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As Gun Violence Rises, Congressional Committee Plans Hearing with Gun Manufacturers

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Senior National Correspondent

A congressional oversight committee has planned a hearing to examine the role of the firearms industry in America's gun violence epidemic.

Hosted by Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D-N.Y.), the June 27 hearing also will seek steps Congress can take to hold manufacturers accountable.

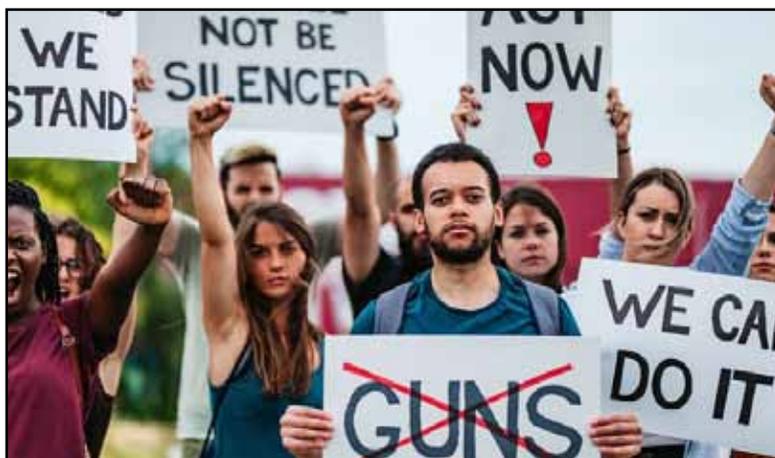
In June, President Joe Biden celebrated the passage of the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, which he called the most significant gun violence reduction legislation to pass Congress in 30 years.

"Make no mistake about it, this legislation is real progress, but more has to be done," Biden declared.

The bill enhances background checks for gun buyers under 21, provides billions of dollars for mental health services, and gives \$750 million to states to incentivize crisis intervention programs.

It also ensures that individuals convicted of domestic violence can't buy a weapon for at least five years.

After most mass shootings, so-



Hosted by Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D-N.Y.), the June 27 hearing also will seek steps Congress can take to hold manufacturers accountable. (Photo via NNPA)

cial media fills up with posts about thoughts and prayers from lawmakers and others.

Biden appeared to recognize that in his speech Monday.

"Will we match thought and prayers with action? I say yes, and that's what we're doing here today," Biden declared.

The Biden Administration promised to continue to use "all of the tools at its disposal" to address the epidemic of gun violence.

Biden's Fiscal Year 2023 budget proposes \$32 billion in additional funding to fight crime, including \$20.6 billion in discretionary funding for federal law enforce-

ment and state and local law enforcement and crime prevention programs, an increase of 11 percent over FY22 enacted (\$18.6 billion) and 18 percent over FY21 enacted (\$17.5 billion).

"With more than 300 mass shootings in the United States so far this year, and gun violence now the leading cause of death of children in America, it is clear that we are in a public health epidemic," Maloney stated.

On May 26, following the mass shootings in Uvalde, Texas, and Buffalo, New York, the committee

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House protects contraception rights

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Guns impact on Black homicide overwhelming

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Plano mayor honors student interns

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People In The News ...



Carrie Wells Ponds



Lt. Gen. Michael Langley

NDG Quote of the Week: "The impatient idealist says: 'Give me a place to stand and I shall move the earth.' But such a place does not exist. We all have to stand on the earth itself and go with her at her pace."
—Chinua Achebe

Carrie Wells Ponds

The Ponchatoula, Louisiana community honored the life of *The Drum* co-founder Carrie Wells Ponds on July 16, 2022, at the First True Love World Outreach Ministries in Ponchatoula.

Mrs. Ponds died July 9, 2022, in her home surrounded by her husband of 60 years, Eddie Ponds, and daughters Michelle and Sharon. Mrs. Ponds was born February 10, 1941, in Ponchatoula to the late Louis Wells and Charlotte Wells Jefferson. She was educated in the Tangipahoa Parish School System and gradu-



ated from Greenville Park High in 1960.

Always a dedicated mother and hard worker, she was a certified nursing assistant at Hammond Nursing Home and an early child-

hood educator at Little Oaks Day Care until she retired in the early 2000s. In 1985, she joined Eddie as co-founder of *The Drum*, the longest-published Black community newspaper in Louisiana's Florida Parishes.

Mrs. Ponds was also a founding member of the Civic Organization for People Elation (COPE) the oldest and only incorporated civic organization that worked to ensure Tasker Park became a reality for the Ponchatoula community.

She's preceded in death by her father Louis Wells; mother Charlotte Wells Jefferson; brothers Louis Wells

Jr., Johnny Wells, Percy Wells, and Charles Wells; and sister Deborah Wells Richardson.

Carrie leaves to cherish her memories her husband Eddie Ponds, daughters Michelle (Robin) Nesbitt and Sharon Ponds; grandchildren Robin "Tony" Nesbitt Jr. and Christine Nesbitt; great-grandchildren Micah Nesbitt and Robin Nesbitt III; sisters Bernice Jackson, Debbie Wells, and Priscilla Phillips; brothers Larry Wells and Sammy Mearidy; a host of nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends; and the New Zion Baptist Church Family in Poncha-

toula.

As news of her death spread, many messages of support and personal appreciation flourished.

"Words can't express how much Ms. Carrie meant to me," wrote Lisa Elam on the newspaper's obituary online.

"She took me under her wings as a young CNA @ Hammond Nursing Home. We worked side by side for years. I appreciated our talks and her words of wisdom. She would call me baby-girl. She and others hosted my first baby shower. She LOVED her family and spoke truth to life never

sugar coated words. It saddens my heart to hear of her passing, but our God knows best even when we don't understand. RIP Ms. Carrie."

Family friend Shantellia McGhee added, "Mrs. Carrie always carried a beautiful smile, and always encouraged me and my twin sister. She will be missed. My thoughts and prayers to the family during this difficult time."

The Drum began as a print publication and celebrated 500 issues in 2018. More recently, *The Drum* has joined a burgeoning community of journalism that is available worldwide on Substack.

Justine Jones

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Senior National
Correspondent

After completing a nationwide search that yielded 30 candidates, the Kenly Town Council announced Justine Jones, a Black woman, as their unanimous choice for Kenly's next Town Manager.

And while the council claimed they were "proud" of the hire, police officers and other city officials have expressed their disapproval in a mass resignation.

"I have enjoyed my time working at Kenly Police



Department and had fully intended to remain employed with the town, but unfortunately, decisions are being made which make me question what the future will hold for all town employees," Darren Pate, a

patrol officer, wrote to Police Chief Josh Gibson.

Gibson also submitted his resignation and all four of the city's full-time officers.

Two town clerks also resigned. In their resignation letters, the officers and the clerks cited a "hostile work environment."

The wording appears to be a reference to Jones, who sued her previous employer - Richland County, S.C. - for gender and racial discrimination after they fired her as manager of research.

Jones' lawsuit alleges "hostile" treatment by Richland County officers

and her supervisor and retaliation for reporting harmful behavior.

In addition, Jones claimed that Richland County failed to pay her fairly.

She said officials treated her differently due to illness and terminated her on March 30, 2015.

With a population of approximately 2,400 residents, demographics show Kenly evenly split along racial lines with 36 percent African Americans, 36 percent white, and 20 percent Hispanic.

Town council members plan to hold an emergency meeting to discuss the mass

resignation and how to replace its police chief and the four full-time officers.

"I am honored that the Council has entrusted me with the responsibility of being Kenly's next manager," Jones said following her hiring in May.

Jones has worked for in local government for more than 15 years.

She holds a bachelor's degree from Concordia University in Minnesota, a master's degree in Public Policy from the Humphrey School at the University of Minnesota, and a second master's degree in Public Administration from Baruch College in New York.

"Kenly's diversity and dynamic potential offer intriguing challenges and a promising future of growth and prosperity that I am excited to become a part of," Jones asserted.

"I welcome the challenge of overseeing the Town's operations, and I look forward to working with the Mayor, Town Council, and the talented and committed Staff of Kenly. In this short time, I have learned I will be joining a dedicated team that possesses an extensive understanding of Kenly's services. Together we will continue providing excellent services to our community."

Lt. Gen. Michael Langley

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Senior National
Correspondent

Thursday, July 28, could mark a historic day for the U.S. Marines.

For the first time in its 246-year history, the Marines could have a Black four-star general.

Lt. Gen. Michael Langley faces a confirmation hearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee.

If confirmed, he would lead all U.S. military forces in Africa as chief of U.S. Africa Command.

Officials have stated that the Shreveport, Louisiana native has earned his



stripes at each level.

A graduate of the University of Texas at Arlington and commissioned in 1985, Lt. Gen. Langley commanded at every level from platoon to the regiment - including Battery K, 5th Battalion, and 11th

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Growing the Voices of Our Future

By Layla Davidson
11th Grader
The Westside Gazette



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Aftershocks from the Supreme Court’s historic decision to nullify a woman’s nearly 50-year-old constitutional right to abort a pregnancy are already starting to impact American society. It is becoming increasingly clear that a conservative Supreme Court majority’s willingness to disregard established precedent has created a destabilizing dynamic that may extend far beyond abortion in a country already divided ideologically. Abortion services have abruptly and practically been discontinued in a few conservative

states. When the Supreme Court’s ruling was announced on Friday, some

clinics informed their patients that they would no longer be able to obtain an abortion there. Progres-

sives are becoming increasingly worried about what the court may do next. Concerns about how the decision would impact fertility treatments and even contraception are mounting.

