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Votes to defeat  
GOP bills needed  
before 2020

- See Page 3



Outgoing AHA  
Prez reflect on  
priorities

- See Page 4



YBLO offers  
'People's Brief'  
on voting rights

- See Page 5



Perspectives  
from COVID  
era students

- See Page 6



Irving extends  
aquatics hours,  
seeks staff

- See Page 7



Flower Mound  
sees first Pride  
Day parade

- See Page 8



Cosby tells the  
Black Press to  
'push forward'

- See Page 9



Sister Tarpley:  
Jesus: Prince  
and Savior

- See Page 15

# Bipartisan infrastructure framework advances economic and public health opportunities for communities of color

By Stacy M. Brown  
NNPA Senior National  
Correspondent

The President Joe Biden-led bipartisan Infrastructure Framework released on Tuesday, June 29, addresses economic disparities in America's economy and the consequences of decades of disinvestment in the nation's infrastructure that have fallen most heavily on communities of color.

Through critical investments, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Framework increases access to good-paying jobs, affordable high-speed internet, reliable public transit, clean drinking water and other resources to ensure communities of color get a fair shot at the American dream.

"These critical investments are first steps in advancing equity and racial justice throughout our economy," senior White House officials said.

"The President believes additional investments are needed in our nation's caregiving infrastructure, housing supply, regional development, and workforce development programs to ensure that communities of color and other underserved communities can access economic opportunity and justice."

Earlier this month in Tulsa, Oklahoma, President Biden announced a whole-of-government effort to increase the share of federal con-



*Historic investments in transportation infrastructure, especially highway construction, cut too many Americans off from opportunity, dividing and demolishing communities, and perpetuating economic and racial injustices.*

tracts going to small, disadvantaged businesses by 50 percent over the next five years, leveraging the government's purchasing power to help more Americans realize their entrepreneurial dreams.

The President followed through in announcing the bipartisan Infrastructure Framework which includes delivering high speed internet to every American household.

Access is vital, particularly for African Americans whom the White House said are 9 percent less likely to have high-speed internet than their white peers (Latino Americans are 15 percent less likely).

About 35 percent of individuals living on Tribal lands also lack ac-

cess to broadband service.

The Framework invests \$65 billion to make high-speed broadband available to all Americans, to bring down high-speed internet prices across the board, and to close the digital divide.

The President's plan will also invest in long overdue expansion of broadband on Tribal lands, in consultation with Tribal Nations.

"With the 1936 Rural Electrification Act, the Federal government made a historic investment in bringing electricity to nearly every home and farm in America, and millions of families and our economy reaped

See BILL, Page 16

## Inside...

People in the News .....	2
Op/Ed .....	3
Health .....	4
Community .....	5
Education .....	6
Irving / Carrollton / Plano .....	7
Entertainment .....	9-10
Marketplace .....	11-12
Career / Notices .....	13
Religion .....	14-15
NDG Book Review .....	10

## See Page 2



Lt. Andrea Thorne-Thomsen

## People In The News ...



Eric Adams



Judith Heumann

NDG Quote of the Week: "Yes we can!"

- Barack Obama



## Lt. Andrea Thorne-Thomsen

By Stephanie Fox, Navy Office of Community Outreach



NEWPORT, R.I. — Lt. Andrea Thorne-Thomsen, a native of Richardson, Texas, joined the Navy to travel the world and experience new and exciting things while having the opportunity to serve our country.

Now, six years later, Thorne-Thomsen is part of the most innovative tactics at Surface Warfare Officers School (SWOS), located in Newport, Rhode Island.

"I'm an instructor with the International Surface

Warfare Officer School and I think one of the most important things we cover are case studies," said Thorne-Thomsen. "We have discussions about lessons learned and shared experiences, and we're able to share our

knowledge in the classroom.

According to Thorne-Thomsen, the values required to succeed in the military are similar to those found in Richardson.

"In my hometown, there's such a sense of community and helping each other out," said Thorne-Thomsen. "For me, that's what the Navy is all about. We look out for each other, we help each other, and we grow together. We operate as a team."

Thorne-Thomsen, a 2011 graduate of Richardson High School, is at the school where naval officers learn to serve as surface

warfare officers.

"In simple terms, we're ship drivers," said Thorne-Thomsen. "We're also responsible for leading different divisions, which includes managing the people that work in those divisions. We know our ships inside and out and we make sure we are ready not only to face any challenges at sea, but also to fight and win."

The mission of SWOS is to ready sea-bound warriors to serve on surface combatants to fulfill the Navy's mission maintaining global maritime superiority.

Once service members finish training they are de-

ployed around the world putting their skill set to work aboard Navy ships, such as aircraft carriers, cruisers, destroyers, amphibious warfare ships, mine warfare ships and littoral combat ships.

Naval Education and Training Command (NETC), led by Rear Adm. Peter Garvin, is the U.S. Navy's Force Development pillar and largest shore command. Through its "Street to Fleet" focus, NETC recruits civilians and transforms them into skilled warfighters ready to meet the current and future needs of the U.S. Navy.

Serving as a surface

warfare officer requires a combination of dedication and sacrifice, but Thorne-Thomsen believes the accomplishments achieved along the way make the hard work worth it.

"I've had two successful deployments as a navigator," said Thorne-Thomsen. "I was very proud to see how my navigation team grew and worked together to make those deployments successful."

According to the U.S. Naval History and Heritage Command, during the early days of the Surface Navy, wooden frigates, propelled

**See THORNE-THOMSEN, Page 6**

## Eric Adams

By Stacy M. Brown  
NNPA Senior National Correspondent



Eric Adams grew up poor. As a teenager, he was abused by the police but later decided to join New York's Finest ranks.

After serving as a police captain, and in the state Senate and as Brooklyn borough president, Adams is poised to become only the second African American to lead the biggest city in America.

Adams won the Democratic primary for mayor, and political watchers in

the Big Apple give Republicans virtually no chance of beating Adams in the fall, which would put him in exclusive company with the late David Dinkins as New York's only Black mayors.

"While there are still some very small amounts of votes to be counted, the results are clear: a historic, diverse, five-borough coalition led by working-class New Yorkers has led us to victory in the Democratic primary for Mayor of New York City," Adams said in a statement.

"Now, we must focus on winning in November so that we can deliver on the promise of this great city for those who are struggling, who are underserved, and who are committed to a safe, fair, affordable future for all New Yorkers," he declared.

Born in the Brownsville

neighborhood of Brooklyn in 1960, Adams counts as the fourth of six children for his mother Dorothy, a house cleaner and cook, and his father Leroy, a butcher.

The family later moved to the working-class neighborhood of South Jamaica, Queens, where New York police officers badly assaulted Adams and his brother.

Adams has pointed to that encounter as a 15-year-old as motivation for a law enforcement career.

He earned an Associate in Arts degree in data processing from the New York City College of Tech-

nology, a Bachelor of Arts degree in criminal justice from John Jay College of Criminal Justice, and a Master of Public Administration degree from Marist College.

According to his official bio, Adams paid his way through his collegiate studies through several jobs, including work in the mailroom of an accounting firm, as a mechanic, and as a clerk in the Kings County District Attorney's Office.

He graduated from the New York City Police Academy in 1984 as one of the highest-ranked students in his class. After initially serving with the New York

City Transit Police Department, Adams was transferred to the New York City Police Department with the merging of the city's police forces.

In 1995, Adams co-founded 100 Blacks in Law Enforcement Who Care, an advocacy group that rose to nationwide prominence speaking out against police brutality, racial profiling, and departmental diversity.

According to his bio, Adams also served as president of the Grand Council of Guardians, a statewide fraternal society for African Americans in law enforce-

**See ADAMS, Page 4**

## Judith Heumann

By Stacy Maiers  
National Education Association



*The National Education Association awarded lifelong disability rights activist Heumann with its highest honor — the Friend of Education Award — during its virtual Representative Assembly in Washington on July 2, 2021.*

WASHINGTON — Imagine your mom is taking you to the neighborhood public school to enroll. Your belly is full of butterflies because of all the excitement for that first day. But as you enter the school campus, the principal breaks the news that you can't attend there after all because you're a "fire

hazard." The shocking scenario seems unimaginable now, but that was the reality facing a young, wheelchair-bound Judith Heumann in 1950s Brooklyn.

"It was very clear as I was growing up that there was not an expectation that I or the millions of other disabled people who lived in the United States were expected to...contribute to

society," said Heumann. "Even being that young... [we] realize[d] that the status quo is not what it needed to be."

The heart-breaking scene at that New York public school helped lay the foundation for Heumann and her life's work to ensure that all students — white, Black, Brown, Indigenous, disabled or not — have access to a just and equitable education, no matter their different learning needs or abilities. "Those of us who come from other minority groups really understand both the pivotal role that education does — or does not — play in our ability to move forward," she added.

Today, the National Education Association awarded lifelong disability rights activist Heumann with its

highest honor — the Friend of Education Award — during its virtual Representative Assembly.

Always looking for the teachable moment, NEA President Becky Pringle remarked how Heumann had taught her by describing their appearances and surroundings, in detail, for the visually impaired viewers as they began their virtual conversation.

"Judy Heumann has a unique perspective of being a former teacher and having worked for the Department of Education. She understands how those roles together can positively impact education policy," said Pringle, who presented Heumann with the award. "Just like other marginalized communities, institutional discrimination

has systematically harmed the disabled community. We must tear down those barriers that stop us from progressing, and those obstacles are coming down thanks to civil rights leaders like Judy who have been brave, fierce and unapologetic in advocating for change."

The NEA Friend of Education Award is presented during NEA's annual convention and recognizes a person or organization whose leadership, acts or support have significantly contributed to the improvement of American public education. Past recipients include economist Paul Krugman; education policy writer and researcher Linda Darling-Hammond; leaders of the Public Broadcasting Service and the Corpora-

tion for Public Broadcasting, among many elected officials and other dignitaries.

"If you don't demand what you believe in for yourself, you're not going to get it," has said Heumann. We agree.

*The National Education Association is the nation's largest professional employee organization, representing more than 3 million elementary and secondary teachers, higher education faculty, education support professionals, school administrators, retired educators, students preparing to become teachers, healthcare workers, and public employees. Learn more at www.nea.org.*





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# Votes to thwart election bills now - were needed even before 2020

By Royce West  
Texas Senate

Although some may question why the Texas Legislature is days away from the start of a Special Called Session, some know the ground was made fertile when the votes were counted from the November 2020 Elections. One could say outcomes of Texas legislative races at least resemble what took place in Congress.

Democrats gained three seats in the U.S. Senate. With an effective 50-50 total in both caucuses, gridlock remains. Democrats picked up two seats in the Texas Senate, but saw the goal line again move to guarantee success on controversial and partisan issues for the majority party.

In Congress, House Democrats lost seats won in 2018, but held their chamber majority. But hopes of Democrats picking up enough seats to control the Texas House were dashed when no additional seats were gained. With Republican rule of both chambers, Democrats lack the muscle to force compromise. And without a clear majority in the U.S. Senate, the minority party leader resumes

and redesigns methods used to obstruct the agenda of former President Barack Obama.

