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Fearless Fund and allies stand firm against legal challenge

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Senior National
Correspondent

A resounding call for justice echoed through the halls of the news conference held in New York as attorneys representing the Atlanta-based Fearless Fund declared their unwavering commitment to fight against a lawsuit they deem both misguided and frivolous.

The venture capital firm, dedicated to dismantling barriers to funding faced by women of color, is facing legal action brought forth by the American Alliance for Equal Rights, a nonprofit helmed by anti-affirmative action activist Edward Blum.

The legal challenge, brought before the U.S. District Court in Atlanta, poses a potential turning point in the ongoing debate over considering race in workplace matters.

A powerhouse legal team, including prominent civil rights advocate Ben Crump, declared they would fight Blum and others, alleging that the Fearless Fund discriminates against non-people of color. "We stand here not just to defend a cause but to defend the Fearless Fund from the enemies of equality," Crump passionately



Civil rights advocate Ben Crump declared they would fight Blum and others alleging Fearless Fund discriminates against non-people of color. (Photo via NNPA)

stated.

Founded in 2019 by three Black women, the Fearless Fund has championed economic empowerment and opportunity for women of color. The fund's cornerstone initiative, the Fearless Strivers Grant Contest, has provided financial support to Black women entrepreneurs, with awards amounting to as much as \$20,000.

However, the American Alliance for Equal Rights argues that the program violates a section of the Civil Rights Act of 1866 that bars racial discrimination in contracts. The organization claims that some members are being excluded from the contest due to

their race, demanding relief from what they perceive as an infringement on their rights.

"Today, the playing field is not level — that is beyond dispute," emphasized Alphonso David, a civil rights attorney, and President & CEO of The Global Black Economic Forum. "Those targeting Fearless Fund want to propagate a system that privileges some and shuts out most. They want us to pretend that inequities do not exist. They want us to deny our history."

Crump asserted that "Blum 'thought they would be the easiest

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People In The News ...



Vivian M. Williams, Esq.



Cindy Brown

NDG Quote of the Week: "Have a vision of excellence, a dream of success, and work like hell."
—Dr. Samuel DuBois Cook

Vivian M. Williams, Esq.

NEW YORK, (24-7Press-Release) -- Leveraging more than two decades of excellence in law, economics, business and crisis management, Dr. Williams has earned distinction as an adjunct professor of business at the Baruch College Zicklin School of Business. Since 2022, he has been channeling decades of real-world experience and academic rigor to mold future business leaders in the Department of International Business at Baruch College.

Outside of his teaching efforts with Baruch Col-



lege, Dr. Williams is the President of VMW Law – a law firm with divisions in the United States and the Caribbean, and The Williams Firm – a boutique real estate firm in New York

City. In his private practice, Dr. Williams uses a unique blend of law, business, and communications competencies to help corporations and entrepreneurs navigate legal and functional issues. He has decades of litigation and transactional experience, combined with competencies in predictive analysis. He offers a variety of services to help individuals and entities minimize risk and optimize opportunities in business ventures.

Dr. Williams hails from the small town of New Amsterdam in his native Guyana, South America and started his professional

life as a schoolteacher after completing training at Cyril Potter College of Education before migrating to the United States.

He later attained a Master of Laws in global antitrust law and economics from George Mason University's Antonin Scalia Law School and Master of Laws in intellectual property and media law from the Cardozo School of Law. He is a graduate of the George Washington University Graduate School of Political Management, where he attained a Master of Strategic Public Relations. This, followed by an MBA from

TRIUM – a top ranked global program jointly administered by NYU Stern School of Business, London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) and HEC (Paris). He capped off his academic achievements with a Doctorate in Business Administration from Baruch College.

Sitting at the intersection of law, economics, and public policy, Dr. Williams' scholarship focuses on the role of law and institutional structures in remedying or perpetuating socioeconomic disparities and injustices. Key areas of his practice are cross-border mergers

and acquisitions, intellectual property law, antitrust, corporate reorganization, crisis management and appellate advocacy.

Vivian M. Williams, Esq., has been included in Marquis Who's Who.

Since 1899, when A. N. Marquis printed the First Edition of Who's Who in America, Marquis Who's Who has chronicled the lives of the most accomplished individuals and innovators from every significant field of endeavor; including politics, business, medicine, law, education, art, religion and entertainment.

Cindy Brown

Former WNBA player Cindy Brown, identity theft and mortgage fraud victim, left living in her car after an armed Orange County Sheriff's Department (OCSD) SWAT team raided her home in 2020, has filed charges with the Federal Trade Commission (FTC). She is seeking civil



and criminal probes into alleged fraud, violations of state and federal wire fraud, and computer tampering statutes against the Bank of New York Mellon (BONYM) and The Ryan Firm, APC of Irvine, California.

Brown discovered new evidence in court filings by The Ryan Firm, APC in the matter of Brown vs. the

Bank of New York Mellon, California Court of Appeal's case No. G06145, of court record tampering and an unlawful entry into the California e-filing system without payment of required California court filing fees. Brown alleges that the actions amounted to theft of government services, conspiracy to commit theft, and obstruction

of Brown's constitutional rights to notice and due process.

Former Olympic gold medalist Brown, appearing in pro per, alleges that BONYM and its lawyers have tried since 2008 to gain title and possession of her home by engaging in various acts of fraud, deception, and exploitation of her status as a self-represented

litigant, and exploitation of her perceived celebrity status. In September 2020, Brown filed another action against BONYM in the Superior Court of California, County of Orange Case No. 30-2020- 01159870-CU-OR-WJ. She obtained a valid court order blocking any eviction effort by BONYM.

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publisher@northdallasgazette.com

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editor@northdallasgazette.com

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Allen R. Gray

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Minority Opportunity News, Inc.

Contributing Writers

Jackie Hardy

Lori Lee

Marland Mosely, Jr.