Additionally, companies are hastily formulating plans to pay workers or expand health insurance to cover out-of-state abortion services, but they are also concerned about upsetting leaders in Republican states who are itching for a fight. However, a fresh week can usher forth additional judgments that highlight the extremism of the Supreme Court majority.

This article originally appeared in The Westside Gazette.

The Social Crisis, Black Folks and the Economy



Dr. John E. Warren
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Viewpoint

It appears that we continue to live in Charles Dickens’ “A Tale of Two Cities.” He wrote these words: “It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of light, it was the season of darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair.”

Where you fit in between “the best of times” and “the worst of times” really depends on who you are today in America. For African Americans, too many of us are still experiencing the worst of times, and things will not get better unless we decide to make them so. While America is excited about abortions and gun violence, we have been victims of the latter, with civil rights violations and voter suppression be-

ing more important than abortions to most of us. The speed with which the President moved with an Executive Order to assist the abortion issue and his mentioning of overturning the Filibuster Rule were both absent on the Voting Rights and Civil Rights is-

to get elected and whether they will commit to overturning the Filibuster Rule in the Senate.

While some say we need two more U.S. Senators so that we can break the chokehold of Senator Manchin and Senator Sinema, who vote with the

voter turnout in most primaries so far, they have been right.

Let’s remember that we, as Black people, are responsible for the Voting Rights Act, and the Civil Rights Act. We elected Obama twice and Biden once.

We are not apathetic. We are just tired. But we cannot stop to rest. As Robert Frost wrote, “The woods are dark and deep, but I have miles to go before I sleep.”

Voter Registration and Voter Turnout in all 50 States must become our Number One Priority, at all costs. More important than abortions, homelessness, high gas prices and bad Supreme Court Decisions. Let registration begin and let’s track the numbers week by week. As Rev. Ben Chavis, President of the National Newspaper Publishers Association has said, “We want 10 million new registered voters by November 2022. Let’s make this the “Best of Times” in spite of what appears to be the “Worst of Times.”

Trump and the Conservative Right are counting on a low voter turnout in November, just four months away. From the voter turnout in most primaries so far, they have been right.

Republicans on all issues, Nevertheless, it is now our turn to correct all this. Just as our votes made Joe Biden president and sent two U.S. senators to the Senate from the State of Georgia, it is now our turn to rally in every state that the Trump people are trying to “Steal” in the coming elections. We must vote out their supporters.

This means that no matter what the social issues that emerge, we must stay focused on who is seeking

Trump and the Conservative Right are counting on a low voter turnout in November, just four months away. From the

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House passes legislation to ensure contraception rights

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Senior National
Correspondent

Democrats in the House and a handful of Republicans voted to pass legislation to codify the right to contraception in the United States.

The 228-195 vote seeks to protect contraception rights against future Supreme Court decisions following the controversial ruling in June to overturn *Roe v. Wade*.

Sponsored by North Carolina Democratic Rep. Kathy Manning, the Right to Contraception Act establishes the right for indi-



Photo via NNPA

viduals to obtain and use contraceptives.

It permits health care providers to prescribe or provide contraceptives.

“The right to contraception is a fundamental right, central to a person’s privacy, health, wellbeing, dignity, liberty, equality, and ability to participate in the

social and economic life of the nation,” Manning wrote in the bill.

She noted that the Supreme Court repeatedly recognized the constitutional right to contraception.

Following the high court’s *Roe* decision, some signaled other opinions

would come that would hamper rights like contraception and interracial and same-sex marriages.

“In future cases, we should reconsider all of this Court’s substantive due process precedents, including *Griswold*, *Lawrence*, and *Obergefell*,” Justice Clarence Thomas wrote one day before the court abolished *Roe*.

In that 1965 *Griswold* case, the court voted 7-2 to strike down a law restricting married couples’ access to birth control. The majority stated that such statutes are impermissible because they violate the right to privacy for citizens.

Manning said the right to contraception has repeatedly been recognized internationally as a human right.

The bill’s text noted that the United Nations Population Fund had published several reports outlining family planning as a fundamental human right that advances women’s health, economic empowerment, and equality.

Further, the World Health Organization internationally recognizes access to contraceptives as advancing other human rights such as the right to life, liberty, expression, health, work, and education.

“Contraception is safe,

essential health care, and access to contraceptive products and services is central to people’s ability to participate equally in economic and social life in the United States and globally,” Manning asserted.

“Contraception allows people to make decisions about their families and their lives. Contraception is key to sexual and reproductive health. It is critical to preventing unintended pregnancy, is highly effective in preventing and treating a wide array of often severe medical conditions and decreases the risk of certain cancers.”

NNPA Pres. Chavis and Sen. Cassidy unite for improving Black maternal health

As a liberal Democrat, Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis Jr., has for decades actively sought to address the various social inequities faced in communities of color across the nation and in Washington, DC.

As a conservative Republican Sen. William Cassidy of Louisiana has done the same to advance improving the quality of life of all Americans.

Cassidy and Dr. Chavis, the renowned civil rights leader and President and CEO of the National Newspaper Publishers Associa-

tion (NNPA), also share the common goal of bringing to light – and ending – the maternal health and mortality rate that disproportionately affects Black women.

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, approximately 700 women die from pregnancy or childbirth-related complications yearly in the United States.

The agency reported that Black women are three to four times more likely to experience a pregnancy or childbirth-related death than white women.

“The two of us have been actively involved in addressing various social inequities for decades, from the formidable days of the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s to today, in our communities and our nation’s capital. In addition, our two families have had a positive history in the medical, health care, and environmental fields,” Cassidy and Dr. Chavis wrote in an op-ed for *The Hill*.

Though it’s rare – some say nearly impossible – to witness a liberal Democrat and conservative Repub-

lican joining forces, the alignment demonstrates the severity of America’s maternal mortality rate.

“What really served as a catalyst that enabled us to initiate a bipartisan public unity and resolve to work together going forward to address the issues of maternal mortality and other matters that impact the quality of life of all Americans was simply our mutual impatience with the current

widening, unproductive partisan divide in Washington, D.C., and throughout nearly all the state legislatures,” Cassidy and Dr. Chavis continued.

Most observers agreed that the bipartisan effort is vital in combating the still-rising rates of maternal health and mortality disparities, particularly among African American women.

Vice President Kamala Harris has taken the lead

in addressing the maternal health crisis.

In her keynote address to the NAACP convention in Atlantic City this month, Harris reiterated that Black women are three times as likely to die from pregnancy-related causes.

“So, we have elevated, for an obvious reason, the issue of maternal health so that it will be a national

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Marines in support of Operations WILDFIRE in the Western United States.

He also helmed battalion and regimental commands in 12th Marines forward deployed in Okinawa, Japan; and the 201st Regional Corps Advisory Command-Central and Regional Support Command – Southwest in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM in Afghanistan.

As a General Officer, his command assignments included Deputy Command-

ing General, II Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) and Commanding General, 2d Marine Expeditionary Brigade; Commander, Marine Forces Europe, and Africa; and Deputy Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Atlantic, and Deputy Commander, Marine Forces Command and Marine Forces Northern Command.

Lt. Gen. Langley has served more than 35 years in the U.S. Marines and assumed command of the

U.S. Marine Corps Forces Europe and Africa a year ago.

According to his military-issued biography, Lt. Gen. Langley’s formal military education includes U.S. Marine Corps Amphibious Warfare School and College of Naval Command and Staff.

He holds multiple advanced degrees, including a Master’s in National Security Strategic Studies from the U.S. Naval War College and Strategic Studies from the U.S. Army War College.

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Study finds nearly 90% of Black homicide victims were killed with guns

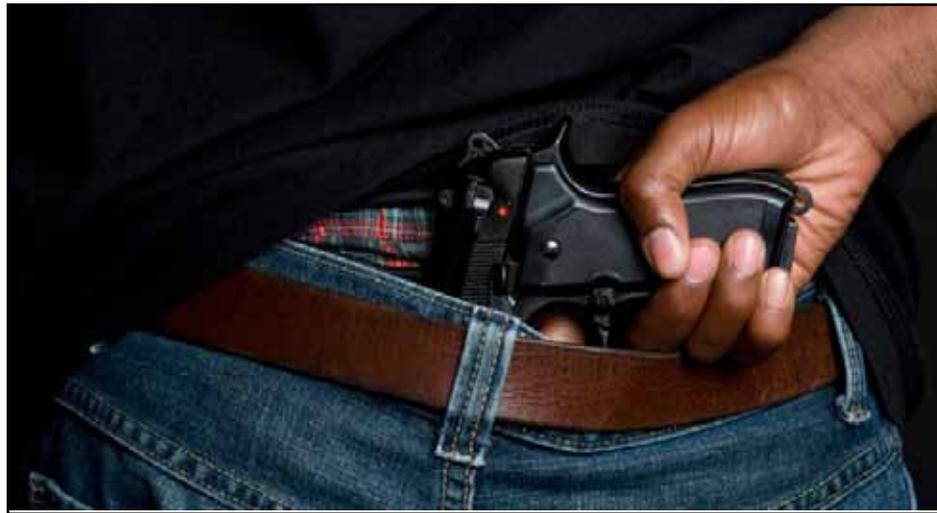
By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Senior National
Correspondent

According to a new and comprehensive study on gun violence, Black men, women, boys, and girls remain the most impacted victims of homicide in America, yet year after year this shocking and unacceptable toll is allowed to continue.