One of the powers of the United States President is to nominate members to the Supreme Court. Republicans have appointed six of nine sitting justices. We later saw how the then-Republican Senate Majority Leader unabashedly reversed the position on presidential nominations used when he blocked Obama's final chance to narrow the Court's majority.

Those of us who opposed SB7 - the most recent Republican effort to protect election security as they say, or further suppress votes as Democrats say - again missed an opportunity to make sure they are not successful. Apparently, the fix is easier said than done. WIN MORE ELECTIONS! Only we can come to our own rescue. Because no one else can save us.

SB7 is based on a defeated former president's false claim that the 2020 Election was stolen. As is too often, it passed the Texas Senate by the vote of 18 Republicans to 13 Democrats. The Texas Senate can't save us.

Texas House Democrats

dramatically broke quorum on May 30, the eve of the final day of the 87th Session, to at least temporarily kill SB7. I said temporarily, because a similar bill will be the agenda's headliner when we reconvene in Austin days from now. The Texas House can't save us.

The U.S. House alone can't save us. They've already approved HR 1 - the For the People Act, which would among provisions, prohibit gerrymandering by ordering an independent commission and stop voter rolls from being purged within six months of an election.

On a moment's notice, Speaker Nancy Pelosi would garner the votes to again pass HR 4 - the John Lewis Voting Rights Act that would restore sections of the Voting Rights Act that were rendered nil by the Supreme Court in its 2013 Shelby v. Holder ruling, which declared the formula used to enforce preclearance of election changes was outdated. (Which also means the U.S. Supreme Court won't save us.)

Current Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell took typical pleasure in blocking test votes for HR

1. It and HR 4 are locked away, where ever he dooms all Democrat initiatives to remain. I had to shake my head when McConnell borrowed a line to tell reporters that the two federal voting rights bills are, "a solution in search of a problem." As comprised, the U.S. Senate can't save us!

Despite the fact that the outgoing Texas Secretary of State, the FBI, the Department of Homeland Security - Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency and former protector of the former president, former U.S. Attorney General Bill Barr - all echoed that the 2020 Election was "the most secure in American history" and free of any massive voter fraud effort, SB7 is part of a coordinated national effort by Republicans to maintain power.

I have said repeatedly that elections have consequences. For Democratic elected officials and voters who believe in democratic values, the consequences of not winning elections will continue to be evidenced if too many who are negatively impacted by the actions of Republicans do not turn out to vote. NO ONE ELSE WILL SAVE US - BUT US!

## Fighting for freedom, one person at a time

By Dr. John E. Warren  
Publisher  
San Diego Voice  
& Viewpoint

Now that the Fourth of July is over and we have all been reminded of what Frederick Douglas said and did, the cookouts are behind us, but so is the memory of the White Nationalists marching in the streets of Philadelphia with flags and faces covered. Let us now come off of recess and dig in for the battle ahead. Let us not be like the Summer Patriot and Sunshine Soldier that Thomas Payne wrote about during the Revolutionary War. In his publication, "The Crisis",

he said that such would soon vanish from the battle, but those that endured until the end would desire the love of all mankind. In other words, some people will only participate in a fight when things are sunny and good as opposed to those who will fight through storms and hardships.

The question on so many of our minds is how do we fight and when and where do we fight? The answer: Right where you stand, and right now.

Since the United States Supreme Court has finished gutting the Voting Rights Act and the U.S. Senate refuses to act in allowing our Constitutional form of

government to work, then we must mobilize in every state where there is a Republican on the ballot for Governor, U.S. Senate, or House of Representative seats; to find and support those people running against them and willing to support voting rights, kill the Filibuster in the U.S. Senate and vote people into the Congress that will allow victories for our people in the 2022 elections.

The reality is that there are more of us than them, but they have learned that historically we don't vote. We must repeat the voter turnout of the 2020 election, in spite of the new voter suppression laws and

efforts to purge election rolls. We must start now to re-register people to vote, join the Black Votes Matter (BVM) movement in every state where we live or have family.

Just as our forefathers didn't quit the fight for civil rights and equality because of the KKK or the hatred of segregationists, so we must not be deterred by marching against White Nationalists, no matter how they are armed and dressed. We must neither ignore nor be discouraged by racist White state governors doing everything in their power to make sure we don't vote again in the numbers we produced in 2020.

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# His term as AHA president over, Dr. Mitch Elkind still aims to tackle pre-pandemic priorities

(American Heart Association) When Dr. Mitch Elkind became president-elect of the American Heart Association, he had about 15 months to get ready to take over the organization's top volunteer leadership position.

As only the second neurologist in the job, Elkind sought to build a stronger bridge between the worlds of heart health and brain health.

He hardly got a chance.

Months before Elkind's ascension, the pandemic scuttled many plans for 2020 and beyond. Elkind immediately became a pivotal leader in the AHA's response to COVID-19 and the inequities it further exposed.

"You do what you're called to do," said Elkind, a professor of neurology and epidemiology at New York-Presbyterian Hospital/Columbia University Irving Medical Center. "I wish the pandemic never had to happen, but I was glad that I was able to play a role in the American Heart Association addressing it."

Said AHA CEO Nancy Brown: "Mitch's tenure came at an unprecedented time for our organization and the world. His keen acumen and calming presence helped us to meet the moment as a public health leader."

Elkind's expertise in neurology and epidemiology gave him multiple viewpoints on the pandemic. He also studied philosophy



*Dr. Mitch Elkind says a key achievement of his term as AHA president, an advisory on structural racism and health equity, "was as urgent as anything in a medical journal would be." (American Heart Association)*

in college and continues to see the world through that lens.

He describes himself as "a listener and a thinker," and he's an eloquent writer. So, it's fitting that several of the hallmarks of his tenure are articles published in medical journals.

Before the coronavirus was declared a pandemic — and while Elkind was still president-elect — he began writing about the AHA's role in the global response. He became the lead author of a journal article co-written by then-President Dr. Robert Harrington and his predecessor Dr. Ivor Benjamin.

In May 2021, he was the lead author — along with Harrington and Dr. Donald Lloyd-Jones, who will succeed Elkind — on

a journal article looking back at a full year of the pandemic. Headlined "A Return to Normal Is Not Good Enough," the authors described the importance of using the pandemic "as a teachable moment that can lead to improved health care, public health and science."

Perhaps the most teachable lesson of his tenure was the connection between structural racism and health equity. That became the focus of a presidential advisory Elkind considers among the proudest accomplishments of his term.

Released in November, "Call to Action: Structural Racism as a Fundamental Driver of Health Disparities" refers to the devastating combination of the pandemic and the police

killings of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor as "reminders that structural racism persists and restricts the opportunities for long, healthy lives of Black Americans and other historically disenfranchised groups."

"There was a real acuity to this; it was as urgent as anything in a medical journal would be," Elkind said. "The pandemic showed that we have big structural problems in this country that need to be addressed. Where we have bad systems, we have bad care. A pandemic emphasizes the importance of thinking about structures and systems. The structural racism paper was about changing those structures."

Structural racism is one of the barriers to health the AHA is working to break down as part of another major element from Elkind's tenure — the organization's new 2024 Impact Goal, which aims to achieve equitable health for all.

Elkind also helped shape some of the neurology questions on the organization's COVID-19 CVD Registry and remained involved in the project as a member of its steering committee. He also took part in the AHA's funding of rapid response grants.

As the leader of a major public health organization, he promoted education about the pandemic's effects on cardiovascular disease, the importance of getting vaccinated and

the "Don't Die of Doubt" campaign, which reminded people that, even during a pandemic, they still need to call 911 when experiencing symptoms of a stroke or heart attack.

In a pandemic-related twist, something else set Elkind's tenure apart from all other AHA presidents: He didn't travel. While he represented the organization in countless meetings and conferences, he did so through his laptop.

"My anecdotes and memories are a little bit different than other presidents' since most of mine took place right here," Elkind said, laughing, during yet another video call from his home office.

As Elkind transitions to immediate past president, he'll take with him a meaningful to-do list. The top item might sound familiar: Build a stronger bridge between the worlds of heart health and brain health.

And, after 15 months of all those video sessions, he knows exactly who to call.

"Interacting with cardiologists and cardiovascular scientists from China, from Japan, from Brazil, from the Interamerican Society of Cardiology, we'd talk about the pandemic, of course, but then I would ask, 'What are you doing about stroke? Who do you work with on stroke? Do you realize how important stroke is in your community?'" Elkind said. "Those issues are still front-and-center in my mind."

Elkind leaves the office with the dual distinctions of being the second neurologist to serve as AHA president and the first to spend the entire term with the nation in the grip of a pandemic.

"A small community of people have had the chance to serve as president of this incredible organization," Elkind said. "It really was an opportunity to learn a lot about myself, my abilities, my limitations, and my interests. I am grateful to have had the chance to lead during this historic time."

## ADAMS, from Page 2

ment.

"I grew up poor in Brooklyn & Queens," Adams wrote on Twitter. "I wore a bulletproof vest to

keep my neighbors safe. I served my community as a State Senator & Brooklyn Borough President. And I'm honored to be the

Democratic nominee to be the mayor of the city I've always called home."

Adams also put his party on alert.

"If the Democratic Party fails to recognize what

we did here in New York, they're going to have a problem in the midterm elections, and they're going to have a problem in the presidential election," he said.

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# Young Black Lawyers' Organizing Coalition releases a People's Brief on the John Lewis Voting Rights Act to mobilize community support

As Congress considers federal voting rights legislation, the Young Black Lawyers' Organizing Coalition (YBLOC) released a People's Brief on the John Lewis Voting Rights Act today. Designed to be a community education tool, the brief traces the narrative history of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and discusses, in a clear and accessible way, how the John Lewis Voting Rights Act would restore the landmark legislation and revive its critical voting rights protections.

"The goal of this brief

is to empower all Americans with the information they need to be effective ambassadors for the John Lewis Voting Rights Act," said Abdul Dosunmu, the founder and chief strategist of YBLOC. "In order to ensure the restoration of the Voting Rights Act and its urgent voting rights protections, we must take the conversation directly into the heart of our communities, clarify the stakes, and mobilize people power. That is what this document aims to do."

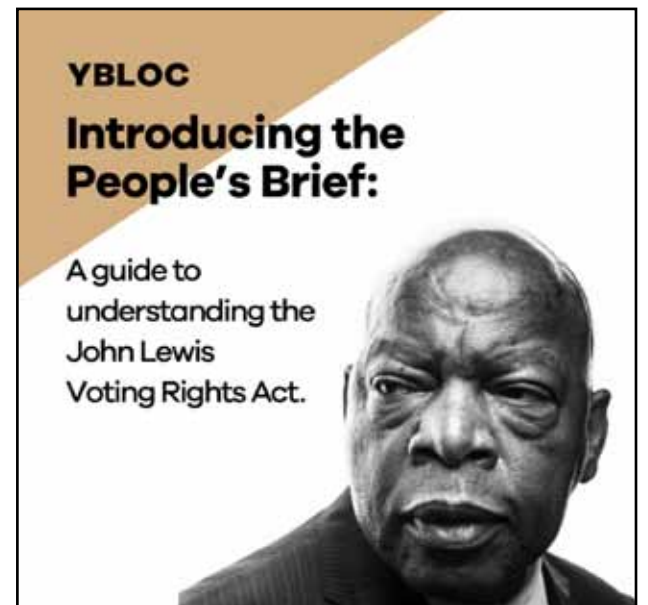
This People's Brief is be-

ing released at a critical inflection point for Black voting rights. According to the Brennan Center for Justice, there are 389 proposed voter suppression bills in 48 states. The John Lewis Voting Rights Act would help combat this troubling tide of voter suppression bills by restoring key provisions of the Voting Rights Act.

