv
North Dallas Gazette takes a moment to reflect on the past with **Historical Perspectives from Sister Tarpley**
Hear what it was like growing up in a very different Dallas when Booker T. Washington was a black school. Sister Tarpley graduated from there and went on to college and later became a city councilmember in Carrollton.
Look for NDGTV at NorthDallasGazette.com

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NDG Book Review: *Triple Threat* is a whodunit you will dig

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

You dig, and you dig, and you dig.

Like a dog with a bone, you're all in when presented with a tiny scrap of intriguing information. You don't let go until you know everything there is to know about it, searching and uncovering and digging until, as in the new novel "Triple Threat" by Camryn King, you've dug yourself into trouble.

There had been absolutely no reason for Leigh to have killed herself.

Award-winning journalist Mallory Knight knew that about her best friend. Just days before her body was



found, bruised and nude, Leigh had been happy and laughing with Mallory. There was just no way she was suicidal, and Mallory had tried to keep the police focused.

But it had been a year

since the supposed-suicide-maybe-murder and now Leigh's case was considered closed. In Mallory's mind, though, nothing had been settled; even less so when Leigh's mother gave her a duffel bag of mementos with a mystery inside.

Leigh had left a journal with what appeared to be coded words; some were senseless, but others led Mallory to a few shaky conclusions. Leigh was dating New York Navigators basketball player Christian Graham when she died, and his name was in the diary; to Mallory, that made him a suspect. And as it happened, her editor, Charlie, gave her an as-

signment to write about Christian's charity organization. It was the perfect opportunity to find out more about the man Leigh seemed drawn to.

To her surprise, Mallory learned that Christian was a truly nice guy, but her investigator's background nagged her to dig deeper. She knew that he strongly mentored a kid enrolled in his charity, and that he had a soft spot for the boy. Rumor was that the teen had been sick but Mallory also heard there was violence involved. There was something about the boy and Christian's relationship with him that made her act rashly.

One ill-considered act, and Mallory's entire life crashed.

And that was just fine. It gave her more time to figure out what happened to Leigh and whether Christian Graham was involved her death. Leigh once called Christian a "triple threat": smart, handsome, and successful. But was he a killer, too?

In the beginning of "Triple Threat" and until about twenty pages in, the temptation to quit the book may be strong. It's slower than chilled honey, which happens in small pockets throughout this novel.

When it heats up, though, it's on fire. Author Camryn

King tells a fine mystery that'll keep you engaged and eager to solve, in part because there's also a bit of romance inside and enough drama to satisfy. There are a couple of heart-pounders, too, and a character that does some really dumb things, which makes her seem more relatable.

While the ending of "Triple Threat" feels like it goes on forever, getting to that point will be fun if you have the patience. This book isn't always snappy or snazzy but it's a good enough whodunit and if you like romancy-mysteries, you'll dig it.

From singing in the subway to *Phantom of the Opera*

By Ruth Ferguson
NDG Editor

Musical theater was not Quentin Oliver Lee's first musical passion. But after being discovered while singing in the New York Subway, his career and life went in a totally different direction. He now finds himself starring as the Phantom in the touring production of *Phantom of the Opera*. One of the most legendary roles in theater for more than three decades.

"I was studying specifically opera and I moved to

New York City because I thought that was you did," Lee jokes. "It was rough going, you do a lot of things to survive in New York while trying to figure out. But someone saw me singing in the subway and I ended up in "Porgy and Bess," the rest they say is history.

Although he never imagined himself starring in *Phantom of the Opera*, Lee drew inspiration from Norm Lewis, who made history as the first African American to star as Phantom on Broadway.

"I have seen Norm Lewis

do great work," Lee shared. He felt confident that if Norm can do it

so could he. "The role itself it could be anybody," Lee pointed out.

In fact this is Lee's second visit to perform in Dallas during the holiday season. Two years ago he was on tour with *Porgy and Bess* in

December. Although now a veteran, a long tour can be very demanding.

"Anytime you are expected to perform at a high level eight times a week, it can be tricky to maintain excellence," Lee acknowledged. "It is essentially the next level. It is like going from the minor to the major

leagues and comes with its own challenge emotionally, physically and spiritually. Lee is grateful his wife is able to travel with him, but does miss the comforts of home and his church family.

Even if you have seen *Phantom of the Opera* before, Lee believes you will enjoy the latest production.

The Dallas Summer Musical's *Phantom of the Opera* is onstage December 19, 2018 - January 6, 2019. Although there is no show on Christmas Eve, you can enjoy the show on Christmas Day and New Years Day also. For tickets and show-times visit DallasSummerMusicals.org

CHICAGO is a winner

By Tiffany Gilbert
NDG Entertainment

"Murder, greed, corruption, violence, exploitation, adultery, treachery..."

What a night at the Winspear Opera House as Eddie George, former NFL superstar and Heisman Trophy winner, took the stage in the touring production of the longest running show on Broadway *CHICAGO* as the smooth-talking lawyer, Billy Flynn.

Alongside George Velma Kelly played by Terra C. MacLEOD and Roxie Hart played by Dylis Croman had us at the edge of our seats as two sexy murderers fighting for attention

and fame. The two were equally funny and allow extensive vocal and emotional range to shine as Hart sings "Me and My Baby" and Kelly with "All That Jazz".

The powerful, brash, and commanding "Mama" Morton played by Jennifer Fouche clears up who's the top dog when she sings a potent "When You're Good to Mama" and solidifies her role.

CHICAGO is a testament to our insatiable craving for sex, crime, and fame. One of the most electrifying musicals of all time, you will not want to miss this show.. On a scale from 1-10 I definitely give it a 10.

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