The study published by the Washington, D.C.-based Violence Policy Center, revealed that in 2019, the United States recorded 7,441 Black homicide victims.

African Americans represent 14 percent of the U.S. population, but accounted for 52 percent of all homicide victims, the study authors found.

The annual study, Black Homicide Victimization in the United States: An Analysis of 2019 Homicide Data, also ranks the states according to their Black homicide victimization



The study published by the Washington, D.C.-based Violence Policy Center, revealed that in 2019, the United States recorded 7,441 Black homicide victims. (iStock photo / NNPA)

rates.

Officials said it's based on unpublished data from the Federal Bureau of Investigation Supplementary Homicide Report.

The study details homicide rates for 2019, the most recent year for which comprehensive national data is available.

For homicides in which authorities could identify the weapon used, 88 percent of Black victims (6,190 out of 7,056) were

shot and killed with guns.

Of those, 64 percent (3,935 victims) were killed with handguns.

On average, more than 20 Black Americans died each day from homicide – 17 were known to have died from gunshots.

"These deaths almost always involve a gun, and the resulting devastation ravages families, friends, and community members," Violence Policy Center Executive Director Josh Sug-

armann stated in a news release.

"The goal of our research is to help support advocates and organizations working on the ground to stop this lethal violence while, at the same time, continuing to educate and engage the public and policymakers on the need to address this ongoing national crisis," Sugarmann said.

The study also revealed that the Black homicide victimization rate in the

United States was nearly four times the overall national victimization rate and nearly seven times the white homicide victimization rate.

In 2019, the Black homicide victimization rate was 18.08 per 100,000.

In comparison, the overall national homicide victimization rate was 4.79 per 100,000. For whites, the national homicide victimization rate was 2.69 per 100,000.

Further, 87 percent of Black homicide victims were male (6,454 of 7,441) and 13 percent were female (986 of 7,441).

The sex of one victim wasn't unknown.

The authors noted that Black male homicide victimization rate in the United States was "more than four times the overall male victimization rate and more than eight times the white male homicide victimization rate."

In 2019, the homicide victimization rate for Black

male victims was 32.49 per 100,000.

In comparison, the overall rate for male homicide victims was 7.68 per 100,000 and the rate for white male homicide victims was 3.88 per 100,000.

Meanwhile, the Black female homicide victimization rate in the United States was more than twice the overall female victimization rate and three times the white female homicide victimization rate.

In 2019, the homicide victimization rate for Black female victims was 4.60 per 100,000. In comparison, the overall rate for female homicide victims was 1.95 per 100,000 and the rate for white female homicide victims was 1.52 per 100,000.

For homicides in which the victim to offender relationship could be identified, 77 percent of Black victims (2,282 out of 2,954) were killed by someone they knew.

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Vatican: Moment is ripe for serious consideration of the harms of the Transatlantic Slave Trade

ROME – A group of global reparations leaders met with the Vatican this week to discuss the Catholic Church's role in the Transatlantic Slave Trade, and the need for the Church to formally address its role with a Papal reparations commission and financial retribution for descendants of enslaved Africans.

The Global Circle for Reparations and Healing (GCRH) a delegation of reparations leaders arrived in Rome, led by Kamm Howard, Director of Reparations United; and included Dr. Ron Daniels, convenor of the National African American Reparations Commission (NAARC); Dr. Amara Enyia, strategist for the GCRH, and Nikole Hannah-Jones, author of the



Photo via NNPA

1619 Project.

They met with Bishop Paul Tighe, Secretary of the Pontifical Council of Culture, at the Vatican.

The group delivered a presentment outlining the harms and offenses of the Church regarding the Transatlantic slave trade and slavery.

The presentment also referenced the legacy of those harms and offenses, and reparations measures

that are needed for full repair.

"The effects of the Transatlantic slave trade, and the harms inflicted on our ancestors continue to cause systemic damage to this day," said Kamm Howard, Director of Reparations United, who is co-convenor of the GCHR.

"The Catholic Church has admitted that it played a role in the Transatlantic Slave Trade, and the pur-

pose of our meeting was to provide a roadmap to allow us to move forward toward true reparatory justice. The focus now will be on continued conversations to move the work forward to ensure repair becomes a reality."

During the meeting, Bishop Tighe suggested that the moment is "ripe" for the presentment to be seriously considered by the Church under the guidance of Pope Francis.

He cited Pope Francis's encyclical Fratelli Tutti as evidence of the Pontiff's commitment to explore issues of justice, equality, and reconciliation.

Bishop Tighe agreed to share the presentment to leaders within the Church and offered suggestions for initiating a process for

moving forward with talks.

"When talking about slavery, particularly the Transatlantic slave trade and its after-effects, there are certain institutions that directly benefitted and continue to reap those benefits," said Dr. Ron Daniels, convenor of NAARC and co-convenor of the GCRH.

"Our goal is to hold those institutions accountable and ensure that they play a major role in helping to repair the communities that have been harmed. I am encouraged by the conversation with Bishop Tighe and look forward to creating real change for African descendants of enslavement throughout the diaspora."

Also present at the Vatican meeting were repre-

sentatives of other GCRH organizations and supporters representing the Global African Congress (U.K.), Black Europe Summer School (Netherlands), Nia Foundation (Netherlands), First Repair (U.S.), Questa E Roma (Italy), and the African Future Action Lab (Europe).

In August, the group will travel to Accra, Ghana with nearly 100 other global reparations activist to learn from each other in efforts at "building a global culture of repair and healing."

Additionally, they will meet with Ghanaian President Nana Akufo-Addo and address, among other things, the expanding the role of African nations in discussions about the global reparations' movement.

Emory University announces the first African American Studies Ph.D. program in the U.S. Southeast

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Senior National
Correspondent

Emory University in Atlanta has announced the first African American Studies Ph.D. Program in the Southeast United States.

“We are accepting applications beginning in September 2022,” Carol Anderson, the Charles Howard Candler Professor of African American Studies at Emory, announced on Twitter.

In an overview posted on

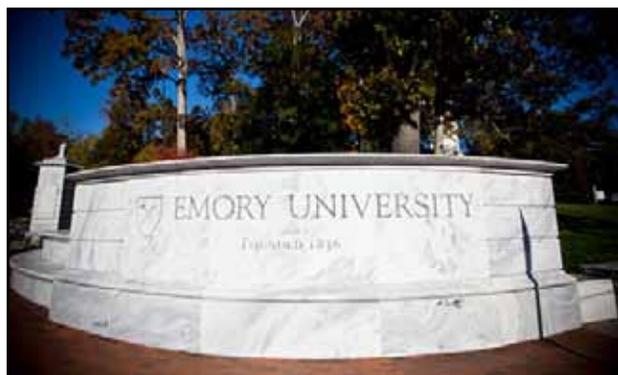


Photo via NNPA

Emory’s website, the university noted that “as an interdisciplinary graduate program, the African American Studies Ph.D. Program is a highly selective course of

study combining the expertise of an esteemed group of more than 50 core and affiliated graduate faculty with research specializations in disciplinary and interdisci-

plinary fields such as African and African American Studies, American Studies, Anthropology, Art History, Comparative Literature, Creating Writing, Educational Studies, English, History, Music, Political Science, Religious Studies, Sociology, and Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies.”

The university said the program provides rigorous training and preparation for Ph.D. students interested in careers within and outside of academe.

“Our program is organized around the four pillars upon which AAS as a field rest: interdisciplinarity, intersectionality, community engagement, and transnationalism,” officials wrote.

“Additionally, each student enrolled in the program will be equipped with specialized training in AAS through one of three cognate fields: Gender & Sexuality, Social Justice & Social Movements, and Expressive Arts & Cultures.”

Beginning with the first AAS Ph.D. cohort in Fall

2023, officials said they expect to enroll four new Ph.D. students each year.

The school also anticipates that each student will complete the degree within five to six years.

According to the fact sheet, all Ph.D. students are fully funded for five years with an annual stipend of at least \$31,000, a tuition remission, and health insurance. Though each student is guaranteed funding and support for five years, funding for a sixth year – if needed – will be possible.

A Different News Experience: *Baltimore Times*, *Houston Forward Times* in Step with future of news delivery

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Senior National
Correspondent

The metaverse as a potentially new medium for news reporting in the future, and the National Newspaper Publishers Association’s live national news show, Let It Be Known, explored how using wearables affect the media production process.

“I sat on the consumer committee for Upsurge and had the opportunity to meet with a lot of tech founders, and we began to look at how technology can improve the lives of Baltimore city residents,” said Paris Brown, associate editor for the Baltimore Times.

“I started a consumer streaming shopping network and met LaKisha Greenwade, the founder of Wearable Tech Ventures and the creator of the Global Hackathon 2022 for Wearable Technology. My



Photo via NNPA

interest began to grow.”

Brown said that was just the beginning.

“The Baltimore Times was approached to be a media partner for Wearable Technology, and we wanted to amplify the voices of the Black tech people and make sure people knew what was happening, and then we were asked to participate as a virtual newsroom,” she stated.

“We expected participating in this would create an

interesting opportunity.”

Greenwade amplified Brown’s excitement, noting that Wearable Technology touches almost every business sector, from mobile connectivity to medical monitoring to fitness trackers and smartwatches.

Forecasters predict that the global wearable tech market will reach 300 million tech shipments by 2026 – or five times the shipments completed in 2018 and 2019.

“What we do is we develop and promote wearable technology. We’ve been redefining what wearable technology is,” Greenwade remarked.