The brief was crafted with community stakeholders in mind. As leaders engage their communities around voting rights issues, this People's Brief will be an important community

education and empowerment tool.

The Young Black Lawyers' Organizing Coalition (YBLOC) is a nonpartisan, community-centered movement of young Black lawyers and law students working to protect and empower Black electoral voice through voter education, strategic advocacy and impact litigation. We work in collaboration with grassroots Black communities to fight for full access to electoral democracy and to realize full electoral voice.



## National Action Network seeks leader for the local Dallas chapter

The National Action Network is one of the leading civil rights organizations in the nation with chapters throughout the entire United States. Founded in 1991 by Reverend Al Sharpton, NAN works within the spirit and tradition of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to promote a modern civil rights agenda that includes the fight for one standard of justice, decency and equal oppor-

tunities for all people regardless of race, religion, nationality or gender.

The NAN is looking for a President for a local Dallas chapter which is expected to launch soon. This is a volunteer position, and requires a highly motivated individual with an activist heart and an interest in civil rights issues.

As an organizer, the initial role is critical in help-

ing to grow the Network with people who are committed and ready to take ACTION! We welcome their efforts to build the membership base of the NAN. Membership is open to any person or entity that promotes a doctrine of civil rights and fairness for all people. NAN members share a commitment to civil rights and frequently mobilize in regions across the country to protect

equal rights and a modern day civil rights agenda.

The President will be expected to reside at meetings and acts as Chairman/Chairwoman of the Executive Committee and appoints all committees not directly elected by the Chapter.

Between meetings of the Executive Committee and subject to the approval thereof, the president also exercises executive author-

ity on behalf of the Chapter. The President shall be an ex-officio member of all committees.

The President shall work with other members of the Executive Committee to develop a program agenda for a defined fiscal year, and acknowledges he/she is the primary force within the Chapter in establishing a working relationship and communication with the National and Re-

gional Office(s); ensures that these offices receive all reports, including quarterly reports, and reports of elections.

The President will also be familiar with pertinent governing documents including the NAN by-laws and Chapter rules.

Interested parties should contact Robert D. Bush, president of the Las Vegas Chapter, at (702) 626-0158.

## Six Sunrise Movement activists arrested at home of Sen. Ted Cruz

Six Dallas activists were arrested at the home of Sen. Ted Cruz following a 400-mile march that ended on the senator's doorstep.

Sunrise Movement Dallas and Gulf South activists with "Generation on Fire" demand President Biden and Senator Cruz stop impeding life-saving climate legislation in the American Jobs Plan and support a fully funded Civilian Climate Corps (CCC).

As covered in the national media, marchers presented a choice to the President: continue negotiating away young peoples futures with Republican climate deniers like Cruz or stand with the young people who elected you.

Seventy youth climate activists finished the final mile of their 400-mile march on June 21 by marching to Cruz's door-



21-year-old activist Nathan May from Dallas is arrested by Houston Police following a protest that ended at the home of Sen. Ted Cruz. (Photo by Rachael Warriner)

step holding signs saying, "Our Homes Flood, Our People Freeze, Cruz Abandons Us," and "No Deal with Climate Deniers," and demanded Biden stop negotiating away their futures and hire 1.5 million people to fight the climate crisis through a fully funded CCC.

"Politicians like Cruz and Biden can't sell my

future away to their highest donor while Gulf South residents are losing their lives to storms like Claudette and the Texas Freeze. Our homes burn, our neighborhoods flood, our parents freeze, and they sentence us to death while talking about fake bipartisanship," said 26 year old arrested Sunrider Kidus Girma.

"My parents sacrificed

everything to come to this country to give me a better future. Having Ed Markeys and AOC's Civilian Climate Corps for Jobs and

Justice to Rebuild America would get us one step closer towards the future that my parents envisioned for me and my sisters. For that

reason I'm willing to make sacrifices," said 21 year old arrested Sunrider Giselle

See SUNRISE, Page 11

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# New national data provide high schoolers' perspectives on a school year shaped by remote learning, attention to racial injustice

WASHINGTON, D.C. (America's Promise Alliance) – Many high school students are rethinking their postsecondary plans and feeling disconnected from their teachers but also becoming more civically engaged, according to a national survey of high school students released today by America's Promise Alliance and Research for Action as part of the GradNation campaign.

The wide-ranging, national survey of more than 2,400 high school students provides one of the most comprehensive looks yet at the high school experience during a tumultuous year marked by a global pandemic, heightened attention to racial injustice, and upended plans.

Among the key findings:

- 55% of high school students discuss issues of race and racism in school, but students of color are less likely to report seeing themselves represented in the curriculum compared to white students.

- Learning about race and racism in school is associ-



Sam Balay / Unsplash

ated with higher levels of egalitarian beliefs, social action, and a sense of postsecondary readiness.

- Four out of five (78%) 11th and 12th graders report that COVID-19 has impacted their plans after high school.

- High schoolers, particularly those learning remotely, feel disconnected from peers and teachers.

"After a year of upheaval, these insights clarify the need for schools and communities to prioritize high school students in their recovery planning for next school year and beyond," said Mike O'Brien, CEO of America's Promise. "The majority of high schoolers

have been attending school remotely and there is a shorter runway to support them through graduation. Schools, in partnership with families and communities, will have to rebuild connections with students, prioritize relationships, strengthen pathways to postsecondary success, and embrace honest discussions about our nation's history. Rather than restoring schools to their pre-pandemic state, this moment calls for a transformation of the high school experience that will better, more holistically, support young people."

Launched in 2010, the GradNation campaign is a

nationwide effort to boost the on-time high school graduation rate and prepare young people for postsecondary life. To inform the campaign and understand high schoolers' current experiences, the survey is organized around three topics: students' opportunities to learn about race and racism, COVID-19's impact on students' postsecondary planning and the factors that contribute to students' sense of readiness, and COVID-19's impact on students' sense of connectedness and wellbeing.

## Opportunities to Learn about Race and Racism

Overall, about half (55%) of high school students report discussing race and racism in school, with two-thirds (66%) reporting being taught about the history of racism in the US. About 3 in 5 students (61%) report that their school curriculum represented non-white communities at least "sometimes." Fewer students of color (52-62%, by racial/ethnic group) report that their curriculum represents their racial/ethnic

background compared to white students (68%).

Notably, learning about race and racism in school is associated with higher levels of egalitarian beliefs and social action. Young people who had more opportunities to learn about race and racism in school were significantly more likely to endorse egalitarian beliefs (i.e., society should strive to promote equality among social groups) compared to peers with less exposure (65% v. 56%, respectively). Similarly, youth who had more opportunities to learn about race and racism in school more often reported high levels of personal social action (i.e., consuming information and talking with friends and family about political and social issues) compared to those who had less exposure (60% v. 52%, respectively).

## Postsecondary Plans and Readiness

COVID-19 has disrupted students' postsecondary planning in myriad ways, the survey results show.

Approximately four out of five (78%) 11th and 12th graders report that COVID-19 has impacted their plans after high school at least "a little bit," with almost one in five reporting their plans were impacted "a great deal."

Among those who report their post-high school plans have changed, the most common change was to where students plan to attend college. One-third (34%) of young people report changing their plans to attend college closer to home, and one-quarter (24%) plan to attend a two-year instead of a four-year institution. Notably, nearly half indicate that their plans have changed due to financial (47%) or family reasons (45%) with far fewer citing changes to their interests (24%), suggesting that shifting plans are driven largely by constraints beyond young people's control.

Postsecondary readiness is highest among students who are connected

See SCHOOL, Page 7

## THORNE-THOMSEN, from Page 2

by sails, would fire cannon balls at enemy ships in an attempt to either sink or capture the ships on the open seas, while modern surface warfare conducts a wide variety of missions—from multiple ship classes—including aviation, damage control and seamanship.

Surface warriors are the backbone of America's Navy and the most capable surface force in the world, explains the U.S. Naval History and Heritage Command: "The United States Navy is known for a colorful and illustrious history with opportunities in numerous warfare communities. But since its inception, the Navy has been known for fighting on the high-seas, and surface warfare remains our heart and soul."

The future of surface

warfare is rapidly changing, according to Navy officials, so the course and materials at Surface Warfare Officer School are constantly evolving to create the most dynamic, lethal, safe and professional warfighting team for the Navy the nation needs.

With more than 90 percent of all trade traveling by sea, and 95 percent of the world's international phone and internet traffic carried through fiber optic cables lying on the ocean floor, Navy officials continue to emphasize that the prosperity and security of the United States is directly linked to a strong and ready Navy.

According to Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Mike Gilday, four priorities will focus efforts on sailors, readiness, capabilities and

capacity.

"For 245 years, in both calm and rough waters, our Navy has stood the watch to protect the homeland, preserve freedom of the seas, and defend our way of life," said Gilday. "The decisions and investments we make this decade will set the maritime balance of power for the rest of this century. We can accept nothing less than success."

As Thorne-Thomsen and other surface warriors continue to train, they take pride serving their country in the United States Navy.

"I am part of something that is bigger than myself," added Thorne-Thomsen. "My parents encouraged me to join the military. I knew I would enjoy both the structure and the opportunities the Navy would give me while giving me the chance to give back and serve my country."

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# Irving extends hours at Cimarron, West Aquatics, seeks new staff

Following the slow re-opening of business and daily life coming from the pandemic, many organizations are scrambling to find qualified employees to meet the ever-expanding demand.

Municipalities are not exempt, and many city perks that have been long-enjoyed by residents are taking a little extra time to ramp back up.

Irving Parks and Recreation said in a recent release that it is excited to announce that Cimarron Family and West Irving Aquatic



City of Irving

Centers are adding Thursday hours to the summer schedule. Both centers will be open 1 to 7 p.m. Thursday, beginning July 8.

Residents now can enjoy four days a week, Thursday through Sunday, at the city's outdoor aquatic centers.

The Parks and Recreation

Department thanks residents for their patience, and continue to recruit qualified candidates to ramp up to full staffing for all city aquatic facilities.

The City of Irving currently is actively seeking to fill multiple positions across the organization. Working for the City of Irving is a great opportunity for those seeking a career with competitive pay and benefits that is close to home and serves the community. View the Benefits summaries for employment with the city.

As a City of Irving em-

ployee, help make a difference in the lives of residents and positively impact the community.

To apply for a city position or to view other available employment opportunities, visit the City of Irving jobs page.

Irving is also inviting residents to participate in the upcoming Irving 360 Civic Academy.

Attendees can get an up-close look at local government operations.