Jacqueline Murphy

Dwain Price

Terri Schlichenmeyer

Special Projects to**the Publisher**

Mrs. Clinique Hill

Account Executive

Sterling R. Bradford

Production

David Wilfong

NDG Obituary Dept.Vicky Richardson-Stewart
VP of Operations

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Ethnonationalism - corrosive and toxic

By Oscar Blayton

You would be hard-pressed to find a nation without a creation myth. Such myths are the fountainhead of justifications for most belligerent acts by one group of people against another.

But let me back up, because words are important, and the misuse of words is often the cause of belligerence that leads to misery and death.

The Nation

In this commentary, the word "nation" refers to a large body of people who are united by common descent or a history, traditions, cultures and often language. In today's world, nations often are understood to be nation-states – those geo-political entities displayed in multicolored patchwork fashion on global maps in elementary schools across the country. In many instances, those colorful patches are shaped by one group of people imposing their will upon another.

Despite current geopolitical realities, the word "nation" traces its roots back to the Latin, *nationem*, which was used to voice the concepts of "birth, origin; breed, stock, kind, species, race of people or tribe." And even though race is a social construct, it weighs most heavily when defining the concept of a nation.

The complex tapestry of human history has created a mishmash of concepts such as "race" and "nation." The distinguished Irish author Seumas MacManus wrote a celebrated book titled "The Story of the Irish Race: A Popular History of Ireland."

The Irish inhabit the island of Ireland, which sits in the north Atlantic Ocean to the northwest of the landmass many refer

to as "Europe." MacManus considered the Irish to be a homogeneous and distinct race of people separate from northern Europeans or the English. But apart from their cultural characteristics, the Irish are indistinguishable from northern Europeans and the English. To complicate matters further, the Irish are divided politically into two separate nations. Those who live in the north of the island are a part of the United Kingdom and those who live in the south are citizens of the Republic of Ireland. How the Irish came to be considered a separate and distinct race unto themselves, while at the same time divided into two nations, is illustrative of the complexities of the concepts of race and nation.

Volksgeist

How the Irish became a separate and distinct race can be explained by what Germans call *volksgeist*. It is a German word that expresses the unique spirit and character of a particular people. *Volksgeist* encapsulates their perceived characteristics that distinguish their nation and way of life from all others. These characteristics are believed to have continued to the present from prehistoric times and are as indigenous to the land as the forests and mountains. Inherent in this concept is a sense of intergenerational continuity of thought. And this continuity of thought often is said to lead to conservative nationalism.

Conservative nationalists apply the principle of organic society to nations, believing nations emerge naturally through a *volksgeist* among those who want to live with others who are similar to them. And in this kernel of an idea lies a great plague of human misery. *Volksgeist* speaks of the spirit of the

people, but it does not define "people," because it is understood to mean "people like us." These individuals seek meaning and security through patriotism related to people like them and the national community. This need for meaning and security leads to a desire to maintain national unity by encouraging national pride in people like them. This also justifies a resistance to change or expanding inclusion by conservative nationalists.

Conservative nationalists are fearful of – and see as their enemies – liberal nationalists who believe the principles of balance and natural harmony apply to individuals as well as nations. Balance and harmony imply shared wealth. And shared wealth is anathema to colonialists who exploit the resources and labor of other nations.

And this brings us to ethnonationalism.

Ethnonationalism is a socio-cultural political ideology that connects a particular ethnic or cultural group and a specific territory. It asserts that the interests, rights and identity of a particular group should be preserved and protected.

These people also seek to strengthen the bonds between them by acts that they claim preserve their cultural heritage, such as flying the Confederate flag to honor the valiant South. But in countries like the United States and other former colonial and post-colonial powers, ethnonationalism often leads to exclusionary and divisive tendencies, resulting in hostility toward those who belong to other ethnic or cultural groups. In multicultural nations, this xenophobia results in injustice and violence against those the ethnonationalists consider to be "the other."

Ethnonationalism marginalizes minority communities by creating a hierarchical society that excludes individuals based on ethnicity or culture. It is exacerbated when it intersects with authoritarianism and conservative political ideologies. Politicians such as Donald Trump and Marjorie Taylor Greene have put this type of cultural toxicity on full display. Through the use of their hate-filled and nonsensical rhetoric, these despicable individuals use ethnonationalism to stir up a frightful brew of grievance politics, notions of white superiority and general discontent as a means of gaining political power.

Ethnonationalism erodes democratic institutions and suppresses the voices of the oppressed. It is poison to pluralism and democratic values. The banning of books dealing with race and non-binary individuals is a result of ethnonationalism. The attack on the ability of women to have control over their own reproductive choices is a result of ethnonationalism. The mistreatment and exclusion of migrants arriving at our southern border is a result of ethnonationalism. The decimation of the voting rights laws established during the last half century is a result of ethnonationalism.

There are among our neighbors, co-workers and even relatives individuals who are ethnonationalists. And while we must love our neighbors, co-workers and relatives, we must not allow them to poison the land where we live.

Oscar H. Blayton is a former Civil Rights litigator, former Marine Corps combat pilot and human rights activist. His earlier commentaries may be found at <https://oblayton1.medium.com/>.

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Social determinants of health can contribute to higher CVD mortality rates in Black persons

ACP (Newswise) — A study of more than 50,000 US adults suggests that social determinants of health are a major contributing factor to higher mortality rates from cardiovascular disease (CVD) in Black individuals compared to Whites. The findings are published in *Annals of Internal Medicine*.

CVD mortality is persistently higher in the Black population than in other racial/ethnic groups in the United States. Social determinants of health (SDOHs) have been associated with



Hennie Stander / Unsplash

CVD risk factors and CVD events and mortality in epidemiologic studies. However, data are scarce on the complex relationship of so-

cial, behavioral, and metabolic risk factors with racial differences in CVD mortality in a large, nationally representative sample in the

U.S. population.

Researchers from Tulane University conducted an observational study of 50,808 persons aged 20 years and older to examine the degree to which social, behavioral, and metabolic risk factors are associated with CVD mortality and the extent to which racial differences in CVD mortality persist after these factors are accounted for. The authors found that age- and sex-adjusted CVD mortality was significantly higher in Black participants than White participants. They also found that in addi-

tion to behavioral and metabolic risk factors, several social factors—including unemployment, lower family income, food insecurity, not owning a home, and not being married or living with a partner—were significantly associated with CVD mortality independently of established behavioral and metabolic risk factors.