“We use wearable technology every day. For example, someone with diabetes might wear a pump. Someone with kidney failure uses wearables in their treatment, and someone with heart failure uses a defibrillator. That’s wearable technology,” she continued.

“So, especially when we talk to the Black community where we are most impacted by these technologies that are being developed, we want to move from a consumer to a developer.

“We have become the industry. We are developing talent and direct connections to corporations, government institutions, research institutions, and funding. That headline we hear relating to the lack of

funding and a lack of representation. That won’t exist in wearable technology.”

Ursula Spencer, the founder of Dope Nerds, said her company plans to ascend as one of the best virtual reality arcades in the world.

Backed by several years of planning and strategy, Dope Nerds proclaims that its virtual reality “edutainment” solutions could transform how educational content is delivered.

“There are so many facets to how this is going to innovate, and how it’s innovated, the industry,” Spencer stated.

“Right now, we’re in this headset phase, but soon we will be at a point where we are projecting something on our arms, and a screen pops up,” she said.

“I think this will create a more social and immersive component on how we interact with the news.”

The Houston Forward

Times also has joined the wearable community to enhance its product.

“Peer research says that 86 percent of consumers get their news online. I go deeper and say that they get it from Twitter because Twitter hits first,” offered DaNeisha “Totally Randie” Bell, a media personality with the Forward Times.

“With media being injected into this, I can see breaking news and exclusivity. I’m excited that we’re not going to have a learning curve for the Black community because we have these resources that are assisting with educating the Black community to keep us up with the technology and being a part of creativity,” Bell asserted.

“Technology is here, and media will step in and keep going forward. So we’re going to have to be in that space providing that because people already are wearing that technology.”

GUNS, from Page 1

sent letters to gun manufacturers Daniel Defense, LLC, Smith & Wesson Brands, Inc., Sturm, Ruger & Company, Inc., and other manufacturers.

The letters requested in-

formation on the sale and marketing of AR-15-style semiautomatic rifles and similar firearms, including revenue and profit information, internal data on deaths or injuries caused

by weapons they manufacture, and marketing and promotional materials.

On June 8, 2022, the committee held a hearing with survivors and affected family members from the mass shootings in Uvalde, Texas, and Buffalo, New

York.

On July 7, following the Independence Day shooting in Highland Park, Illinois, Maloney sent letters to the CEOs of several gun manufacturers requesting their appearance at a committee hearing on gun vio-

lence.

“Our hearing will examine the role of gun manufacturers in flooding our communities with weapons of war and fueling America’s gun violence crisis,” Maloney continued.

“It is long past time for

the gun industry to be held accountable for the carnage they enable and profit from.”

The committee will livestream the hearing on YouTube and the Committee on Oversight and Reform website.

Mayor Muns honors high school interns and employers at luncheon for ninth-annual Plano Mayor's Summer Internship Program

For dozens of Plano high schoolers, this summer was anything but boring. From learning how nonprofits operate, to shadowing executives at national business headquarters, to working at top tech firms, hospitals and hotels, the ninth-annual Plano Mayor's Summer Internship Program provided approximately 80 Plano ISD high school students with full- and part-time paid positions at some of the area's most regarded organizations. Since the program's inception in 2014, Capital One has served as presenting sponsor.

To honor the interns, employers and sponsors, Plano Mayor John Muns and other community leaders gathered for a celebratory luncheon today at the Plano Event Center. The event featured keynote speaker Vana Hammond Parham, Senior Legal Counsel at AT&T. While chronicling her illustrious career – from



Luis DeLuca / Courtesy

serving as a police officer, to a city attorney, to holding a top leadership position in the Dallas mayor's office – Hammond Parham proved to the interns that career possibilities and exploration are exciting and exhilarating!

Joining Mayor Muns and participating in the program were Andrella Thomas, Manager, Social

Innovation, Capital One; Jeri Chambers, Secretary, Plano ISD Board of Trustees; and DeJuan Taylor, Human Resources Market Leader, JPMorgan Chase & Co. Emceeding the program were Katie Chou, a rising junior at Plano West Senior High School and an intern at Centurion American Development Group, and Tariq Wrensford, a rising

senior at Plano West Senior High School and an intern at Children's Health.

"The Plano Mayor's Summer Internship Program is a prime example of how public-private partnerships have far-reaching impact on education and business development in Plano," said Mayor Muns. "Even more important, this program connects our city's sought-after businesses and nonprofits with talented young people who bring fresh perspectives to the workplace while learning work life skills that

will serve them for years to come."

The program gives outstanding Plano public high school students an opportunity to gain real-world experience, combining Plano's vibrant business community with a nationally recognized school district. The eight-week program, which ran June 6 and continues through July 29, gives rising juniors and seniors the opportunity to work 20- to 40-hour weeks earning a minimum of \$10 per hour.

See PLANO, Page 14



Photo via NNPA

For the first time, Princess Tiana will be featured on an EPCOT International Food & Wine Festival merchandise collection

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. – (July 11, 2022) – Princess Tiana is getting her own merchandise collection! Walt Disney World Resort is unveiling a merchandise line during the 2022 EPCOT International Food & Wine Festival presented by CORKCICLE at Walt Disney World Resort.

The collection, which includes an array of kitchenware and apparel, marks the first time Princess Tiana will have her own festival

merchandise line.

Starting July 14, fans can bring Tiana's New Orleans-inspired culinary flair to their kitchens with a whimsical assortment of Tiana-themed merchandise. The collection features illustrations that showcase Tiana's passion for cooking and the memorable shade of lily pad green used in Princess Tiana's iconic dress in the Walt Disney Animation Studios film, "The Princess and the Frog." Items in the

collection include an apron, measuring cups, cake stand, spatula, flour sifter, rolling pin, oven mitts, and more.

The full list of 2022 Epcot International Food & Wine Festival merchandise can be found on the official event page, along with the other commemorative festival collections honoring Mickey Mouse and Minnie Mouse, Figment, Remy, and more.

See TIANA Page 13



SAVE SOME GREEN. GO YELLOW.

#Back2DART




Jurassic Quest, nation's biggest dinosaur experience, migrates to Dallas

The largest and most realistic dinosaur event in North America is BACK, BIGGER and BETTER than EVER! Families can walk among the nation's biggest herd of photorealistic dinosaurs when Jurassic Quest® opens at Fair Park in Dallas for a limited run July 29-31. This follows a spring showing at

Ft. Worth Convention Center (April 1-3), giving Dallas-area families two chances for a prehistoric adventure this spring and summer!

Houston-based Jurassic Quest is one of the first indoor family edutainment shows to re-launch since March 2020 due to the pandemic and will open indoors with its most beloved and unique experiences for the whole family including life-like dinosaurs, some of the largest rideable dinosaurs in North America, live dinosaur shows, interactive science and art activities including a fossil dig and real fossils like T-Rex teeth, a triceratops horn and life-size dino skull, a "Triceratots" soft play area for our littlest explorers, bounce houses and inflat-



Courtesy photo

able attractions, photo opportunities, and more.

New for 2022, families are invited to pick up a map at the entry to embark on "The Quest," an interactive scavenger-hunt style

adventure with 10 clues leading them to meet dinos and prehistoric sea creatures, capture a Dino Snap, search for fossils, watch a live Raptor Training Experience and more, to earn a

prize at the end (included with general admission).

Loved by millions, only Jurassic Quest can bring families memories this BIG! Walk through 165 million years of the Trias-

ic, Jurassic, and Cretaceous periods to learn about the creatures that ruled on land, and "deep dive" into the "Ancient Oceans" exhibit to come face to face with the largest apex predator that ever existed – a moving, life-size, 50-foot-long megalodon!

Meet the babies, hatched only at Jurassic Quest: Cammie the Camarasaurus, Tyson the T-Rex, and Trixie the Triceratops – and you may even catch one of our star dino trainers: Safari Sarah, Dino Dustin, Captain Caleb, Prehistoric Nick, or Park Ranger Marty!

The Jurassic Quest herd of animatronic dinos – from the largest predators to playful baby dinos – are displayed in realistic scenes with some that move and roar, allowing guests to experience them as they were when they roamed the earth billions of years ago. Jurassic Quest works in collaboration with leading paleontologists to ensure each dinosaur is painstakingly replicated in every detail, from coloration to teeth size, to textured skin, fur or feathers, drawing on

the latest research about how we understand dinosaurs and ancient giants of the sea looked and moved.

Tickets are timed entry and start at \$19. Reserve tickets online at www.jurassicquest.com to ensure desired date and time, or buy them on-site. General admission tickets include access to the dinosaur and marine exhibits, arts and crafts activities, and dinosaur shows. Guests can walk through the dinosaur experience at their own pace, and strollers are permitted.

There are rides and activities that require activity tickets available on-site, or guests can upgrade to the Kids Unlimited Rides ticket (the best value for children ages 2-12). Entry is free for children under age 2. Socks are required for inflatable attractions.

All tickets include a 100% ticket guarantee that ticket purchases will be automatically refunded for the full purchase amount in case of a show cancellation or postponement for any reason.

High school students nationwide now applying for popular Disney Dreamers Academy mentorship program

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla. – Teens from around the country are trying to put their best foot forward in hopes of being among the 100 students selected for the 2023 Disney Dreamers Academy. Applications are now underway for the inspiring and transformational mentorship program at Walt Disney World Resort for Black teens and students from underrepresented communities.