The 11-week series of in-person evening sessions offer selected participants

behind-the-scenes insight into how city departments work, with interactive facility tours included. Irving 360° Civic Academy is a great networking opportunity for those who want to become more involved with the Irving community. Upon completion of the program, participants take part in a special recognition ceremony with City leadership and the City Council.

Designed to increase community engagement, this program is offered by the City of Irving at no cost to participants.

## SCHOOL, from Page 6

to teachers and peers, have opportunities to learn about social issues like race and racism at school, and feel academically challenged and interested in their courses. For example, youth who have opportunities to learn about race and racism in school were more than twice as likely to feel a sense of postsecondary readiness compared to students without those opportunities. And those who felt a high degree of interest in their classes were five times more likely to report a high degree of readiness for life after high school.

### Students' Wellbeing and Sense of Connection

As part of the survey, stu-

dents were asked to indicate how connected they feel to their classmates, teachers, peers in their community, and other adults at school and in their communities. Overall, levels of connectedness were low, with more than half of students indicating feeling "not at all" or "only a little" connected across each of these relationships.

Even when controlling for demographics, students attending school remotely were almost twice as likely to report feeling "not at all" or "only a little" connected to their teachers compared to youth attending all or mostly in-person.

The data also suggest

that many young people are experiencing poor or declining mental health. Almost 3 in 4 surveyed high schoolers (72%) reported a poor or decreased sense of mental health in the past 30 days, indicating that they feel happy, were able to concentrate, or that they were playing a useful part in things, "much less than usual" or "not at all." More than half of respondents (58%) reported feeling signs of distress "much more than usual" (e.g., feeling unhappy and depressed, constantly under strain, or losing much sleep over worry).

The report makes four recommendations for supporting young people now and in the coming years:

- Schools should address student mental health by partnering directly with mental health service providers and embracing a more holistic understanding of wellbeing.

- Schools and districts should support comprehensive and inclusive classroom discussions about the history of race and racism in the U.S and develop adult capacity to teach about race and racism and non-white histories and experiences.

- Schools and their com-

munity partners should support postsecondary success through relevant content and pathways planning.

- District and school leaders should center relationships in school structures and practices to strengthen students' connections with peers and teachers.

The report also recommends state and district leaders prioritize support for high school students in the allocation of their federal recovery funds.

The full report is avail-

able at <https://www.americaspromise.org/resource/where-do-we-go-next>.

America's Promise Alliance and Research for Action conducted the survey over a six-week period in March and April 2021 to a national sample (n=2,439) of young people ages 13-19 who are enrolled in high school in the United States. The full report includes a complete description of the study methods. This research was generously supported by AT&T.

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## Flower Mound area Dems host first Pride Celebration in Flower Mound

FLOWER MOUND, — The Flower Mound Area Democrats (FMAD) staged the first Pride Celebration in Flower Mound at Parker Square from 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday, June 26. The celebration included a yoga session, speeches, rock painting, makeup demos, a chalk walk, and live music by Sara Pray.

Turnout for the event was excellent — it is estimated that a minimum of 50 attended. Adults, children and dogs enjoyed the event designed to support the LGBTQ+ community. Flower Mound Mayor Derek France appeared, added his name to the chalk walk and invited others to come on Facebook.

A well-attended yoga session was led by Debbie Simon from 8:30-9:30 a.m. At 10 a.m. FMAD Chair Dru Murray welcomed attendees saying the LGBTQ+ community includes those who are “our respected co-workers and leaders, beloved family members, cherished friends, and friendly neighbors. They are Americans who should not have to fight for their rights.” An-



From left: Delia Parker-Mims, Paige Dixon, Kim Payne and Kimber Fox all enjoyed the Pride Celebration. (Courtesy photo)

gel Simone, a transgender woman, told her audience about all the changes she has undergone in her fight to “be who I am.” Then, a transgender youth and the parents of transgender and gay children testified about their journeys. One transgender youth noted that he had been subjected to bullying at school but felt welcome support at the Pride Celebration.

Besides FMAD, Creekside Christian Church, Congregation Kol Ami, Denton Together, and Powered by People also had tables with representatives.

Much gratitude must be extended to Events Chair Sandra Weinstein and com-

mittee members Sara Pray and Brittini Kelly, FMAD secretary, who worked diligently with Sandra to plan and execute this event.

Thanks must also be given to Vice-Chair Stephanie Turner; Vice-Chair Communications Debbie Simon, Vice-Chair Recruitment Antonella Longo, Sergeant-of Arms Beth Tuttass and Treasurer Emily Allgier for their great efforts.

The Flower Mound Area Democrats disseminate Democratic ideals and values in and around Flower Mound through grassroots organization, education and activism.

## Pride Month means Black Pride, too

By Julianne Malveaux  
NNPA Contributor

June is Pride Month, commemorating the violent police raid on the Stonewall Inn on June 28, 1969, when GLBTQ activists fought abusive police officers who beat gay men, lesbians, and those who cross-dressed. So-called law enforcement also participated in blackmail and extortion against those who were closeted. It took fifty years, until June 2019, for the New York City police commissioner to apologize for the raid. While the GLBTQIA community has increased visibility and acceptance, there is also the putrid and hateful resistance to the very existence of this community.

In a tiny Texas town, a

bakery that offered Rainbow cookies in honor of Pride Month faced a detestable backlash when a patron who ordered five dozen cookies, a sizeable order for a small family-run bakery, canceled their order (having not paid for it) because they felt that a Facebook recognition of Pride month was “gay propaganda.”

In Jacksonville, Florida, a planned bridge lighting in honor of Pride Month was threatened, some say over intergovernmental jurisdictional issues, while others say it was simple homophobia. In a Washington, DC suburb, a teacher says he violates his religion to refer to young people by their preferred pronouns. He was fired, and he sues saying that it violates his

faith for him to be courteous and compassionate to others. The court agrees with him, and he is headed back to the classroom, intolerant as ever. These are incidents that have bubbled into the national consciousness, but there are others that go unreported. The bottom line is that hate — racism, homophobia, and more — thrives in our nation, and few are prepared to stop it.

Police violence is at the root of Pride Month, just as it is at the foundation of the Black Lives Matter Movement. The Movement for Black Lives has been firmly and fiercely supportive of GLBTQIA rights, especially sensitive to the rights of trans people, focusing on

See PRIDE, Page 9



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# Newly freed, Bill Cosby urges Black Press to 'push forward'

By Stacy M. Brown  
NNPA Senior National  
Correspondent

The Pennsylvania Supreme Court's ruling to vacate Bill Cosby's conviction is not only about vindication for the comedian.

For Cosby, it is now about helping other Black men who were falsely accused.

He told the Black Press in an exclusive telephone conversation just hours after his release from a prison outside of Philadelphia.

"This is an opportunity that the Black Press, the writers, the men, and the women have now an opportunity with great intelligence, with great foresight, with great after sight, not just about Mr. Cosby, it is about what you saw, it is about what you know, and you must tell it, and you must be believed, and you have to put it in a way a level of intelligence," Cosby insisted.

He said it's important that the NAACP's Crisis Magazine also reports the truth of his case because it could assist many falsely accused African Americans who don't have the noto-



Former prosecutor Bruce Castor exclusively told the Black Press that Cosby should never have been tried because of a deal he reached with the superstar a decade prior. (Photo: Getty Images / NNPA)

riety or the means to fight their cases.

The National Newspaper Publishers Association closely monitored both of Cosby's trials in Pennsylvania, and not surprisingly, the reporting done by the Black Press of America proved far different from mainstream media's accounts.

For instance, the Black Press regularly reported on the egregious behavior of trial court Judge Steven O'Neill, District Attorney Kevin Steele, and several lawyers who openly coached witnesses while they were giving testimony.

The Black Press also reported that jurors in Cosby's first trial initially voted

to acquit the comedian but was ordered by Judge O'Neill to deliberate further. That first trial ended in a hung jury, despite Cosby's team declining to put on a defense.

Former prosecutor Bruce Castor exclusively told the Black Press that Cosby should never have been tried because of a deal he reached with the superstar a decade prior.

Castor also called into question the credibility of Andrea Constand, the lone alleged victim in the case.

"What is happening to Bill Cosby is a travesty, a miscarriage of justice," Castor said.

The state Supreme Court backed up Castor in over-

turning the conviction.

"By publicly announcing that appellant William Cosby would not be charged with any crimes related to Andrea Constand — a decision apparently made, in part, to force Cosby to testify in Constand's future anticipated civil suit — former Montgomery County District Attorney Bruce Castor intended to, and in fact did, force Cosby to give up his Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination," Justice Kevin Dougherty wrote.

"Then, years later, Castor's successor used the damaging evidence Cosby turned over in the civil case to convict him of the same criminal offenses he had previously been induced to believe were off the table. I am constrained to agree with the majority that due process does not permit the government to engage in this type of coercive bait-and-switch."

Justice David Wecht further broke down the reason for overturning Cosby's conviction.

"In 2005, Montgomery County District Attorney Bruce Castor learned that Andrea Constand had re-

ported that William Cosby had sexually assaulted her in 2004 at his Cheltenham residence. Along with his top deputy prosecutor and experienced detectives, District Attorney Castor thoroughly investigated Constand's claim," Justice Wecht wrote.

"In evaluating the likelihood of a successful prosecution of Cosby, the district attorney foresaw difficulties with Constand's credibility as a witness based, in part, upon her decision not to file a complaint promptly. D.A. Castor further determined that a prosecution would be frustrated because there was no corroborating forensic evidence and because testimony from other potential claimants against Cosby likely was inadmissible under governing laws of evidence."

The judge continued:

"The collective weight of these considerations led D.A. Castor to conclude that, unless Cosby confessed, 'there was insufficient credible and admissible evidence upon which any charge against Mr. Cosby related to the Constand incident could be proven beyond a reasonable

doubt."

NNPA President and CEO Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr., said the Black Press continues to cover the Cosby matter because of the tremendous interest of Black America to see justice done.

"Today's decision by the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania emphasizes the importance of what the NNPA has been doing about the Cosby case," Dr. Chavis exclaimed.

"As I visited Cosby in prison in Pennsylvania, I witnessed firsthand the strength of his spirit and affirmation of his innocence. Yet, it took the great work of his lawyers and the growing sentiment in the court of public review that enabled the Supreme Court to make this historic decision.

"I know from personal experience, and it is very difficult to have an alleged criminal conviction overturned by appellate courts. But now, like what happened to the Wilmington Ten in the 1970s and 1980s, we have the Bill Cosby case today as a reminder of the systemic racism and injustice in America's criminal justice system."

## PRIDE, from Page 8

the trans women who are exponentially more likely to be murdered than others. But with police violence as the common root of two vital movements, why is there so little visible collaboration between those communities). Gay pride is Black pride, too. Let's call the roll of Black GLBTQIA leaders and thinkers — Bayard Rustin, Pauli Murray, Audre Lorde, James Baldwin, so many others. And let's look at hate and hate crime from an intersectional perspective and solutions from that same place.