Black-White differences in CVD mortality were diminished after adjustment for behavioral and metabolic risk factors and entirely dissipated after adjustment for social factors. Accord-

ing to the authors, future research is warranted to understand the underlying mechanisms of SDOHs on CVD mortality and develop novel interventions for reducing CVD mortality in populations, especially in Black persons.

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Black men reap mental health benefits from 'otherfathering'

ALEXANDRIA — Black men serve a variety of parental roles in their communities — from teaching to coaching to mentoring youth. A new study reveals how this work, called otherfathering, influences the men's mental health.

The findings are published in the *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development (JMCD)*, a journal of the American Counseling Association. The study showed that men who serve as otherfathers find the role deeply fulfill-



Sebastian Leon Prado / Unsplash

ing, although they often face several logistical and emotional challenges.

"The Black men represented in this study who

act as otherfathers in their communities are proud to do it and doing so gives them a sense of purpose," said Michael Hannon, PhD,

an associate professor of counseling at Montclair State University in New Jersey and lead author on the study. "But they acknowledge that doing so is challenging, due to their desire to provide in ways that are feasible or sustainable. That can lead to feelings of guilt, frustration and stress."

To better understand the experience of otherfathering, Hannon and his colleagues interviewed eight participants from organizations of Black men whose

mission was to mentor Black children and adolescents. The participants said their otherfathering ranged from providing job or educational support to sharing wisdom.

"Sometimes it's just as simple as, 'Mr. A ... can you write me a letter of recommendation for the National Honor Society?,'" one participant told the researchers. "And then sometimes it's just at the corner store and a young man walks in and [says], 'Hey can you give me some life

knowledge?'"

The men in the study reported feeling stress from lack of financial support for their work and balancing otherfathering with personal and family commitments. Some said they have difficulty fully helping youth who have multiple commitments.

"The kids who come to the mentoring programs are competing with track, football, basketball," one participant said. "So they may

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BROWN, from Page 2

Rather than comply with the valid state court temporary restraining order (TRO), BONYM and its lawyers, The Ryan Firm APC, removed the case to federal court, and hid the removal from Brown and the state court judge. They also hid the TRO and eviction efforts from the federal judge. The federal judge later wrote, "[The Ryan Firm and] BONYM waited for the TRO to expire and then pursued an eviction without the Court's knowledge, perhaps with the hope

that Brown, who is proceeding pro se, was unlikely to know to renew the injunction request upon removal." The judge further added, "Instead of being forthright and recognizing this Court's jurisdiction over the matter, BONYM hid the relevant documents, and engaged in behind-the-scenes negotiations with [Orange County] county counsel to bypass this Court's authority."

Once BONYM and The Ryan Firm removed the case to federal court, only the United States Mar-

shall's Office, under the authority of the federal judge, could conduct a lawful eviction of Brown. The Ryan Firm, however, secretly engaged the OCSO to conduct the SWAT team raid on her home and her subsequent eviction. Brown recently testified before the FTC about the SWAT raid and other acts of unfair business practices by the bank and its lawyers. The FTC has jurisdiction to investigate and take action to protect consumers from unfair, and deceptive business practices, including violations of the Fair Debt Collections Practices Act as

alleged by Brown.

"I was in disbelief when the SWAT team came with guns drawn to my door and locked me out with just the clothes on my back, while they were inside taking selfie pictures of my Olympic and WNBA memorabilia," said Brown. "I thought there must be some mistake. I had no idea that the bank had been lying to the court and hiding documents from me."

Brown dismissed her state court actions to allow a federal probe to go forward, but added, "The court records in the California Court of Appeal's case No.

G061451 presented compelling evidence that someone tampered with public records in order to conceal the intended Orange County Sheriff's Department SWAT raid on my home. I believe that this was done in order to cover up the intended excessive use of force that was used during the eviction."

"I also found evidence that some persons submitted forged and false documents under the Ryan Firm's caption seeking and obtaining a false court order. Orange County Superior Court has a long and recent history of bribery

and record tampering," said Brown in a statement.

Brown is requesting that the United States Department of Justice, the Federal Trade Commission, and the Orange County District Attorney's Office investigate the Orange County Superior Court and the Orange County Sheriff's Department for their involvement in the SWAT raid on her home.

If you have been a victim of impersonation fraud, please visit the FTC's website. Also, visit BreakingTheInsidiousSilence.com and share your comments.



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CASA of Dallas County invites a few good men to Men of CASA Night

Dallas Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), a nonprofit dedicated to advocating for children is issuing an invitation to the community to attend its Men of CASA Night on Thursday, August 31 from 6-7 p.m. online.

AT&T Senior VP, Engineering & Operations, Corey Anthony, will bring welcoming remarks. As volunteer advocate and immediate past board chair for Dallas CASA, Anthony will share his story of the importance of advocacy, particularly the importance of men supporting boys without healthy male figures in their



lives.

Dallas CASA is looking for a few good men. "By joining as a male volunteer advocate, you have the chance to change the narrative for a child and

help them find the strength to overcome adversity," said Debi Williams, Chief Program Officer of Dallas CASA.

MEN of CASA show people what a good man

is. Many in foster care lack male guidance to support a good life, and too often, age out of the foster care system without finding permanent homes or family connections. These children need to experience the positive presence of safe men. Boys in particular need positive male role models to show them what a good man is.

Volunteers will work with the child welfare and court system to ensure children receive the protection and support they need while in the protective care of the state. With just a few hours per week, volunteers will help a child learn to trust

again, while providing the guidance, stability, and support to prevent them from falling through the cracks.

Dallas CASA encourages male advocates to make a difference by simply being present. CASA volunteers are a source of hope and support for child victims as they wait for the courts to decide where they may safely live. Advocates help children access the services they need to heal from their abuse, and the information and recommendations CASA volunteers provide help to expedite the court process and provide better outcomes for children under

the state's protection.