The application process for the 16th annual program, set for March 23-26, 2023, runs through October at www.DisneyDreamersAcademy.com. The 100 teen participants receive an all-expense-paid trip along with one parent or guard-

ian to Walt Disney World Resort in Florida to experience a combination of inspiration, education and fun at The Most Magical Place on Earth.

The program is an important part of Disney's commitment to supporting diverse communities by encouraging the next generation of Black students to think big, so they can relentlessly pursue their dreams and make a difference in the lives of others.

"We're excited to find the next group of Disney Dreamers and welcome them to Walt Disney World Resort for an experience they won't soon forget," said Tracey D. Powell, Disney Signature Experiences

vice president and Disney Dreamers Academy executive champion. "If there is a teen in your life who has a dream, I would highly encourage them to apply. Taking a first step towards your dream is a hugely powerful moment. And, for those who are selected, the experience can be life changing."

Since 2008, Disney Dreamers Academy has inspired more than 1,400 students from across the country who were selected from thousands of applicants who submitted written essays about their personal stories and dreams for the future.

See DISNEY, Page 13

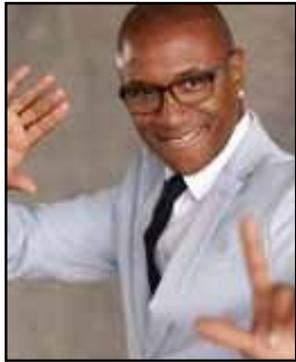
Comedian Tommy Davidson heads to the Arlington Improv

Tommy Davidson (In Living Color), will headline a special four-night engagement at the Arlington Improv Aug. 4-7.

Davidson's exceptional range – from stand-up comedy and acting to versatile music accomplishments – have earned him a reputation as an extraordinary performer. Best known as one of the stars of the hit television show In Living Color, his visibility has allowed him to become a household name known for his innovative talent.

Davidson started his career as a standup comedian in Washington DC, earning an ardent following. Spotted by major concert promoters, he was first booked as the opening act for Patti LaBelle, Kenny G and Luther Vandross. It wasn't long before he came to Hollywood and was headlining the biggest rooms and met Robert Townsend. This led to his first national tv appearance and starring role in Partners in Crime, the conduit to Keenan Ivory Wayans, who proved instrumental in Davidson's career by offering him an opportunity to audition.

Davidson starred in Disney Channel's beloved animated series The Proud Family throughout its run between 2001-2005. He returns this spring to topline the new version of the hit series, "The Proud Family: Louder and Prouder" (Disney +) to rave reviews on a new ardent following. His recent credits also include an upcoming guest-starring role in CBS comedy series The Neighborhood; featured roles in the Nick Cannon-directed TV movie Miracles Across 125th Street and Michael J. White's comedic feature The Outlaw Johnny Black; as well as guest appearances in BET+'s The Ms. Pat Show, the Netflix special Sarah Cooper: Everything's Fine, and Show-



time's comedy series I'm Dying Up Here.

The multihyphenate is perhaps best known for starring in the groundbreaking sketch comedy series In Living Color, there becoming a standout with his impressions of Sammy Davis Jr., Michael Jackson and other entertainment icons. His performance on the series resulted in three Showtime specials: On Strength of New York, Illin' in Philly, and Takin' it to DC. Davidson also hosted and starred in the network's Chocolate Sundaes Comedy Show, as well as three seasons of ABC's Vacation Creation.

Davidson voiced the series regular role of Cream Corn in the Adult Swim action-comedy spoof Black Dynamite, and has also made guest appearances in everything from MTV's Wild 'N Out to BET's Real Husbands of Hollywood and ABC's Celebrity Wife Swap. He also recently headlined The Off Color Comedy Tour with Keenan Ivory Wayans, Shawn Wayans and David Alan Grier, and toured with Mike Epps and Martin Lawrence, having launched his career as a stand-up comic in Washington, D.C.

Davidson's feature credits include Spike Lee's Bamboozled, Morgan Creek's Juwanna Mann, Ace Ventura II: When Nature Calls opposite Jim Carrey, and Strictly Business opposite Halle Berry among others. He also recently starred in the feature documentaries I Am Comic opposite Tim Allen and

Lewis Black, and Dying Laughing alongside Jamie Foxx, Kevin Hart, Amy

Schumer and Sarah Silverman. Kensington Books in

2020 published Davidson's memoir Living in Color: What's Funny about Me,

recounting his personal triumphs after having been abandoned as in infant.



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Music Hall has now become Broadway Dallas

This week Broadway Dallas and Live Nation announced a multi-year partnership to bring a wide-ranging, diverse programming line-up to the 3,400 seat Music Hall at Fair Park.

Since opening in 1925, the Music Hall has hosted thousands of events ranging from Broadway to concerts to comedy and speakers. Notable events include Hamilton, The Phantom Of The Opera, Dr. Martin Luther King, Liza Minnelli, Jerry Seinfeld, Dolly Parton, Dionne Warwick, Lib-



erace and hundreds more.

"We are privileged to have the nearly 100-year-old Music Hall in our care," said Ken Novice, president and CEO of Broadway Dallas. "While Broadway performances take up a significant portion of our calendar, there are dozens of weeks each year where the venue sits empty. This new partnership with Live

Nation will help ensure that the Music Hall is occupied as much as possible with diverse, world-class artists and that the legacy of this marvelous venue continues to grow."

Already announced Live Nation shows at the Music Hall include K-POP sensations Loona (August 25), Il Divo (August 27), The Australian Pink Floyd

Show (August 28), The O'Jays + The Commodores (September 4), A Magical Cirque Christmas (November 19), zoe (December 9), Alton Brown (December 10) with many more to be announced soon. Tickets available for purchase at www.ticketmaster.com or via www.BroadwayDallas.org.

"Our experience with shows at the Music Hall has been great," said Anthony Nicolaidis, Live Nation's Dallas Market President. "We love the historic atmosphere of the venue and be-

ing part of the resurgence of the entire Fair Park district. And the capacity offers a great option for artists to play. We look forward to formalizing our relationship."

Recent successful Live Nation shows at the Music Hall include two sell-outs of comedian Hasan Minhaj, and German techno-pop icons Kraftwerk.

This new partnership has far-reaching economic impact for the community.

"The additional activity in the Music Hall results in more employment days

for part-time event staff including ushers, ticket takers, security, concessions staff, parking personnel and our backstage productions crew," added Novice. "And I know that the restaurants in the growing Exposition Park area directly across the street from us, and in Deep Ellum will benefit as well."

The Music Hall joins a robust roster of venues with which Live Nation partners including: The Pavilion at Toyota Music Factory, Dos Equis Pavilion, House of Blues Dallas and The Echo Lounge & Music Hall.

911 families say golf stars and Donald Trump are accepting 'Blood Money' to align with Saudi-backed league

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Senior National Correspondent

Critics of a new golf league backed by the oppressive Saudi Arabian government and supported by former President Donald Trump have decried the actions of players who have bolted the PGA TOUR, taking millions of dollars to participate.

Observers said the recent decisions of prominent and wealthy stars like Phil Mickelson, Dustin Johnson, Sergio Garcia, and Brooks Koepka to play on LIV Tour is as selfish as the sports world has ever seen.

"As far as ... the players who have chosen to go to LIV and to play there, I disagree with it," Tiger Woods said this month. "I think that what they've done is

they've turned their back on what has allowed them to get to this position."

Harold Varner III credited, among others, retired NBA Superstar Michael Jordan with his decision not to join LIV.

"I'm obviously not going," Varner said matter-of-factly about leaving the PGA Tour for LIV Golf. "I've spoken with (PGA Tour commissioner) Jay

(Monahan), I've spoken with a lot of people I look up to, and it just wasn't worth it to me for what it was worth. So that's pretty simple," he said, according to Sports Illustrated.

According to Golf.com, LIV has presented itself as a beacon for golf improvement.

"To a man, every member of the new league has in some way referenced

'positive change' as a justification for delving into the morally murky waters surrounding its financiers," James Colgan wrote for Golf.com.

This, Woods said, is LIV's greatest failing.

Golf isn't stronger for the competition, and neither are its players. Nobody is, the legend stated.

"I just don't see how that move is positive in the long

term for a lot of these players," Woods stated.

Moreover, the upcoming LIV Golf Series, hosted by Trump at his National Golf Club Bedminster in New Jersey, threatens to detract from the PGA TOUR's Rocket Mortgage Classic in Detroit.

According to CNBC, Trump's decision to align

See SAUDI, Page 12

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Gates Foundation to spend additional \$3B each year on several causes

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Senior National
Correspondent

Bill Gates insists he's optimistic about the future.

One of the wealthiest men in the world said he sees incredible heroism and sacrifice all over the globe, especially as the Covid-19 pandemic continues.

"Medical workers put in unbelievable hours at great risk to themselves to help people infected with COVID. Incredible efforts are taking place to help refugees from the Ukrainian war and to help those caught in battle zones," Gates wrote on his personal blog.

"Activists are courageously protesting and often risking their lives to protect people's rights.



Photo via NNPA

People on the front lines inspire me to do whatever I can. Although each of us can only do so much, when lots of people join in, we will resume progress."

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation announced it would significantly increase its already robust philanthropic efforts in areas including global health, economic develop-

ment, gender equality, and education.

The world's largest charitable foundation will increase the rate of its grant-making from nearly \$6 billion to \$9 billion each year by 2026.

Among its many efforts, the foundation sponsors the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) education program.

"We need all sectors of society – government, the private sector, and the non-profit sector, including philanthropy – to engage on these issues," Gates insisted. "Philanthropy is the smallest of these sectors, but it is unique in its ability to try risky ideas that can have a large impact if they succeed and are scaled up."