Pride Month has to be about Black Pride, too, about embracing all LG-BTQIA identities. After all, as we experience major demographic shifts, the population, and the electorate, are increasingly diverse. We need to see the

intersectional in our commemorations, celebration, and more. And we need to be vocal about our opposition to hate and hateful behavior no matter how it is directed. For example, in an ideal world, the NAACP would have bought some Juneteenth cookies (and maybe they still will) from the Confections bakery in Lufkin, Texas.

Our task is not to respond to each hateful incident but to build a movement that rejects hate. And our mission is to do it "at a time such as this" when the haters empower many who are fearful of inevitable change. Now is a time for a mass movement against racism, homophobia, sexism, and hate. It begins when we know our histories and share them. It starts when we acknowledge that

Gay Pride Month is about Black Pride, too, that Women's History is not White Women's History, Native American History is not a footnote, and hatred is contemptuous.

The carte blanche that so-called "officers of the law" have to terrorize communities they don't like is especially contemptuous. The same way they bullied gay folks in the 1950s and 60s is the same way they terrorize Black communities today. Building on Stonewall's history, the GLBTQIA communities should be some of the most vital voices supporting the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act.

Dr. Dorothy Irene Height was fond of speaking of collective strength. She would say, if I tap you with my finger, you may never feel it, but if my fingers turn into a fist and I tap

you then, you'll feel it. If Black folks and LGBTQIA folks join with others, perhaps we can stop the hate. The folks who patronized

Celebrations Bakery in the face of hate put a firewall between ugly and love. They are the fist Dr. Height referenced. Are we part of

the fist?

Dr. Julianne Malveaux is a DC based economist and author. [JulianneMalveaux.com](http://JulianneMalveaux.com)

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## Redbox to distribute upcoming basketball feature from Nick Cannon

/PRNewswire/ -- Redbox Entertainment has acquired the North American distribution rights to SHE BALL, a feature written, produced, and directed by Nick Cannon. The film will be released simultaneously in theaters and widely available On Demand including Redbox on August 6.

SHE BALL follows the love of basketball through the struggles of Avery Watts (Cannon), who enlists the help of a women's streetball league to help him save the embattled Inglewood Community Center he manages, all while trying to raise his seven-year-old daughter.

The film stars Nick Cannon, Bryan 'Birdman' Williams, Chris Brown, Cedric the Entertainer, DC



Nick Cannon and Cedric the Entertainer star in "She Ball" available August 6 in theaters and On Demand.

Young Fly, Evan Ross, Faizon Love, and Rebecca De Mornay. The movie also features athletes from the WNBA, Ball Up, and the Basketball Beauties League, including Melody Rae, and Jaliyah Manuel. K.D. Aubert, Luenell, and Marla Gibbs also star in the film.

"Nick Cannon, one of the most prolific Black voices in our industry, has created a feature that truly captures the spirit of our unique

times with SHE BALL," said Galen Smith, CEO of Redbox. "SHE BALL tackles the critical issues of race and justice facing our nation today in an enlightening and entertaining way."

"Seeing this project come to life with my incredibly talented and committed team has been nothing but rewarding, powerful and, most importantly – fun!", says SHE BALL's writer, producer, director and star, Nick Cannon. "I believe

this film conveys a strong message about the importance of aligning with today's racial and social justice movements and fight for equality; while also taking us through a resonant example of someone in the community trying to make ends meet. I'm excited to partner with Galen and Redbox on this project to ensure the film reaches a wide audience who will hopefully enjoy taking the journey with Avery!"

SHE BALL is produced by Nick Cannon, Bryan 'Birdman' Williams, Chris Brown, Roger Ubina, Demetrius Spencer and Ben-

jamin Sumpter. Executive producers are Michael Goldman, and Robert H. Keetch.

SHE BALL is the latest in a string of acquisitions from Redbox that includes THE LAST SON (Sam Worthington), CAPONE (Tom Hardy), SHADOW IN THE CLOUD (Chloë Grace Moretz and Nick Robinson), SAS: RED NOTICE (Sam Heughan and Ruby Rose), and AMERICAN TRAITOR: THE TRUE STORY OF AXIS SALLY (Al Pacino and Meadow Williams). It also comes on the heels of Redbox's venture with

John Wick producer Basil Iwanyk, to form Asbury Park Pictures, which is programming a slate of high-concept action and thriller films over the next few years. The film is part of the "Redbox Original" slate of theatrical movies aimed at Redbox's 40 MM U.S. customers.

Redbox has engaged Vertical Entertainment as its distribution partner for the feature. The deal was negotiated by Marc Danon, Head of Original Content for Redbox Entertainment. Nick Cannon is repped by David Gross and Jeff Klein at CAA.

## Brag House to Host Super Smash Bros Texas Loyalty Cup Tournament Powered by McDonald's

Brag House, a subscription-based platform focused on connecting the next generation of gamers through community-based eSports experiences, announces the 2021 Super Smash Bros™ Texas Loyalty Cup powered by McDonald's. Beginning on July 6 and continuing with eight days of gaming over three weeks, the live-streamed tournament features a series of Super

Smash Bros™ games between 10 Texas universities who will compete for the National Championship, claiming bragging rights and \$1,000 in McDonald's Arch Cards. Brag House is known for high-stakes gaming competitions with commentary from shoutcasters, trash talking and bragging in the form of "placing brags."

"We're excited to be partnering with the McDonald's

operators in North Texas and Greater Houston, especially given McDonald's loyal fanbase," said Lavell Juan, CEO and co-founder of Brag House. "The 2021 Super Smash Bros Texas Loyalty Cup should set a new precedent in the gaming industry as it goes more mainstream and attracts casual gamers. Together, we will create an unforgettable

See GAMERS, Page 14

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**Cynt Marshall, Dallas Mavericks / CEO**

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# OP-ED: Insurance giant prioritizing profits over patients

By Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis Jr.  
NNPA, President and CEO

In the past year, a reckoning has happened across the country. What Black people and other communities of color have known for years, our White brothers and sisters are starting to learn. Our country is plagued with systemic racism that runs through industries across the nation. Most concerning is the deep roots it has within the American healthcare system. It's time that we shine a light on this and stop letting insurance companies get away with it.

Health insurance companies have a long-proven pattern of exploiting and discriminating against people of color in this coun-

try. As I wrote in an op-ed in The Hill in April 2020, "Minority and low-income Americans suffer from a significant lack of access to quality health care. They are also more likely to not have health insurance and are often hit with surprise medical bills they cannot afford." Now, insurance companies are at it again by prioritizing their own profits rather than the health and well-being of all Americans.

One of the most recent acts of insurance company greed happened with UnitedHealthcare, the nation's largest insurance provider. Just recently, the insurance giant announced it would no longer cover patients' nonurgent visits to the emergency room re-

actively. Yes, you read that correctly. An American insurance company is no longer going to cover American patients who incorrectly self-diagnose and seek emergency treatment.

With a year of one public health crisis after another, UnitedHealthcare is creating an extra barrier to entry for patients accessing care. As pointed out by the American College of Emergency Physicians, there is a fear that "the change will cause patients to avoid using emergency rooms because they will be responsible for their hospital bills when UnitedHealthcare rejects them." Because many patients were already fearful of visiting the hospital during the COVID-19, there was a rise in cases

of "out-of-hospital cardiac arrest and associated poor health outcomes," as reported in Health Affairs by researchers from the M.I.T. Sloan School of Management and unsurprisingly, this rise was particularly seen in low-income neighborhoods.

As with most corporate decisions, the effects of this policy will inevitably affect our nation's most vulnerable populations the most. In fact, according to a 2017 University of Maryland School of Medicine study, Black Americans use the emergency room more often than any other racial group.

To put that simply, UnitedHealthcare's policy is directed at those who visit emergency rooms, and

Black Americans are the most likely demographic group to visit the emergency room. A coincidence? I doubt it.

Patients should not be expected to correctly self-diagnose their health issue before visiting the emergency room.

Patients look to medical professions to diagnose and treat health problems; putting the burden back onto patients is unacceptable.

While the policy was scheduled to take effect on July 1, 2021, public backlash led to UnitedHealthcare's new stance that it should not go into effect until "the end of the national public health emergency period." The reality is that for the Public Health Emergency (PHE) period is set

to expire on July 20, 2021, if it is not renewed. So, the delay announcement was really just for show, and may not do anything in terms of ending this policy.

UnitedHealthcare should not get away with this. We must speak out and advocate for those who do not have a platform to speak for themselves. Those with chronic conditions, from low income and minority communities deserve to seek emergency health care without fear of racial discrimination and indebteding themselves or their families.

*Benjamin F. Chavis Jr. is president and chief executive of the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) based in Washington, DC.*

## SUNRISE, from Page 5

López Estrada.

"Biden, I voted for you because I thought I was securing my future but everyday since inauguration I've woken up with the same fears. Your decision to work with the same people who won't upgrade Texas' power network to save us from blackouts this summer is a slap in

the face. Deliver on your promises so I can have a future doing meaningful

work like fixing our power grid," said 19 year old marcher Ishan Gupta.

Sunrise demands Biden:

- Stop negotiating with moderates and the GOP on climate jobs legislation and fight for what the people need.

- Support Ed Markey and AOC's Civilian Climate Corps that provides 1.5 million good jobs.

- Take the first step towards climate justice by

revoking the Formosa Plastics permit in St. James Parish, LA.

Activists marched for six weeks starting from the Superdome in New Orleans and highlighting issues of injustice along the way like a \$9.5 billion plastics facility in St. James Parish, LA.

This was the third Sunrise Movement escalated action directly targeting federal politicians in recent weeks including Biden at the White House and Speaker Pelosi's San Fran-

cisco home. Sunrise Movement used this protest as a call to action for an even larger rally in DC on June 28. Sunrise Dallas activ-

ist Javier Enriquez spoke alongside Representatives Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Jamaal Bowman, and Cori Bush at the rally outside the

White House, right before Sunrise Movement members physically blockaded all White House entrances and exits.

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Game #	Game Name / Odds	\$	Official Close of Game	End Validations Date
2261	<b>\$200 Million Ca\$h</b> Overall Odds are 1 in 3.39	\$50	7/4/21	12/31/21
2205	<b>Instant Jackpot</b> Overall Odds are 1 in 3.89	\$5	7/9/21	1/5/22
2225	<b>Triple 333s</b> Overall Odds are 1 in 4.12	\$2	7/21/21	1/17/22
2147	<b>\$100 Grand</b> Overall Odds are 1 in 3.89	\$5	7/21/21	1/17/22
2260	<b>Lady Luck 7</b> Overall Odds are 1 in 4.39	\$5	7/21/21	1/17/22
2244	<b>Mega Loteria</b> Overall Odds are 1 in 3.54	\$10	7/21/21	1/17/22
2271	<b>Cool Riches</b> Overall Odds are 1 in 3.76	\$10	7/21/21	1/17/22
2298	<b>Million Dollar Loteria</b> Overall Odds are 1 in 3.27	\$20	7/30/21	1/26/22

Texaslottery.com is the official source for all pertinent game information. Game closing procedures may be initiated for documented business reasons. These games may have prizes unclaimed, including top prizes. In addition, game closing procedures will be initiated when all top prizes have been claimed. During closing, games may be sold even after all top prizes have been claimed. Must be 18 or older to purchase a ticket. For help with a gambling problem, ncpgambling.org. © 2021 Texas Lottery Commission. PLAY RESPONSIBLY.