CASA volunteers come from all walks of life, and most are employed full-time. Volunteers must be 21 or older, undergo a background check and take part in a personal interview.

Dallas CASA is the only court-appointed child advocacy program in its county that provides trained volunteer advocates for children who are in the child welfare system due to abuse or neglect.

RSVP by emailing nnevarez@dallascasa.org or for more information on Dallas CASA, visit <https://www.dallascasa.org>.

Dallas Office of Homeless Solutions activates temporary cooling centers

The City of Dallas Office of Homeless Solutions (OHS) Temporary Cooling Centers are strategically located at various recreation centers and libraries Monday-Saturday during their normal business hours. The centers are open to the public providing all ages a cool and comfortable environment and equipped with air conditioning, hydration stations, and essential amenities. Facilities include Arcadia Park, Audelia Road, Bachman Lake, Bookmarks in NorthPark Center, the Central Library, Dallas West, Forest Green, Fretz Park, Grauwylers

Park, Hampton-Illinois, Highland Hills, Kleberg-Rylie, Lakewood, Lochwood, Martin Luther King, Mountain Creek, North Oak Cliff, Oak Lawn, Park Forest, Paul Laurence Dunbar Lancaster-Kiest, Pleasant Grove, Polk-Wisdom, Prairie Creek, Preston Royal, Renner Frankford, Skillman, Southwestern, Skyline, Timberglen, Vickery Park, and White Rock Hills.

The City recently announced plans to activate the Temporary Inclement Weather Cooling Centers based on the National Oceanic and Atmospheric

forecast, in accordance with Chapter 45 of the City Code and to safeguard the well-being of residents in response to the scorching heatwave.

The primary TIWCC site at 2929 Hickory Street, operated by the City's external partner Austin Street Center, opened its doors from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. this past weekend. Jaycee - Zaragoza Recreation Center at 3114 Clymer Street, Kiest Park Recreation Center at 3080 S. Hampton Road, and Martin Luther King Jr. Recreation Center at 2901 Pennsylvania Ave. were open noon to 8 p.m.

on Sunday.

By activating these Cooling Centers, OHS aims to engage and protect the most vulnerable Dallas community members by mitigating risks associated with extreme heat such as heat exhaustion and heatstroke to help prevent potential emergencies.

Residents are encouraged to seek refuge from sweltering temperatures at cooling centers staffed with trained professionals to as-

sist those in need and distribute water.

The City is collaborating with local organizations to ensure those in need are aware of and can easily access these resources. "As we continue to navigate new issues concerning severe inclement weather, we thank OHS partners who continue to make temporary inclement weather shelters and cooling centers possible" said Christine Crossley, Director of the

City's Office of Homeless Solutions, "OHS thanks Austin Street Center, Dallas Public Library, Dallas Fire-Rescue, Office of Emergency Management, Dallas Police Department, City Security, area shelters, service providers and temporary inclement weather providers for moving together to efficiently focus our collective efforts."

In addition to the above-

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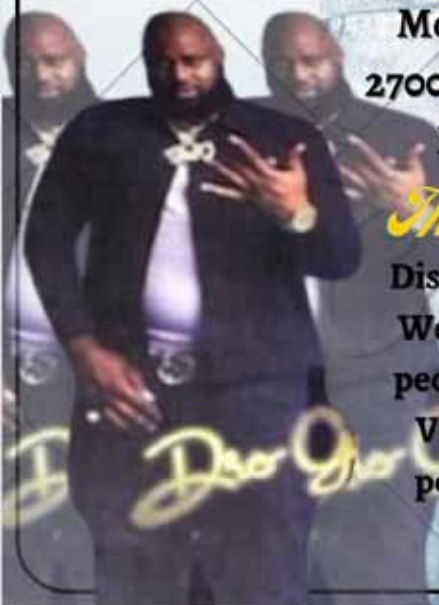
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For Black teens, school belonging can be a matter of life and death

Newswise — Academic performance has long been linked to how supported students feel at school. Now, a Rutgers study suggests this sentiment is also essential to preventing suicides.

A Rutgers researcher found that having a strong sense of school belonging — the subjective feeling of being accepted, valued, included and encouraged in the school community — could mitigate suicidal tendencies among Black adolescents.

“Having a supportive teacher or other nonparent adult can change a child’s life because they will want to go to school,” said Adrian Gale, an assistant professor at the Rutgers School of Social Work and co-author of the study published in the *Journal of Racial and*



Rutgers researcher finds that as sense of belonging at school decreases, risk for suicidal ideation and attempts increases (Eye for Ebony / Unsplash)

Ethnic Health Disparities. “We wanted to understand the factors that affect kids’ sense of belonging at school, and how these factors might influence rates of suicide.”

To fill this knowledge gap,

Gale and colleagues at Ohio State University, Washington University in Saint Louis, and the University of Michigan analyzed data from a national sample of adolescents in grades 7-12. The study, which started in

the 1994-95 school year, followed the adolescents in waves, with the most recent wave in 2016-2018. Participants were asked a series of questions about their emotional ties to school and experiences with teacher-based discrimination and peer-based prejudice.

Researchers found that as Black adolescents’ sense of school belonging decreased, their risk for suicidal ideation and attempts dramatically increased — by as much as 35 percent.

Of the 4,229 respondents, 8% said they thought about suicide and 4% had attempted it. Less than half said they felt a sense of belonging at their school.

More than half reported feeling that their teachers treated them unfairly, while slightly more than 50 per-

cent of the participants said students at their school were racially prejudiced.

In the United States, Black suicide rates have historically been lower than other racial groups. In 2021, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that non-Hispanic American Indian and Alaska Native people and non-Hispanic Whites had the highest rates of suicide, with 28.1 and 17.4 per 100,000, respectively. For non-Hispanic Blacks, the rate was 8.7%.

But Gale said recent research indicates a disturbing increase in the rates of suicide among Black boys and girls. With these trends accelerating in the COVID-era, understanding how the sense of belonging at school impacts suicidal thoughts

could be useful for mitigation.