Despite the 2021 announcement that Gates and his wife, Melinda French Gates, were divorcing, the couple has continued to make the foundation and charitable giving a primary focus.

"I am putting a lot of my energy and resources into innovators working on pandemic prevention, global health, climate mitigation (including getting rid of dependence on hydrocarbons)

and adaptation, education, improvement (including remediation), and food costs.

"When I say 'innovation,' I'm referring to new products and services as well as new ways of delivering them to those in need – including by strengthening local leaders and institutions," Gates continued.

"These innovations will not come in time to avoid the problems altogether, but the faster we move, the less people will suffer. For many people, including myself, this is the most concrete way of contributing, even when it seems modest compared to the scale of the problems. Focusing on being part of the solution is better than giving up in despair."

According to the New York Times, Gates and

French Gates promised to inject an additional \$15 billion in funds into the foundation a year ago. Gates said that as part of that commitment, he planned to give \$20 billion to the foundation this month.

"As I look to the future, my plan is to give all my wealth to the foundation other than what I spend on myself and my family," Gates wrote this week.

"I will move down and eventually off of the list of the world's richest people," added Mr. Gates, who, along with French Gates, has already given \$39 billion to the foundation since 1994.

"My giving this money is not a sacrifice at all I feel privileged to be involved in tackling these great challenges," Gates insisted.

HEALTH, from Page 4

priority," the vice president declared.

"We took action because it can't just be about words, to provide resources to hire and train doulas, to advance culturally competent care and to research the contributors to maternal mortality because included in those contributors are racial bias in the healthcare delivery system; included in those contributors are the stressors that Black women face in life," Harris demanded.

Cassidy and Dr. Chavis acknowledged some recent bipartisan actions by the U.S. Congress both have supported.

They noted the John Lewis National Institute on Minority Health and Disparities Research Endowment Revitalization Act is now law. The Maternal Health Quality Improvement Act also became law.

That law seeks to reduce maternal mortality among Black women and other minorities.

It creates racial and ethnic bias training programs for healthcare providers while studying best prac-

tices to reduce and prevent discrimination in the American healthcare system.

Cassidy and Dr. Chavis said Congress must pass the Telemental Health Care Access Act, reducing barriers to telemedicine and making health care more accessible to Medicare patients.

The duo noted examples of maternal challenges extend even to celebrities.

Earlier this year, tennis star Serena Williams penned an essay for Elle Magazine recounting her reckoning that proved that Black women remain three times more likely to die after childbirth than white women.

She said she was almost one of them.

"I've suffered every injury imaginable, and I know my body," Williams wrote in the deeply personal essay, later adding: "Giving birth to my baby, it turned out, was a test for how loud and how often I would have to call out before I was finally heard."

As Williams recounts, she had a "wonderful preg-



According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, approximately 700 women die from pregnancy or childbirth-related complications yearly in the United States. The agency reported that Black women are three to four times more likely to experience a pregnancy or childbirth-related death than white women. (iStock photo / NNPA)

nancy" with her first child, Alexis Olympia, and even her epidural-free delivery was going well – at first.

"By the next morning, the contractions were coming harder and faster. With each one, my baby's heart rate plummeted. I was scared," the 23-time Grand Slam winner wrote.

"Every time the baby's heart rate dropped, the nurses would come in and tell me to turn onto my side. The baby's heart rate would go back up, and everything seemed fine. Then, I'd have another contraction, and baby's heart rate would drop again, but I'd turn over, and the rate would go back up, and so forth."

Following an emergency C-section, Williams gave birth to her daughter, Alexis.

Afterward, she said she had to fight for her life.

Already classified as a high risk for blood clots, Williams inquired whether she should receive heparin, a blood thinner. Williams wrote, "Well, we don't really know if that's what you need to be on right now."

"No one was really listening to what I was saying."

Four surgeries later, doctors discovered a blood clot in one of her arteries, a hematoma in her abdomen, and other clots.

She said the nurse she

had previously spoken with told her that the medicine was making her crazy.

Had she gone along with the nurse's assertions, Williams could have died.

"Being heard and appropriately treated was the difference between life or death for me," Williams asserted.

"I know those statistics would be different if the medical establishment lis-

tened to every Black woman's experience."

In an email to NNPA Newswire, Cassidy said, "We all do better when all Americans are well. African American mothers dying during or after childbirth at a higher rate than other groups is a tragedy.

"Working with Dr. Chavis, we will find better ways to care for mothers, babies, and families," Cassidy said.

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SAUDI, from Page 10

with LIV highlights his close ties to Saudi Arabia; he made his first foreign visit there as president, and its wealth fund injected \$2 billion into his son-in-law's company last year.

Trump sued PGA of America and the case was settled in December.

"Trump is loving this. He's loving the revenge. He's loving the attention. He's loving the money," said Gary Williams, a golf analyst with the marketing firm Signature Golf and a former host of an NBC-owned Golf Channel show who played with Trump at Doral in 2014.

Critics have also said what's ignored is that through the world of golf, the PGA TOUR drives positive impact at unprecedented levels to support and improve local communities.

Nonprofit tournaments under the PGA TOUR umbrella donate their net proceeds to support local organizations, totaling more than \$3.37 billion in donations.

When players, fans, and businesses support a PGA TOUR event, they contribute to countless philan-

thropic organizations in and around communities where events are held.

Survivors and families of Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks have protested LIV Golf events because of the involvement of the Saudi government in that unforgettable assault and murders of Americans on U.S. soil.

"Some of your fellow PGA Tour members have traded their dreams of earned success for easy money – indeed, blood money – whether they need those funds or not," family members of 9/11 victims wrote in a passionate letter to the PGA TOUR.

"They include some of the richest in the field, who justify their roles in Saudi Arabia's efforts to sportswash by simply, and astoundingly, looking the other way. They do so casually when asked the hard questions or are faced with the uncomfortable truth: That they are helping one of the world's worst regimes paper over its crimes."

The families have made clear that they hold Saudi Arabia accountable for its role in the attacks which

killed nearly 3,000 people at the World Trade Center in New York, the Pentagon in Washington, and in Pennsylvania.

The letter cited FBI reports about Saudi Arabia's involvement in the attacks.

The families applauded golfers who have turned down the eye-popping checks some have accepted to play for LIV.

"To those of you who have chosen what is right over blood money from a corrupt, destructive sports entity and its Saudi backers, please continue to stand strong," the families wrote.

"You inspire hope and conviction that our long journey to accountability and justice is in reach. We deeply value your integrity and your willingness to stand up for principle. Thank you for standing up for decency."

Amnesty International listed the top 10 ways Saudi Arabia continues to violate human rights.

The organization noted that the government still uses torture for many offenses. Amnesty officials often said, following unfair trials, the government resorts to corporal punish-

ment like flogging, amputations, and cross amputations where the opposite hand and foot are removed for individuals found guilty of robbery.

Amnesty said Saudi Arabia stands among the world's top executioners, with dozens of people executed yearly – many in public beheadings. Saudi Arabia also opposes free speech, with activists jailed simply for exercising their rights to freedom of expression, association, and assembly.

The country also doesn't allow protests, and women face broad discrimination.

"Women and girls remain subject to discrimination in law and practice, with laws that ensure they are subordinate citizens to men – particularly concerning family matters such as marriage, divorce, child custody, and inheritance," Amnesty officials wrote.

"Women who supported a campaign against a ban

on women drivers face the threat of arrest and other harassment and intimidation," they stated.

Further, torture in police custody remains common, and authorities don't need reasons to detain individuals. Also, according to Amnesty officials, members of the Kingdom's Shi'a minority, most of whom live in the oil-rich Eastern Province, continue to face entrenched discrimination that limits their access to government services and employment.

According to the Interior Ministry, a crackdown on irregular foreign migrant workers in November 2013 led to the deportation of more than 370,000 people. Some 18,000 were still being detained as of March 2020, and thousands of people were summarily returned to Somalia, Yemen, or other states where they could face human rights abuses on return.

Authorities in Saudi Arabia have continued to deny

access to independent human rights organizations, officials said.

"Maybe Phil Mickelson will stand at a podium and demand the Saudis give a full accounting of what happened to Jamal Khashoggi, the Washington Post journalist brutally murdered by henchmen on orders, the Central Intelligence Agency has said, from Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman," Journalist Kurt Streeter wrote for the New York Times.

"Yes, the same Prince Mohammed is now using the LIV Golf series to distract from the truth about his homeland," Streeter continued.

"Don't hold your breath. None of the golfers who signed on to the LIV tour in exchange for staggering sums will speak up. They are too spineless and too compromised, working as they do for a tour funded by a government that tramples human rights."

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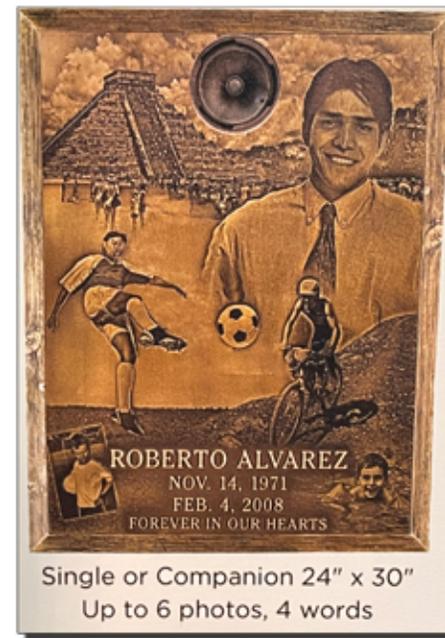
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Business advisory firm Embark sets record revenue growth and expands services and markets

/PRNewswire/ -- Embark is proud to announce \$44.6M of record-setting revenue through the first half of 2022, nearly surpassing 2021's total revenue mark of \$47.7M. As one of the fastest-growing private companies in the U.S., the firm is projecting another triple-digit year of growth, the fifth in the last six years.