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# President Biden signs bipartisan bill to curb predatory lending

By Charlene Crowell

In recent years, consumer finance protections withered through a series of harsh attacks that either outright rejected or significantly diminished financial guard rails in the marketplace. But a new consumer victory, urged by a groundswell of support from everyday people, academicians, and bicameral legislators signals an important step towards fair financial rules.

On June 30, President Joe Biden's signature ended an ill-advised rule that favored predatory loans instead of America's consumers.

"These are so called 'rent-a-bank' schemes", said President Joe Biden at the June 30 signing ceremony. "And they allow lenders to prey on veterans, seniors, and other unsuspecting borrowers tapping in the — trapping them into a cycle of debt. And the last administration let it happen, but we won't."

Days earlier on June 24, a bipartisan vote of 218-208 in the U.S. House of Representatives sent a key financial rule change to the President's desk. Just a few weeks earlier the Senate had passed the same bill with a bipartisan vote. Using authority from the Congressional Review Act, the votes sought to eliminate a



recently passed regulation. In this case, the goal was to nix the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC) "fake lender" rule issued late in the Trump Administration.

As the nation's seat of government, Capitol Hill is a place where an array of interests vies for both attention and influence. Lean-budgeted but principled public interest organizations can often find themselves disadvantaged by deep pocketed interests.

That's why it's important to acknowledge and celebrate overcoming stacked odds to forge changes that result in real life benefits for everyday people and small businesses alike. Especially for Black America and other communities of color, solid steps toward ending billion-dollar financial exploitation are particularly deserving of attention. Historically, we have already

borne the brunt of predatory greed.

"Eliminating this harmful OCC rule will prevent more people from being exposed to high-interest loans that pull borrowers down deep into debt and despair," said Center for Responsible Lending (CRL) Director of Federal Campaigns Graciela Aponte-Diaz. "Nixing the rule will curb the spread of predatory loans that target Black, Latinx, and low-income individuals — many of whom are struggling from the economic downturn. This action will allow states to protect their residents by enforcing their state interest rate laws."

As reported previously in this column, OCC's "True Lender" rule gave a green light to predatory lenders. By effectively overriding a string of state laws in almost every state enacted to prevent abusive payday, car-title, and installment

loans with explosive interest rates of more than 100% took effect in late December 2020. Payday and high-cost installment lenders paid fees to banks for use of their name and charter to dodge state interest rate laws by claiming the bank's exemption from those laws for itself.

Consumer advocates referred to the rule change as a 'Fake Lender' as the real lender is the predatory non-bank lender — not a bank.

Reactions to the successful consumer challenge soon followed. One of the first public comments came as a joint statement from two key U.S. Senators.

"Striking down the Trump 'Rent-a-Bank' rule will help prevent predatory lenders from ripping off consumers and charging loan-shark rates under deceptive terms", noted Senator Chris Van Hollen of Maryland, a member of the U.S. Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs and co-sponsor of the resolution.

"The OCC, when it allowed banks to evade state interest rate caps, betrayed hard-working families and attacked states' ability to protect their citizens from predatory loans," added Senator Sherrod Brown of Ohio, the committee's chair. "Congress showed

the people we serve that we're on their side."

For California's Congresswoman Maxine Waters, Chair of the House Financial Services Committee, the resolution rids the nation of financial rubbish.

"The Trump-era 'True Lender' rule is a back-door way for nonbanks to charge triple-digit interest rates on loans at the expense of consumers in states where voters turned out to pass interest rate cap laws," said Waters. "No wonder some call this the 'fake lender' rule."

Just how much financial harm resulted from the ill-advised rule has been documented by the National Consumer Law Center (NCLC), a member of a diverse coalition that advocated repeal.

According to NCLC, predatory small business lenders are using the fake lender rule to defend a 268% annual percentage rate (APR) rate on loans totaling \$67,000 to a Black restaurant owner in New York, where the criminal usury rate is 25%, and secured by property in New Jersey, where the legal limit is 30%. The lender pretended that the nominal participation of a bank based in Nevada justified its astronomical rate. Nevada has

no interest limits on loans.

In another example, OppLoans (also known as OppFi), an online lender offers 160% APR loans in 26 states that prohibit triple-digit rate loans. This lender has also cited the OCC's fake lender rule to defend its loan to a disabled veteran in California, where the usury rate on the loan is 24%. OppLoans is also evading state rate cap laws supported by broad majorities of voters in Arizona, Montana, Nebraska, and South Dakota. Even in states where legislatures have enacted rate caps, the fake lender rule would have essentially negated those rate cap protections.

For consumer advocates, along with their partners in the civil rights, faith, and veterans' communities, revoking the fake lender rule is a step towards a national loan rate cap of no more than 36%.

Years ago, bipartisan enactment of the Military Lending Act awarded double-digit rate cap protections for men and women in uniform. It's time for all of America to have the same financial protection.

*Charlene Crowell is a Senior Fellow with the Center for Responsible Lending. She can be reached at [Charlene.crowell@responsiblelending.org](mailto:Charlene.crowell@responsiblelending.org).*

## The expanded child tax credit needs to be permanent

By Rep. James E. Clyburn  
(D-SC) House Majority Whip

Persistent poverty is a scourge on our nation. The Covid-19 pandemic exposed the struggle those living in poverty face every day, and their plight was exacerbated by the economic impacts of the virus.

It has been my mission since coming to Congress to do everything I can to address persistent poverty. Those efforts often feel a little like the Greek myth of Sisyphus, who kept rolling the rock up the mountain only to have it roll back down when he approached

the top.

This month, we are again making progress on one significant front in the fight against poverty. American families will begin receiving monthly Child Tax Credit checks on July 15; thanks to an expansion of the popular program in the American Rescue Plan (ARP), that was signed into law by President Biden in March with only Democratic support. The Center for Poverty and Social Policy at Columbia University projects that this provision will cut the child poverty rate in half this year.

Previously the Child

Tax Credit was capped at \$2,000 and not fully available to the lowest-income families. Thanks to the ARP, the full amount of the expanded credit—now available for all households filing jointly with incomes up to \$150,000 and single parents with incomes up to \$112,500—is \$3,600 for every child under 6 years old and \$3,000 for every child ages 6-17. Starting July 15 and continuing through the end of the year, these households will receive \$300 for every child or \$250 every month for each child in those respective age ranges. The re-

mainder of the credit can be claimed when filing 2021 tax returns early next year.

Families who filed tax returns for 2019 or 2020, or who filled out the IRS Non-filers tool last year to receive an Economic Impact Payment, will get this tax relief automatically. Families who neither filed a tax return for 2019 or 2020 nor used the IRS Non-Filers tool should go online and use the IRS Child Tax Credit Non-filer Sign-up Tool to sign up today.

Eligible families who get their refunds from the IRS through direct deposit will see these payments in their

bank account; those who don't use direct deposit will receive their payments by mail.

The challenge we face with this life-changing benefit is that it is set to expire after one year. It was a temporary fix to immediately address the economic impacts of the pandemic. We know, however, that persistent poverty existed well before Covid-19, and it will continue well beyond the recovery if we don't take permanent action.

To keep this huge rock from falling back down the mountain and plunge millions of American chil-

dren back into poverty, Congress must make the expanded Child Tax Credit permanent. Doing so would be a dramatic, positive change in the life of American families and a real solution to addressing persistent poverty.

Unfortunately, just as Republicans opposed the American Rescue Plan, they also oppose extending this key provision. They don't seem to understand that stronger families produce a stronger, more productive nation. Whether or not they are persuaded

**See CHILD, Page 15**



### On-going U.S. Army Opportunity

The United States Army is hiring for over 150 different career fields.

**PART TIME OPPORTUNITIES** - 1 weekend a month, 2 weeks in the early summer. Stay local, Money for school, healthcare, paid drills and skill training, and up to \$20,000 enlistment bonus.

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Jobs in science, intelligence, combat, aviation, engineering, law and more. Contact 214-406 - 3737

Prerequisites:

- GED/High School Diploma
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### Ongoing Census Bureau

The Census Bureau conducts continuous surveys to supply the nation with important statistics on people,



places and our economy. Local field workers know their communities best, and are instrumental in conducting surveys with residents on a variety of topics. Visit [census.gov](http://census.gov) to apply.

### Ongoing City of Dallas

The City of Dallas' HR Dept is currently accepting apps for the Budget and Contract Administrator position.

Bachelor's degree in a business/public administration, human resources or healthcare administration field, plus 7 yrs exp.

For more info and to apply, visit: <http://bit.ly/2NcCfVP>.

### Ongoing House of Blues

Want a cool job in live music? House of Blues Dallas is hiring! Spruce up your resume and join us on Monday, August 26th for a Job Fair in our Cambridge Room from 1-5PM. All departments are hiring. View job openings at <http://livenationentertainment.com/careers>.

## Local organization offers skills development, family assistance for underserved residents

RBOC, Inc., a local nonprofit is offering job training with the assistance of the Texas Workforce Commission through its designation as a career development center.

With the opening up of businesses following pandemic lockdowns, many people are looking to return to work. For a growing number, this means finding new jobs as their previous positions no longer exists.

Workforce training supported by the Texas Workforce Commission includes; appliance career academy (installation and repair), building maintenance and housekeeping, entrepreneurial classes, general office skills, and an introduction of plumbing.

"RBOC is an organization that serves youth and adults in mentoring and job training skills in which allows individuals to become self-sufficient," the organization said in a statement.

"The new career advancements will allow individuals to overcome the barriers of joblessness and become gainfully employed in the workforce. The program has conducted work source employment and provided jobs for students."

Business resources available through RBOC include a notary public, resume writing assistance, GED and tutoring classes as well as dealing with family matters, soft skills and managing conflict.

RBOC, INC., (ReBuilding Our Community) is a nonprofit organization that provides business and technical training and other resources to children, youth and families that are underserved.

The goal of the organization is to teach, train, and mentor children, youth and families that are low-to-moderate income individuals.

als.

The areas of services include business and vocational training, and tutoring and educational services for the community.

Furthermore, RBOC 's says its mission is to provide family outreach services that will strengthen family values.

"We will make every effort to meet the needs of our community by providing training, mentoring, job

placement contacts, affordable housing connections, and educational programs," RBOC says in its mission statement. "We vow to give valuable resources and training that will help enrich and encourage families and the community."

The organization can be reached for more information at (972) 850-9709 or (214) 809-4329. The agency website is [www.rboc97inc.org](http://www.rboc97inc.org).



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### NAN Chapter President

The National Action Network is looking for a President for its upcoming Dallas chapter. This is a volunteer position that requires an activist heart and an interest in civil rights.