“These findings highlight the importance of working to enhance the feeling of belonging among Black teenagers in school,” he said.

To address this challenge, Gale said educators should provide thorough mental health support services that consider the cultural background of Black adolescents. Also, schools should help teachers identify indications of reduced school belonging.

“Most of the elements that influence children’s academic achievement and school life — family socioeconomic status, for instance — take a generation to change,” said Gale. “The relationship a child has with their school is something we can influence now.”

Positive steps for easing the back-to-school transition

(Newswise) — There’s more to back-to-school season than snagging the latest notebooks, bookbags, and trendy jackets and school clothes. The new routine, new teachers, and new schools can signal a big adjustment period for some students.

“Anxiety can be associated with the unknown, such as what will the teacher this year be like, what friends will be in my class, where will my classroom be, and likely other worries can pop into children’s minds,” said Cindy Smith, director of the Children’s Emotions Lab at Virginia Tech and an expert in child emotional development, parent-child interaction, and parenting behaviors. “As parents, understanding how children are feeling can be so important



Solen Feyissa / Unsplash

to helping them through school transitions.”

Adults should be especially sensitive to changes in their students’ behavior during this time of the year.

“Younger children are not likely to be able to label the emotions that they are feeling,” Smith said. “Anxiety about a new school year could look

like an upset stomach or irritability about things that are not even related to school. Older children and teens might not openly express how they are feeling about the transition to a new school year. Parents may not think that the children are experiencing emotions because the emotions are not being openly dis-

played.”

Smith shares some ways that parents and guardians can help children ease the stress of returning to the back-to-school routine.

- Visit the school or classroom before the year starts, which helps children to visualize what their days might look like.
- Arrange a playdate or meet up with other children in their school.
- Read books with children about going to school and discuss questions as you read together. For families with more than one child, having the older child read with you can also give opportunities for modeling for the younger child and for the older child to express how they are feeling too.
- Talk with students about what goals they have

for the upcoming year to help them get excited. Also, families can talk about what their children might learn in the upcoming year.

• Any activity done with children can provide opportunities to talk about how they are feeling about school, even if the activity has nothing to do with school. Having time dedicated solely to your students shows them that you are interested in what they might need and are there to support them. Make it a no-phones time to avoid distractions.

• Practice the routine of getting up and ready for school a few days before the year starts.

• Make sure children have their school supplies ready for the first day.

• Plan a fun activity af-

ter the first day of school, such as getting ice cream. This activity gives children something fun to anticipate.

“Always remember that children take their cues from the adults around them,” Smith said. “If parents are showing excitement about going back to school, then children will pick up on that excitement.”

Cindy Smith is a professor and associate department head in the Department of Human Development and Family Science at Virginia Tech. She also directs the Children’s Emotions Lab, a research space for faculty, graduate, and undergraduate students to study young children’s emotional development and caregiver support.

← FEARLESS, from Page 1

ones to pick off. Oh, was he wrong.”

Others joining in defense of the Fearless Fund include the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, the National Women’s Law Center,

and the Gibson, Dunn, and Crutcher law firm.

“This attack does not change our mission. In fact, we will remain steadfast on ensuring that the Fearless Fund will contin-

ue to empower women of color entrepreneurs,” said Arian Simone, CEO and co-founder of the Fearless Fund.

Backed by industry giants like J.P. Morgan Chase and Mastercard, the Fearless Fund has invested

over \$26.5 million in businesses led by women of color. They’ve awarded grants totaling more than \$3 million to Black women-owned businesses.

“This lawsuit turns civil rights law on its head,” affirmed Jason Schwartz,

Partner at Gibson Dunn. “Offering grants to Black women small business owners fill an important void to achieve economic freedom.”

Blum’s claims are baseless and seek to subvert existing law, added Alphonso

David, another of the Fearless Fund’s lawyers and president and CEO of the Global Black Economic Forum. “We are prepared to vigorously defend Fearless Fund and the critical work that they do,” David stated.

McKinney to see lower city property tax rate if proposed budget passes

MCKINNEY -- McKinney's City Manager proposed an \$849 million total budget for Fiscal Year 2024.

The budget, which includes \$202 million in the general fund, represents an increase of 2.34% above the current property tax levy and would lower the city's property tax rate from 0.457485 to 0.427513.

The proposed rate means property owners would pay \$0.427513 for every \$100 assessed property value.



Rick Ray / Wikimedia

McKinney residents and stakeholders are encouraged to provide feedback

on the city's proposed budget at www.mckinneytexas.org/budget before the final

budget is scheduled for adoption on Sept. 5. The 2024 Fiscal Year is Oct. 1 – Sept. 30, 2024.

"The proposed budget is a reflection of the valuable input provided by our community, as well as our unwavering commitment to accountability, transparency, and engagement. Our top priority is to continue providing essential services while investing in the future of our community, as envisioned by our mayor and City Council," said

City Manager Paul Grimes.

"We are confident that this budget will effectively enable us to achieve our shared goals."

A public hearing will take place at 6 p.m. Sept. 5 at City Hall, 222 N. Tennessee St., McKinney.

As one of the fastest-growing cities in America, McKinney maintains a nationally-acclaimed quality of life and a convenient location to the DFW area. The city offers award-

winning schools, a vibrant historic downtown and cultural district, and a trendy culinary scene set within a uniquely beautiful natural setting.

McKinney is home to the top-rated McKinney National Airport and serves as the headquarters to many Fortune 500 companies. A balanced way of life, sense of place and authenticity make McKinney "Unique by nature." To learn more, visit McKinneyTexas.org.

Proceeds from restaurants on 821 Day to fund Officer Houston Memorial Highway signs

MESQUITE – To honor the memory of fallen Mesquite Police Officer Richard Houston II, the Mesquite Police Association (MPA) Charities has created 821 Day, a campaign that will take place on Aug. 21.

Named after Officer Houston's badge number, on 821 Day participating area restaurants will donate a portion of their proceeds to help pay for

signage on a designated section of Interstate 635 as the Officer Richard Houston II Memorial Highway.