"Our growth and revenue figures are a testament to how incredibly talented and committed our people are to helping our clients

succeed," said Paul Allen, Founder & Chief Vision Officer at Embark. "We recognize and appreciate how special this type of dynamic growth is in the professional services industry, and we're going to continue building on it. We're not going to take our foot off the gas one bit in the second half of the year, and we'll continue delivering the hospitality and excellent client service that continues to set this firm apart."

Embark is also thrilled to announce an expanded and

revamped service offering in its Business Transformation Practice. The firm's transformation consulting services (including technology, data & analytics, change management, amongst others) now extend outside of Finance and Accounting to include HR, supply chain operations, IT, and other critical business functions, each headed by a newly-appointed Managing

Director:

- Camillo Caballero - Managing Director, Supply Chain (formerly of Alvarez & Marsal, Deloitte)

- John Wedding - Managing Director, Human Capital Management (formerly of Accenture, Deloitte)

- Farrukh Mohammed - Managing Director, Enterprise Data & Analytics (formerly of Accenture)

Embark has also added

an ESG and Sustainability Practice to its service offerings, led by Managing Director Robby Sundberg. With executives and reporting teams facing an impending wave of ESG (Environment, Social, and Governance) regulations and reporting requirements, Embark's ESG reporting specialists can provide the insight organizations need to quickly adapt to grow-

ing regulatory demands and stakeholder expectations. The firm's experience in all phases of ESG reporting implementation (people, processes, and technology) make the new practice a natural and seamless expansion for Embark, solidifying a service offering clients already utilize for their ESG reporting needs, including a multinational S&P 500 company.

TIANA, from Page 7

Guests can find select items from this year's EPCOT International Food & Wine Festival Princess Tiana Collection at shopping destinations throughout EPCOT, July 14 – Nov. 19, with additional pieces expected to debut later this fall. Select items will also be available on shopDisney.com.

The EPCOT International Food & Wine Festival

is a delicious celebration which runs through Nov. 19, 2022. The festival invites guests to embark on a tasty tour across six continents with a menu of new flavors and sips, along with live entertainment, family activities and more. To experience the festival, guests must have both valid admission and a park reservation for EPCOT on the same date.

DISNEY, from Page 10

During the four-day event, the students interact with community and business leaders, Disney cast members, celebrities and other special guests while participating in sessions teaching valuable life tools such as leadership skills, effective communication techniques and networking strategies. Past celebrity participants have included stars from the big screen and television, noted sports figures, popular musicians as well as personalities and cast members from across the Disney family, including "Good Morning America," ESPN, Disney Channel and the TV series "black-ish" and "grown-ish."

The students also take part in career workshops covering a variety of disci-

plines aligned with the students' dreams. These workshops introduce the Disney Dreamers to diverse career paths within business, entertainment and sciences, including career opportunities within The Walt Disney Company.

After taking part in the academy, graduates have gone on to become doctors, nurses, engineers, pilots, journalists and more, and some have transitioned into mentors to the Disney Dreamers who followed them.

For more information, visit DisneyDreamersAcademy.com, or follow on social media at Facebook.com/DisneyDreamersAcademy, Twitter.com/DreamersAcademy and Instagram.com/disneydreamersacademy/.



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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.

To Ask or Not To Ask is No Option

By James L. Snyder

You would think I would have learned all I needed to learn at my age. However, each day I learn something I did not know the day before. So much of my new learning is still connected to being married to The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage.

I know, for example, that she is not soliciting information when she asks a question. So many times, I forget and walk into that trap.

Last week, for instance, The Gracious of the Parsonage looked out the living room window and sighed very deeply and then looking at me said, "Why is it so hot out there today?"

Under normal circumstances, but what is normal these days, I would have realized this was not a question to be answered. But, without thinking, I looked at her and said, "It's Flor-

ida, and it's the middle of the summer, and that's why it's so hot out there."

I then put on one of my typical smiles, and winked at her.

Not a good thing to do in this situation.

"Do you think that is funny?" she said with both hands on her hips and staring at me.

I then remembered that a woman asking you questions is not soliciting an answer. If only I could remember that, I could keep myself out of a lot of difficulties.

"I know it's summer, and I know we're in Florida, but I wasn't asking for your opinion."

For me, it is not easy to know when she is asking and when she is not asking a question. So to answer one of her questions means I have to give her an opinion of mine. But, of course, that is never on the table.

Recently we had an ap-

pointment across town, so my wife drove, and I sat in the passenger side. The traffic was heavy, and people were driving rather crazy. At one intersection, a car almost ran into us, and on my part, I lost all my hee-bee-jeebies.

My wife said, "What is wrong with people today? Why are they so crazy?"

I cleared my throat, and then she looked at me and said, "That was not a question I want you to answer. So keep your opinion to yourself."

I looked out the window and started to chuckle. I did not realize I was chuckling; it just came naturally.

"What are you chuckling about?" she said.

Now I am in one of those marital dilemmas. Is she asking a question she wants me to answer, or did she set me up?

I spoke up and said, "Look over there. Is that a Hobby Lobby store?"

The atmosphere in the vehicle changed automatically. She looked in my direction and asked me a question I knew she wanted me to answer, "Where's the Hobby Lobby?"

Sometimes when you answer a question with a question you get completely out of the swamp you are sinking in.

For the next several minutes, she talked about why she wanted to visit Hobby Lobby and all the things she wanted to check on and maybe even purchase. So I just sat back in my seat and smiled, knowing I had missed the bombshell that time.

When the vehicle atmosphere got quiet, I knew I had to do something to diverge the energy, so I simply said, "Is that a new thrift store? I don't think I've ever seen that one before."

Well, the conversation focused on the thrift store, and I learned everything

there was to know about that thrift store and all of the stuff she bought there in the past. And even her plans to go and pick up some other items there.

She could not say enough good about that thrift store, and the more she talked about it, the more she smiled. I had accomplished my goal, and I was smiling on the outside now. The rest of the trip home was enjoyable.

Before we got home, she said, "I could go for some ice cream. Should we stop and get some ice cream?"

I just looked at her, smiled and shook my head. We then stopped, got some ice cream, and had a wonderful time there.

"Wasn't that," she said as we started back home, "the best ice cream we've had in a long time."

I know when not to answer certain questions, at least I am learning, but I also know that certain ques-

tions are open for response.

"Yes, my dear," I said as cheerfully as possible, "that was a good idea you had to get some ice cream."

The trip ended well because I am learning to negotiate what is a question and what is not a question. But, you know I still have a long way to go, at least I am progressing. My confidence in our relationship is growing according to my understanding of the asking challenge I face everyday.

This led me to a verse of scripture in 1 John 5:14 - "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us"

I am also learning what to ask and what not to ask when it comes to my relationship with God. Learning what questions God will answer goes a long way in my Christian experience and it saves me a lot

See ASK, Page 15

PLANO, from Page 7

To date, nearly 800 students have participated in summer internships.

This year 400 Plano public high school students applied - representing every Plano public high school - and were placed into approximately 80 coveted summer positions. Many interns are enrolled in Plano ISD's AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) program and are likely to be first-generation college students.

"The Plano Mayor's Summer Internship Program gives students the incredible opportunity to gain valuable experience with the amazing businesses and nonprofits in our region,"

said Sanjiv Yajnik, President, Capital One Financial Service." Building on the Capital One Impact Initiative, this program enables us to continue to be a strong advocate for the community and fuel the talent pipeline in DFW. Thank you to Mayor Muns and the organizations who participated to ensure area students are equipped with skills for tomorrow. Most of all, thank you to the interns for your hard work this summer. Congratulations!"

All qualifying students attended a virtual Internship Prep, a mandatory training day held virtually March 19, and a virtual Job Fair on April 22. Once the interns

were offered a job, they attended a full day of Intern Training and Enrichment where they learned about business soft skills, financial literacy, networking, corporate culture, team-building and work-readiness topics. They also had their LinkedIn headshots taken by a professional photographer.

In addition to presenting sponsor Capital One, JPMorgan Chase & Co. is the Job Fair sponsor. (They also underwrote 20 interns in the STEM, nonprofit and healthcare industries and hosted nine interns at their offices.) The Boeing Company is the Internship Enrichment and Training sponsor, and NTT Data is the sponsor of Community

Service Day at the North Texas Food Bank. Program and luncheon sponsors are AT&T, Atmos Energy, Bank of America, City of

Plano, Dallas Mavericks, FedEx Office, Liberty Mutual, Oncor, Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital of Plano and Toyota Motor

North America. Plano ISD is the education partner.

For more information, please go to planomayors-interns.org.

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National Black Family Month



Sister Tarpley
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“It’s in the blood”, was a favorite saying of my oldest sibling Eloyd Demus Avery, when a family member looked like someone in the family or acted like someone in the family.

You may not have parents alive any more or even some sibling, but I can say that you have some family somewhere. You may even have a family reunion, an event familiar to many in the Black community.

Since we all have a family—it’s time to celebrate that fact. July is National Black Family Month, a time for people of the Black community to make a conscious effort to spend time with family members.