The President:

- Presides at meetings and acts as Chairman/Chairwoman of the Executive Committee.
- Appoints all committees not directly elected by the Chapter.
- Between meetings of the Executive Committee and subject to the approval thereof, exercises executive authority on behalf of the Chapter.
- The President shall be an ex-officio member of all committees.
- Shall work with other members of the Executive Committee to develop a program agenda for a defined fiscal year.
- Acknowledges he/she is the primary force within the Chapter in establishing a working relationship and communication with the National and Regional Office(s); ensures that these offices receive all reports, including quarterly reports, and reports of elections.
- Is familiar with pertinent governing documents including: The NAN by-laws and Chapter rules.

Interested parties should contact Robert D. Bush, president of the Las Vegas Chapter, at (702) 626-0158.



**BETHEL BIBLE FELLOWSHIP, CARROLLTON (A NEW PLACE TO BELONG)**

**NOTICE:** *New You, Pastor Woodson serves the community by providing “Professional Therapy and Counseling Services” on a “Sliding Fee” scale. To schedule an appointment call the Pastoral Counseling Center at 972-526-4525 or email the church at [www.bethelbiblefellowship.org](http://www.bethelbiblefellowship.org)*

*Note: Until further notice, all services at Bethel church will be via Video-Conferencing and perhaps other churches as well; log on individual churches websites for details. See Bethel’s website [www.bethelbiblefellowship.org](http://www.bethelbiblefellowship.org) for their details because of the Coronavirus.*

**July 8, 9:45 am**  
Please join us in our quiet time, “Prayer and Medita-

tion” followed by Morning Worship. You will be blessed and inspired as we celebrate service to God, our community and all mankind.

**July 11, 7 pm**  
You are invited to join us via video-conferencing for Prayer and Bible Study from 7 to 8:45 pm as we pray for the world’s Coronavirus. In Wednesday’s Bible we are studying Celebration of Discipline by Richard J. Foster, Chapter 10. Dial in Phone # 346 248 7799, Meeting I.D. 256 518 4741.

Dr. Terrance Woodson, Senior Pastor  
1944 E. Hebron Parkway  
Carrollton, TX 75007  
972-492-4300  
[www.bethelbiblefellowship.org](http://www.bethelbiblefellowship.org)

**FELLOWSHIP CHRISTIAN CENTER CHURCH**

**IN ALLEN “THE SHIP” We are Saving You a Seat!**

Check “The Ship’s” website for details of their services until further notice because of the Coronavirus.

July 11, You are invited to join us in our Sunday Morning Services as we praise and worship God in the Joycie Turner Fellowship Hall, followed by our Worship Services; and bring someone with you, you will be blessed. It’s for God’s glory and honor.

**July 14, 7 pm**  
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.

Dr. W. L. Stafford, Sr., Ed. D.

Senior Pastor  
2450 K Avenue #300  
Plano, TX 75074  
972-379-3287  
[www.theship3c.org](http://www.theship3c.org)  
[www.visitF3c.org](http://www.visitF3c.org)

**INSPIRING BODY OF CHRIST CHURCH, Let’s Go Fishing! MATTHEW 4:19**

*“Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the Lord Almighty, “and see if I will not open the windows of heaven and pour you out a blessing that there will not be room to receive.”*

**- Malachi 3:8-10**

Check “IBOC’s” website for details of their services until further notice because of the Coronavirus.

**July 9, 7 pm**  
All men are invited to Men’s Ministry meeting each Friday night at 8 pm, (IBOC promotes proactive

male leadership.)

**July 11, 10 a.m.**  
Join us for our Morning Service; and don’t forget to invite family and friends to join us as we celebrate our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

**July 12, 7 pm**  
You are invited to Monday School to see what God has to say to us in His Holy Word.  
  
Pastor Rickie Rush  
7701 S Westmoreland Road  
Dallas, TX 75237  
972-372-4262  
[www.Ibocchurch.org](http://www.Ibocchurch.org)

**SHILOH MBC IN PLANO (WHERE COMMUNITY BECOMES FAMILY)**

Connect to God through Shiloh, Grow in Christ through the study of the Word of God, Serve God through service to each other and the world.

Check “SMBC’s” website for details of their services until further notice because of the coronavirus.

**July 11, 8 and 11 am**  
You are invited to our Worship Services as we honor God for His goodness and faithfulness.

**July 12, 7 to 8 pm Every Monday Night**  
Sister II Sister (Women’s Mission) in the Main Fellowship Hall and the Men II Men Bible Study in the Youth Church Sanctuary (Chapel).

**July 14, 7 pm**  
You’re invited to our Wednesday’s Bible Study class; you will learn what God has to say to us. Come and 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  
972-423-6695  
[www.smbcplano.org](http://www.smbcplano.org)

## Any Pie à la Mode Is My Kind of Pie

Dr. James L. Snyder

Choices are a very important part of our everyday life. I am what I am today because of choices I made yesterday. I would like to blame someone else, but the truth of the matter is, I am what I am because of my choices.

I must confess that there are a lot of bad choices I have made throughout my life. I will not name them right here, in fact, I’m trying

to forget most of them. It’s a good thing I can’t relive yesterday.

However, I have made a few choices that I have made in my life that has been very good. I don’t focus on my bad choices because I can get discouraged. But, I do focus on my good choices because that’s a real source of encouragement.

I must say that the best choice that I’ve ever made in my life was marrying the

Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. I’m really not sure it was my choice, but I will take credit for it.

While we were dating, we were once traveling with a group of people, and as we were sitting together, she said something like, “Wouldn’t it be nice to get married?”

I thought it was a rhetorical question; how was I to know it was an unofficial proposal.

In my naivety, I said, “It

sure would be nice.”

Well, in that regard, that was a choice I made.

It also was a prophecy. I did not know I was a prophet. But when I said it would be “nice,” I was precisely on target. It has been nice.

In August of this year, the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage and her husband will celebrate 50 years of marital bliss. I can’t believe it’s that long; I must’ve been very young when it took place.

But 50 years can go by very fast. So after celebrating your wedding for 49 years, what can you do that’s different for the 50th anniversary?

I hear a lot about couples having difficulties and problems and arguments in their marriage. Even some of my friends have got to the place where they just divorce as if that solves problems.

I must say that during

these 50 years of marital bliss, we have had very few arguments.

That is except for one major conflict.

Our one argument is the Broccoli/Apple Fritter controversy. Up to this point, neither of us has budged either way.

It is a good thing I didn’t know she was a broccoli-holic, or I might have had second thoughts. How any-

**See PIE, Page 15**

## GAMERS, from Page 10

Esports experience for collegiate Texas gamers and fans alike, to compete in a fun, organized way via our platform.”

The competition begins with a round of pre-qualifiers to determine the final gamer for each school. Students from two to three schools will play round-robin matches each day for the chance to represent their University in the tournament. Four schools will

play wildcard matches on July 20 to advance to the single elimination tournament bracket, and matches on July 21 and 22 will determine the Final Four and finalist pairings, culminating in a championship match on July 27. For the full tournament schedule and list of participating universities, visit <https://www.thebraghouse.com/mcdonalds-loyalty-tournament/>.

The first-ever Texas

Loyalty Cup powered by McDonald’s celebrates the new MyMcDonald’s Rewards Program, which launches nationally on July 8 and rewards loyal McDonald’s fans with points that can be redeemed for free menu items.

“The North Texas McDonald’s owner/operators are excited to partner with Brag House to bring loyal McDonald’s fans and gamers together for the Super Smash Bros™ Texas Loyalty Cup,” said Cliff John-

son, North Texas McDonald’s owner/operator. “My son and I love playing video games together and we know the tournament will be an incredible gaming experience. We can’t wait to see which school brings home the championship.”

“This tournament is sure to fuel competition amongst schools in North and Southeast Texas,” said Jonathan Miles, Houston area McDonald’s owner/operator. “As an avid gamer, recent University of Houston

alum, and the owner of the UH campus McDonald’s, I’ll be watching and rooting for the Coogs! Whose House? Coog’s House!”

Fans are incentivized to tune in and show their school pride by placing brag House’s signature form of audience interaction—making predictions and downloading the McDonald’s mobile app. Engagement during the pre-qualifiers will determine tournament seeding. Continued engagement

throughout the tournament will score the top school a tailgate party sponsored by Coca-Cola.

Tournament prizes include first place: \$1,000 in McDonald’s Arch Cards; second place: \$300 in McDonald’s Arch Cards; and third place: \$200 in McDonald’s Arch Cards. Viewers can stream the tournament live via Brag House’s app, website, Twitch, YouTube and Facebook.



# Jesus: Prince and Savior



**Sister Tarpley**  
NDG  
Religion  
Editor

*Him, God has exalted to His right hand to be Prince and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.*

- Acts 5:31.

After being released from prison, Peter told the Jewish leaders that Jesus was the Prince of salvation and the Savior of Israel.

Peter understood his audience—the Jewish leaders—

who were still looking for the Messiah. They had rejected Jesus. So Peter called Jesus Prince.

A prince is one scheduled to be king but who is not yet ruling on the throne. That's a true picture of Jesus. He is not yet ruling on the throne of Israel.

When Jesus returns to Earth in power and glory, He will be called King of kings, and He will rule on David's throne.

When Jesus first came to Earth, He offered a kingdom of inward peace and righteousness. Jesus knew that the way to influence nations was to rule the hearts of individuals. Is Jesus your

King?

Jesus is my King, and He rule my heart. I know that one day He will rule the outward affairs of all people.

"Savior" is the second title used by Peter to describe Jesus. By calling Jesus Savior, Peter was pointing the Jewish leaders back to the accomplishments of the Cross.

In His death, Jesus became the Savior of the world (John 4:42). So in this quick description of Jesus, Peter gives the Jewish leaders both a backward and a forward look.

In the past, Jesus was Savior; in the future, Jesus the Prince will become the

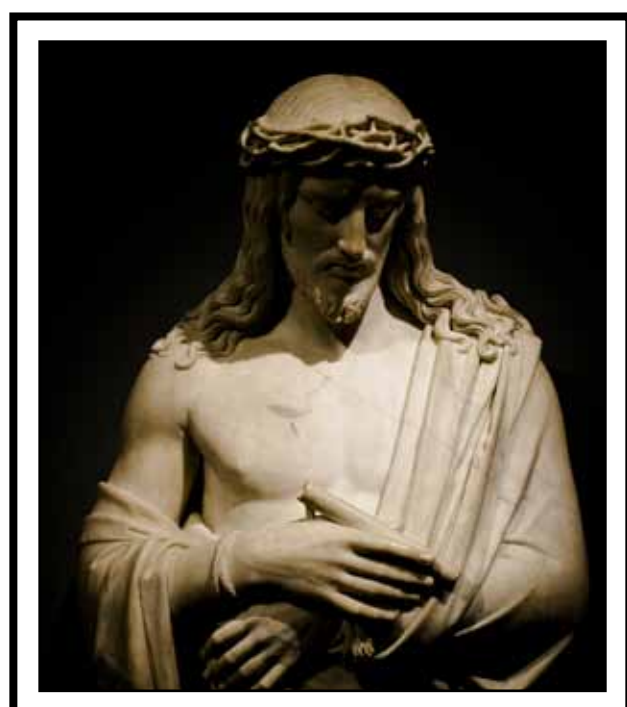
King of Israel.

Praise God for past salvation, and worship Him as the coming King of all kings.