"We believe that 821 Day is a small way that we can all come together to honor Officer Houston's memory and support his family," said MPA Charities President Officer Bruce Sales.

"Our goal is to have the signage installed by the second anniversary date of

his end of watch, which is Dec. 3. We are extremely grateful for each and every donation."

Officer Houston was slain in the line of duty in 2021.

MPA Charities collaborated with Texas State Rep. Victoria Neave to write legislation to have part of Interstate 635 in Mesquite named for Officer Houston.

The measure passed

unanimously and on June 10, Gov. Greg Abbott signed House Bill 975 into law designating the roadway. The law takes effect on Sept. 1.

The signage will be manufactured and installed by the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) but the markers

themselves must be purchased by the community. MPA Charities has raised approximately \$16,000 toward the estimate of \$40,500 for the signs.

To see a list of participating restaurants and to make donations, visit www.mpacharities.com/821Day.



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10:00 am

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SPEAKER


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Pastor of
Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church, Fate, TX

MISTRESS OF CEREMONY


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Former Mississippi officers plead guilty to state charges for torturing and abusing two Black men



Michael Jenkins and Eddie Parker filed a federal lawsuit in June, alleging the officers forcibly entered their home, handcuffed, kicked, waterboarded, and repeatedly tasered them. (Photo via NNPA)

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Senior National
Correspondent

Six ex-law enforcement officers from Mississippi have admitted guilt for their participation in the torture and abuse of two Black men earlier this year. Five former deputies from the Rankin County Sheriff's Office and one former officer from the Richland Police Department have admitted to federal charges related to a racially motivated attack that occurred in January. Christian Dedmon, Hunter Elward, Brett McAlpin, Jeffrey Middleton, Daniel Opdyke, and Joshua Hartfield, all of whom are white, have admitted to conspiring to obstruct justice.

Dedmon faced charges of home invasion, while prosecutors charged Elward with both home invasion and aggravated assault. McAlpin, Middleton, Opdyke, and Hartfield each bore an extra charge of first-degree obstruction of justice.

The former officers appeared in Rankin County court on Monday, Aug. 14, clad in prison jumpsuits and wrist shackles with the names of the county jails where they are incarcerated concealed by duct tape.

The 13 felony charges included torture and physical abuse.

Prosecutors said the ex-

officers, who called themselves "the goon squad," barged into a home in Braxton, Mississippi, without a warrant and subjected the Black men inside for two harrowing hours to unspeakable violence.

Michael Jenkins and Eddie Parker filed a federal lawsuit in June, alleging that the officers forcibly entered their home, handcuffed, kicked, waterboarded, and repeatedly tasered them.

Their claims also include an attempted sexual assault and how the officers poured liquids on them and forced them to shower to erase evidence. One of the officers placed a gun in a victim's mouth and fired, severely injuring him.

Throughout the brutal assault, Jenkins and Parker said the officers used racial slurs, including "monkeys" and the n-word.

"These former law enforcement officers have committed heinous and wanton acts of violence disgracing the badge which so many others have worn with pride and honor," said U.S. Attorney Darren J. LaMarca for the Southern District of Mississippi. "They violated their oaths and have become the criminals they were sworn to protect us from."

Special Agent in Charge Jermicha Fomby of the FBI Jackson Field Office said citizens deserve credible

law enforcement to safeguard the community from crime.

"The actions of these deputies and the officer significantly deprived the citizens of that protection and eroded the trust earned each day by honest law enforcement officers throughout the nation," Fomby insisted.

"The FBI is committed to aggressively investigating those who misuse their authority, violate the color of law, or inject biases in the execution of their duties."

Further, without a relationship of trust between law enforcement officers

and those they swear to serve and protect, the fight for justice and against crime is doom to fail, added Mississippi State Attorney General Lynn Fitch.

"This brutal attack caused more than physical harm to these two individ-

ual victims, it severed that vital trust with the people," Fitch asserted.

"This abuse of power will not be tolerated. The Attorney General's Office is committed to delivering justice for these victims and all Mississippians, and we

are grateful for this strong partnership we have with our U.S. Attorney's Offices and FBI Field Office. Working together, it is my hope that we can help these victims heal and restore confidence in our criminal justice system."



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Garland NAACP hosts 32nd annual Freedom Fund Brunch and Silent Auction

GARLAND -- The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) Garland, Texas Unit, which serves the Garland Community, will host its 32nd annual Freedom Fund Brunch and Silent Auction. The event will be held on Saturday, September 16, 2023 for Brunch at 10:00 am at Hyatt Place, 5101 N President George Bush Hwy., Garland, 75040.

An online silent auction will take place from Sep. 10, 2023 to Sep. 16, 2023,



Sam Moghadam-Khamsheh / Unsplash

ending at 11:00 a.m.

The theme of the event is "Moving Forward Together 'Revived, Restored and

Rejuvenated.'" Keynote speaker,

The Keynote Speaker will be Dr. Demond

Dawkins, Pastor of Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church in Fate, and the Mistress of Ceremony will be Dr. Lakisha Culpepper, GISD Liaison to the African American Community. Youth Scholarship Recipients from GISD will be announced at the event, as well as the recipient of the Elaine Bradley Scholarship and NAACP Garland Youth Council member. GISD African American seniors with the highest GPA for each of the seven high schools will be recognized.

And the John Willie Washington Legacy Scholarship for low-income African American students enrolled in State of Texas certified vocational, technical training school or Dallas County Community College District will also be honored.

Adult awards recipients will also be announced, including the Education Award honoring Jonathan Coffield, Director of Choirs at Austin Academy for Excellence. The Entrepreneur Award will go to

Sabrina Carter Henry of Nana's Country Citchen & Catering LLC. Avid volunteer in Garland and surrounding communities, Wathenia Woods Clark, will be honored with the Community Service Award, and Jesse Ramon will receive the Volunteer Award for his volunteer work as Track & Field Coach.

For more information, go to www.garlandtx-naacp.org or contact the NAACP Garland Unit at 972.381.5044, press 5.