We need to strengthening and encouraging them and simply enjoying the company of our loved ones. Families have varied



traditions when it comes to holding their reunions: “We usually have an informal meet and greet Friday, and then a more formal dinner in a banquet hall on Saturday,” said an Atlanta attorney with family roots in Virginia.

She said that her family began holding reunions “because they realized that people were only getting together for funerals. Most families say this and don’t like this idea; therefore some started holding reunions.

An insurance agent in Philadelphia shared this similar sentiment, “The essence of the family reunion

is to bring all the generations together in one place for a particular weekend to bond in festivities with loved ones,” he said.

No matter how your family holds its reunion or even if you don’t attend a reunion, remember to take some time out this month to really appreciate your loved ones. Spend some time with immediate and extended family. You now have a reason, it’s National Black Family Month.

All of this came to mind because I recently lost one of my nieces to cancer. As we gathered at her home after the service, I thought about the many people that

miss going to a family reunion or a family gathering that is not a funeral.

Since July is National Black Family Month it is a month that is dedicated to the enrichment of Black families through, education, health and self improvement.

Founded in New York City by Shaun McLaughlin, she wanted the time that families get together for family reunions to be more than t-shirts and eating good food. The spirit was for family get-togethers to also include investments in improving the health of our bodies and encourage more investment in our children. My late cousin Sylvia Livingston Terry was all about this at our Demus Family Reunions.

Personally, I believe you can use this time as a time for quiet reflection about how things stand in your own family and what you can do to make improvements.

Since God has said that men are the head of the

family, let’s take a moment to celebrate the role of Black men in their families and in society at large.

Let’s reveal Black men to America. Let’s upend the stereotypes and honor what is best about Black men who are raising children in our communities and our country.

Tell somebody that according to the U.S. Army, Black men serve this country in uniform at a higher rate than all other men. By that measure, Black men are the most patriotic men in America.

Also, according to the U.S. Census, the rate of business creation by Black males have been growing at nearly twice the national

average for more than a decade. By that measure, Black men are among the most enterprising men in America.

And, according to the Cultures of Giving Report by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Black households continue to give to charity at a higher rate than all other households. By extrapolation, Black men may be among the most generous men in America.

Let’s celebrate our Black families, especially our Black men, not only in July but every month of the year.

(Editor’s Note: This column originally ran in July 2015).

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ASK, from Page 14

of time. Most of my prayer time, up until now, has been wasted asking the wrong questions.

Dr. James L. Snyder is pastor of the Family of God Fellowship, 1471 Pine Road, Ocala, FL 34472. He

lives with his wife in Silver Springs Shores. Call him at 352-687-4240 or e-mail jamesnyder2@att.net. The church web site is www.whatafellowship.com.

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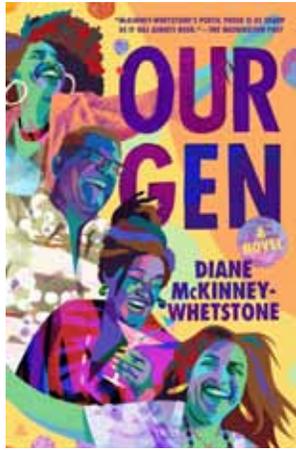
NDG Book Review: 'Our Gen' is a delightful surprise

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

Sometimes, you just have to lay your burden down.

When it's heaviest, when your arms can't support it and your back breaks from the weight of it, when your shoulders and your heart ache from it, release it. Let it go, let it be. Or, as in the new novel, "Our Gen" by Diane McKinney-Whetstone, ask a friend to lend a hand.

Cynthia hated everything about the Sexagenarian, an over-55 complex to which she'd moved. She hated that her son and his wife had all but forced her to move there, that "The Gen"



wasn't her old house, and that all her belongings were in boxes. As she lamented to her best friend, Gabrielle, Cynthia missed her old neighborhood and her old life.

Having said that, now, she did have to admit that her newly-built cottage was airy and bright and, contrary to what she was afraid of, she wasn't the only Black person in a sea of white faces. Oh, and she also met a man, not even 24 hours after moving in, although he didn't seem like he was exactly single.

Bloc never meant to sleep with Cynthia because he thought he was dating Tish – although Tish could be cruel sometimes, like she was better than everybody. Still, he enjoyed being around her and her friends. Being the only Black man living at The Gen was very

interesting...

It had been years – decades, actually – since Tish's father had died on the floor of a brothel, but she never forgot the humiliation of it. Imagine: her father, a widely respected professor, a charismatic speaker, in the arms of a common trollop!

Tish spent her entire life erasing the idea of it all.

Having worked as a sometime-spy for most of her adult life, Lavia loved living at The Gen. It was a great place to practice her skills and besides, she was born on a cruise ship and never really had a home before. Lavia didn't talk

about her past, but she knew things – things like, for instance, that secrets and half-truths can't stay hidden forever.

Ahhhhhh. That's what you're going to say when you have a cold beverage next to your chair and this wonderful surprise of a book in your lap.

You have to love a novel that starts out like "Our Gen" does, with a holistic medicine that works too well, and a hazy tryst on an air mattress. Everything moves up from there in an easy story told with the feel of a lazy-hot afternoon spent listening to music

with good friends.

But don't get too comfortable.

Author Diane McKinney-Whetstone has some shockers in store for her readers, the kind that don't seem like much until two pages later and then... boom, there's love and fifty-year-old heartache. Snap, the past comes roaring back. Pop, and secrets are gracefully kept.

Beware that there are some adult themes inside "Our Gen," but truly, it's an otherwise delightful surprise. Enjoy, and ask yourself if your bookclub might not be down with it, too.

HOMICIDE, from Page 5

The number of victims killed by strangers was 672.

For homicides in which the circumstances could be identified, 70 percent (2,856 out of 4,102) were not related to the commis-

sion of any other felony.

Of these, 56 percent (1,591 homicides) involved arguments between the victim and the offender.

With a homicide rate of 50.64 per 100,000 resi-

dents, Missouri ranked the highest.

Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin, Tennessee, Louisiana, Kentucky, Arkansas, Michigan, and Oklahoma rounded out the top 10.

The authors said individuals living in communities where violence is preva-

lent are at higher risk for a broad range of negative health and behavior outcomes.

An increased understanding of how trauma resulting from community violence influences development, health, and behavior can lead to improvements in

the way many social services are delivered as well as policy changes at the local and federal levels.

"At the same time, the firearms industry, looking to expand beyond its shrinking base of white male gun owners, has launched an organized marketing cam-

paign focusing on Black and Latino Americans," the study authors wrote.

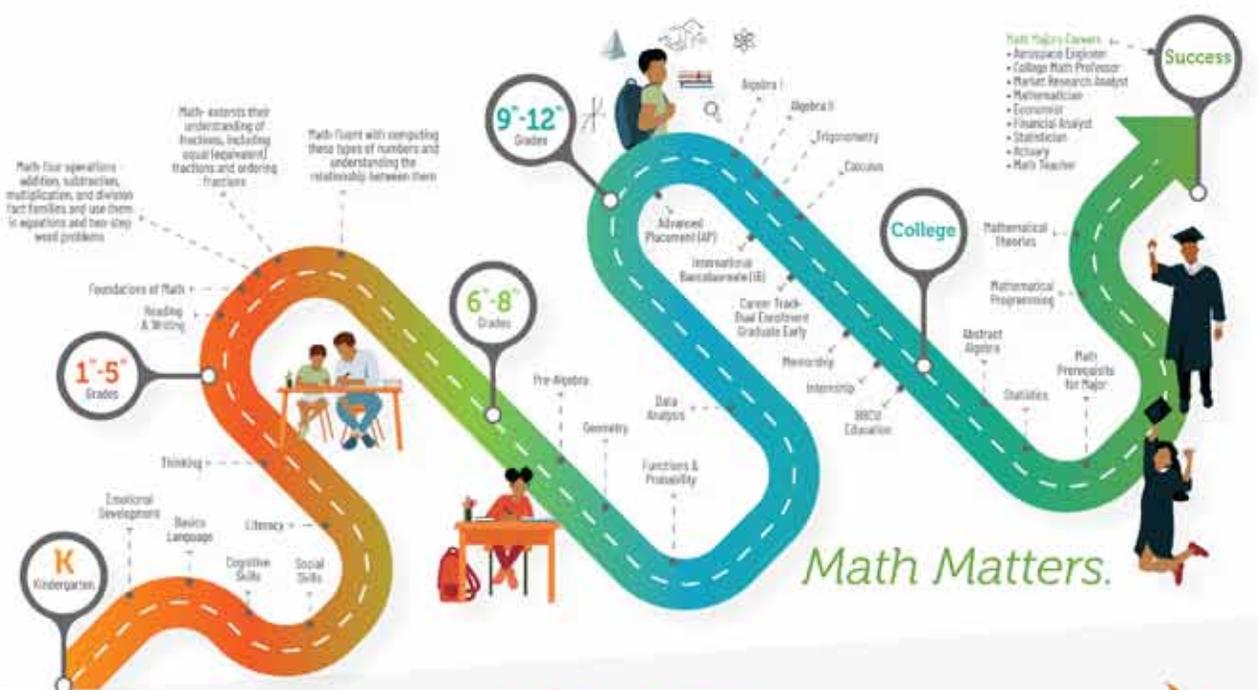
"If successful, such efforts can only increase gun death and injury in these communities."

The full study is available at <http://vpc.org/studies/blackhomicide22.pdf>.

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