God very Word tells us that He has given us divine power to live our life as He wants us to . . .

His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and goodness.

Through these He has given us His very great and precious promises, so that through them we may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desire. 2 Peter 1:3-4



Alessandro Bellone / Unsplash

## PIE, from Page 14

body can like broccoli is beyond my comprehension.

On her side, if she knew I was an Apple Fritter-holic, she might have had second thoughts as well.

As much as I can remember, this has been the only controversy that we've had.

In retrospect, it is a good thing I didn't know about this, and probably it's good that she didn't know about me. That controversy could've kept us from getting married and then look at what we would have missed in life.

She once suggested that we switch, and for one week, I eat broccoli every day, and she will eat an Apple fritter every day.

I tried to consider that but only for one half of a second. So if we did that, I would be the great loser, and she would get to enjoy an Apple Fritter everyday for a week. That didn't sound fair to me.

As we celebrate our 50th wedding anniversary, we still will hang on to these personal preferences.

Just because there are some things that we don't agree on doesn't mean there are not some things that we actually do agree on.

For example, this past week, we decided to go out for supper at a local restaurant. It's been a long week and many things were happening that you just can't

prepare for, so we deserved a little bit of a break.

As we got to the end of our meal, the waitress came by to see if we wanted dessert, and of course, we did.

Almost simultaneously, we said, "I'll have an apple pie à la mode," which was the featured dessert on the menu.

We looked at each other and broke out laughing. The waitress laughed with us, and then she went to get the dessert.

It was then I realized there are things that do bring us together. I never thought of it before, but apple pie à la mode was the one thing that brought us together and the one thing that we could agree on.

We've known each other

for about 50 years, and I just realized the one thing that we do have in common. So we talked about it for a few moments, and the topic was, "What was your favorite pie à la mode?"

For me, it's tough to pick out my favorite pie. But, if there's a bad pie, I've never encountered it.

Finally, I brought it all together by saying, "Any pie à la mode is my kind of pie."

Later on, I was reminded of one of my favorite verses in the Bible. "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3).

Walking together for

50 years has been a great blessing. We don't focus on our disagreements but rather on those things that we agree on. As the years have gone by, what we agree on has become more important.

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## CHILD, from Page 12

to join the effort to address persistent poverty and strengthen American families, Democrats are working hard to make the expansion of the Child Tax Credit permanent.

Now is the time to break out of this Sisyphean struggle and sustain and build on the progress we have made

lifting a significant number of families out of poverty. The public supports these efforts.

In addition to the expanded Child Tax Credit, we must permanently extend other economic lifelines in the American Rescue Plan like the expanded Earned Income Tax Credit, Child

and Dependent Care Tax Credit, and nutrition assistance for children.

We must also provide the benefits of the Affordable Care Act's Medicaid expansion to those in the 12 states, including my home state of South Carolina, that have refused to participate. Democrats won't stop moving this boulder until we reach the top—and stay there.

### 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](mailto:religion@northdallasgazette.com)



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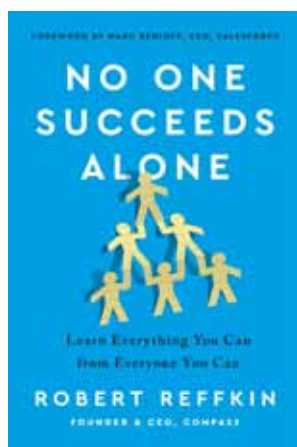
# NDG Book Review: 'No One Succeeds Alone' is a lesson to remember

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

Everything you know, you learned from Mom.

And Dad. And Grandma, Grandpa, six cousins, three playmates, a neighbor, thirty-one teachers, a coach somewhere along the line, your spouse, and a kid or two. And if you're smart, you'll keep your eyes open because everybody has something to teach you. As you'll see in "No One Succeeds Alone" by Robert Reffkin, that's the best way to get ahead.

Almost from the moment he was born, Robert Reffkin was encouraged to succeed: at bedtime, rather than wishing her son



"Sweet dreams," Reffkin's mother told him to "have big dreams."

That wasn't easy for him, though.

Reffkin's Black father abandoned his family when Reffkin was young, his

mother was a Jewish immigrant from Israel, and this mixed lineage caused Reffkin to feel "out of place my entire life," he says. Even his maternal grandparents spurned him but none of these things negatively affected Reffkin. He used them as inspiration to do better.

He was a small businessman in high school, first selling products on the bus to school, then launching a DJing business shortly after that. When it came time to apply for college, he used his successes and things he'd learned to strive for his dream college, despite that a counselor told him not to bother. His curiosity was

strong; what he absorbed helped build his businesses, including Compass, a real estate technology company.

To succeed, says Reffkin, ignore haters, naysayers, and rules that are meant to be bent. Be supportive of others, children, in particular. Thank those who support you, including your Mom, because "None of us got where we are on our own." Keep in mind that "The real rules of the game are never written down." To get help, be helpful. Don't be afraid to emulate the people you admire, or to try to copy their methods for success. And finally, do what Reffkin did with this book: "Turn your story into

a beautiful narrative that inspires others."

The saying is this: There is no I in Team. There is in "WIN," though, and that's what you get when you read "No One Succeeds Alone."

For the entrepreneur who doesn't know where to start, author Robert Reffkin offers so much advice that you may feel overwhelmed: there's something to remember, highlighted and easy to find, just about every couple pages. These things fit seamlessly into this book, more in the way that a header for a biography might, which subtly makes the story-lessons

stand out better amid the chatter here. Indeed, Reffkin indulges in a small amount of righteous humble-bragging, but he also shares enough stumbles to make his story relevant; this biographical aspect will appeal to a wide variety of readers, including C-Suiters, whether they're looking for business advice or not.

If your office is filling up again and your staff is now returning, this book might be a great way to ease back into the swing of things. For businessfolks and staff, "No One Succeeds Alone" might underscore everything you know.

## BILL, from Page 1

the benefits," White House officials noted.

"Broadband internet is the new electricity. It is necessary for Americans to do their jobs, to participate equally in school learning and health care, and to stay connected."

The Framework will drive down prices for internet service and close the digital divide by making broadband more affordable, including in low-income communities and communities of color.

It also will eliminate lead pipes and deliver clean drinking water to every household, the White House official asserted.

"Across the country, pipes and treatment plants are aging and polluted drinking water is endangering public health. There are up to 10 million homes with lead service lines and pipes. Children in up to 400,000 schools and childcare facilities are at risk of exposure to lead," the officials continued.

"Across the country, families of color are at the highest risk for lead exposure at home and in schools. Communities of color in cities like Chicago, Milwaukee, and Newark are also at particular risk."

For kids, higher exposure to lead can negatively affect academic performance, and can lead to cardiovascular disease later in life.

By some estimates, each lead service line replaced at a cost of \$5,000 per line leads to \$22,000 in health savings.

The Framework makes the largest investment in clean drinking water in American history, replacing all of the nation's lead pipes and service lines.

It also invests in more public transit options and address the backlog of repairs.

Asian American and African American workers commute by public transit at nearly 4 times the rate of white workers.

For example, low-wage Black residents in Chicago spend 70 additional minutes commuting to work than their white peers.

In New York City, the average Black resident spends 110 minutes more per week commuting to work than the average white resident.

"The Framework's historic investment in public transit – the largest federal investment in history – will reduce commute times and create more economic opportunities in communities of color," according to a White House Fact Sheet.

The Framework invests \$48.5 billion to modernize transit and improve accessibility for older Americans and people with disabilities.

Significant portions of the interstate highway system

were built through Black neighborhoods, destroying homes, schools, churches, and parks and causing lasting disconnection and disinvestment for residents who stayed.

"More broadly, historic investments in transportation infrastructure, especially highway construction, cut too many Americans off from opportunity, dividing and demolishing communities, and perpetuating economic and racial injustices," The Fact Sheet noted.

The Framework creates a first-ever program to reconnect communities divided by transportation infrastructure. The program will fund planning, design, demolition, and reconstruction of street grids, parks, or other infrastructure.

Further, the Framework will make a critical down payment on helping the more than 25 million children and thousands of bus drivers who breathe polluted air on their rides to and from school.

"Diesel air pollution is linked to asthma and other health problems that hurt our communities and cause students to miss school, particularly in communities of color and Tribal communities," officials wrote in the Fact Sheet.

The Framework will deliver more than 35,000 electric school buses nationwide, helping school districts across the country buy

clean, American-made, zero emission buses, replacing a sizable percent of the yellow school bus fleet.

It also remediates Brownfield and Superfund Sites.

The White House estimated that 26 percent of Black Americans and 29 percent of Hispanic Americans live within 3 miles of a Superfund site, a higher percentage than for Americans overall.

Proximity to a Superfund site can lead to elevated levels of lead in children's blood. Recent studies demonstrate that cleaning up these sites can lead to a decrease in blood levels by approximately 13 percent to 26 percent.

The Framework provides the full American Jobs Plan funding level of \$21 billion to create good-paying union jobs plugging orphan oil and gas wells, cleaning up abandoned mines, and remediating Brownfield and Superfund sites.

"The Framework will begin to remedy economic injustice for communities across the country that have relied on the fossil fuel industry and have been affected most by the impacts of climate change and pollution, including rural communities and communities of color," the White House offered.

It will also offer safeguards to communities of color from climate crises and extreme weather risks.

The White House officials noted that people of color are more likely to live in areas most vulnerable to flooding and other climate change-related weather events.

For example, in the wake of Hurricane Harvey, Black and Hispanic residents were twice as likely to report lost income.

Tribal lands are significantly at risk to the effects of climate change and Alaska Natives are particularly vulnerable, as they face multiple climate impacts.

The Framework invests \$52 billion in helping communities build resilience to wildfires and floods through investments in forest management and upgrades to critical infrastructure – like elevating buildings, roads, and bridges, hardening physical infrastructure, and winterizing the power grid.

And it will fund state and local infrastructure improvements and emergency response strategies, such as planning grants to support development of evacuation routes or upgrading community shelters.

The Framework will also make it easier for low-income families to buy flood insurance.

Finally, Black, Latino, Asian American and Pacific Islander, and Native communities are more likely to be burdened by pollution.

Black people are almost three times more likely to

die from asthma related causes than their white counterparts. And more than one in three – or over 23 million – Latinos in the U.S. live in counties where the air doesn't meet EPA public health standards for smog.

"The Bipartisan Infrastructure Framework helps meet this challenge by making the single largest investment in clean transmission in American history," the officials stated.

"It creates a Grid Development Authority at the Department of Energy to enable a national, clean energy power grid and funds to support activities that reduce the impacts to the electric grid, and protect communities from extreme weather, wildfire, and natural disasters."

The White House officials continued:

"It deploys long distance, high voltage transmission to enhance reliability and resilience, lower costs, and integrate the highest value clean energy resources. It invests in research and development for advanced transmission and electricity distribution technologies, and smart grid technologies that deliver flexibility and resilience.

"And, it invests more than \$22 billion in demonstration projects and research hubs for next generation technologies like advanced nuclear reactors, carbon capture for industrial plants, and green hydrogen."