Nichelle Lewis' Tik Tok performance lands her the role of a lifetime

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Senior National Correspondent

Nichelle Lewis, a 24-year-old entertainer, known as a triple threat in theater, music, and social media, will star in the revival of "The Wiz" on Broadway.

A graduate of Molloy University's class of 2021, Lewis ingeniously harnessed the reach of her modest TikTok account to showcase her vocal range. One of her renditions, "Home" from "The Wiz,"



Nichelle Lewis will star in the revival of "The Wiz" on Broadway, placing her in the prestigious lineage of performers like Stephanie Mills and Diana Ross. (Photo via NNPA)

resounded far and wide, reaching the ears of astute casting agents who promptly beckoned her to audition.

A seasoned actress who has appeared in "Hair-spray" and showcased her vocal prowess on "Ameri-

can Idol," Lewis reportedly captivated casting agents with her creative TikTok escapades.

Now the Virginia native has seized the coveted role of Dorothy, placing her in the prestigious lineage of iconic performers like R&B superstar Stephanie Mills and pop icon Diana Ross.

"It's been a pretty crazy journey," Lewis conveyed

in an Associated Press interview on Monday, Aug. 14. "I'm honored to be making my debut as Dorothy. I know I'm following in some really big footsteps."

Lewis will act alongside Wayne Brady and Alan Mingo Jr., who will take turns playing the mysterious character known as the Wiz. Singer and actress

Deborah Cox will grace the stage as Glinda.

"The Wiz" will soon begin a tour across the United States, starting in Baltimore this fall and heading to Broadway in 2024. The cast includes Kyle Ramar Freeman as the Lion, Phillip Johnson Richardson as the Tin Man, and Avery Wilson

See LEWIS, Page 11

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NDG Book Review: 'Althea' is an inspiring look at a sports legend

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

Love-all.

It sounds like a sweet way to start a game, doesn't it? But you know the score: nobody's made any points in this tennis game.

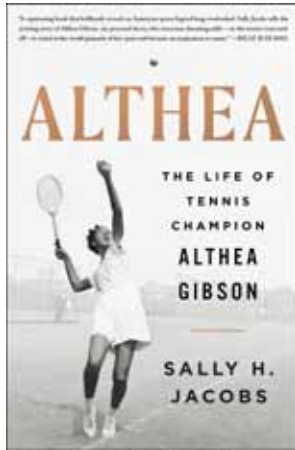
Basically, the score is zero-zero but things could change with one good backhand shot. As in the new book "Althea" by Sally H. Jacobs, tennis, like life, moves quickly.

No one knew the significance of that day in 1941. Mostly, it was just another afternoon at one of Harlem's elite Black tennis clubs, a club that enjoyed a recent surge of popularity in a sport that wasn't just for white people.

"Negro" players embraced tennis in great numbers, too, and on that day in Harlem, spectators watched as a sullen, "skinny thirteen-year-old [Black] girl" smacked around a few balls as if she wanted to punish them.

Young Althea Gibson treated tennis balls with the same aggression she had received.

She was born in the South but raised in Harlem after an aunt offered to bring baby



Althea north during the Great Migration.

Once reunited with her parents, Althea had a shaky relationship with them: by the time she was twelve, her father beat her, teaching her to fight the hard way. He punched her regularly until she "tore him up" one day.

Later, she used her fists on the streets, where she spent most of her time. She shoplifted to eat, spent hours watching "the flickers" and she "found other kinds of competition that absorbed her as much as fighting..." She bested most boys at ball sports – once even challenging Sugar Ray Robinson to bowl against her, which led to a lifelong friendship. She loved basketball but tennis is where she excelled.

In 1938, Gibson was named New York City's paddle tennis champion, which gained her a coach. Her appearance at that elite club in 1941 led to formal tennis lessons. The following year, she attracted the attention of two wealthy doctors who took her under their wings and smoothed her rough edges.

And then they set their sights on the big tournaments...

At a time in history when we see Black athletes on fields and courts as an everyday thing, it's important to remember who helped put them there. Author Sally H. Jacobs tells the almost-forgotten story of one woman whose struggle to win wasn't just in her sport.

In that way, "Althea" is a very nice surprise. Jacobs doesn't soften Gibson's early lifestory and with that, readers will get a true sense of the steeliness that Gibson possessed even as a young girl. Other stories hint that Gibson was a complicated person, androgynous, "aggressive," often angry, impatient, and driven.

This, and the explanations of the game and the times and social mores in

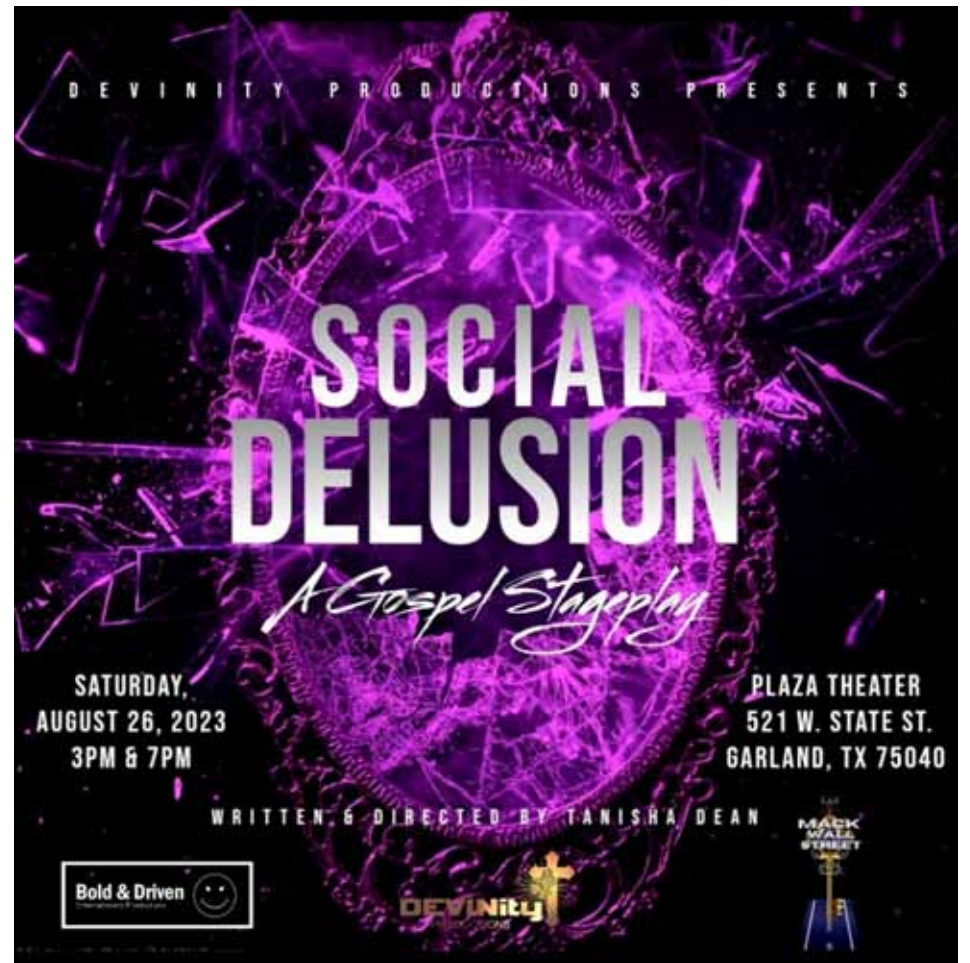
Gibson's lifetime make it clear that not saying Gibson's name in the same breath with Jackie Robinson and Jesse Owens is a grave mistake.

Sports fans, don't miss this biography. Black his-

tory scholars, you want it. Tennis lovers, there's a lot of tennis here, so make a racquet for it. "Althea" is a grand slam.

Sally H. Jacobs is a former reporter for the Boston Globe, and winner of both

the coveted George Polk Award and the 2014 Pulitzer Prize for Breaking News Reporting with the Globe newsroom. She is the author of The Other Barack, a biography of Barack Obama's father.



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CHIPS and Science Act marks one year, boosting American tech sector

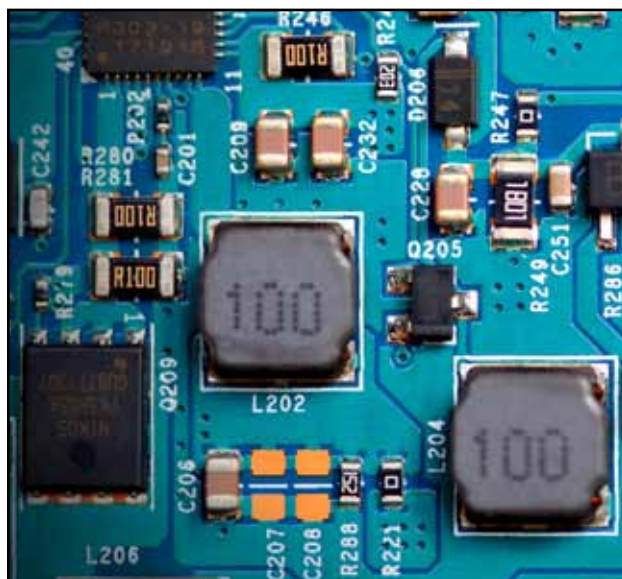
By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Senior National
Correspondent

Semiconductors, which power everything from cell phones to cars, are the bedrock of modern technology. Though conceived in the United States, U.S. chip production has dropped drastically, from nearly 40% of the world's chips to just over 10%. This has made our economy vulnerable to global supply chain disruptions.

"The CHIPS and Science Act aims to change that," Biden declared. According to a White House Fact Sheet, the President's comments resonated with his pledge to reinvent the landscape.

Administration officials said a pivotal facet of the "Bidenomics" agenda, the CHIPS and Science Act, has elicited tangible responses. Corporations have pledged over \$166 billion in investments toward domestic semiconductor manufacturing, spawning job opportunities across diverse communities.

Administration officials said that the heart of the Act, a \$53 billion infusion into U.S. semiconductor



Semiconductors, which power everything from cell phones to cars to refrigerators, have become the bedrock of technology. Though conceived in the United States, production has declined drastically from nearly 40% to just over 10%, rendering the U.S. economy vulnerable to international disruptions.

(Anne Nygard / Unsplash)

manufacturing, research, development, and workforce initiatives, is pivotal in propelling the nation's technological progress. The legislation also mandated a 25% tax credit for capital investments in semiconductor manufacturing, which officials said has been instrumental in maintaining America's position at the forefront of innovation.

Biden explained, "Over the coming months, my Administration will continue to implement this

historic law, make sure American union workers, small businesses, and families benefit from investments spurred by the CHIPS and Science Act, and make America once again a leader in semiconductor manufacturing and less dependent on other countries for our electronics or clean energy supply chains."

Administration officials reiterated that the White House's unwavering dedication to revitalize the job market has been palpable.

Already, officials have established a set of five Workforce Hubs to foster pipelines for Americans to access well-compensated positions in the semiconductor industry and other sectors witnessing an upsurge due to Biden's Investing in America agenda – a comprehensive strategy encompassing the CHIPS and Science Act, the Inflation Reduction Act, and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

Additionally, the White House unveiled a nationwide Workforce Sprint, which is laser-focused on cultivating avenues into advanced manufacturing roles, including within the semiconductor realm.

More than 50 community colleges have proactively introduced new or expanded semiconductor workforce programs, and the National Science Foundation has invested in the American semiconductor workforce through ground-

breaking initiatives, encompassing the manufacturing workforce, backing researchers, and advancing curriculum development.

Strategic partnerships with major semiconductor and technology companies have reinforced the endeavor, solidifying the nation's position as a crucible of innovation and knowledge exchange.

The White House noted that applications by students for full-time jobs posted by semiconductor companies soared by an

impressive 79% during the 2022–2023 academic year, in stark contrast to the 19% growth witnessed in other industries.

"Over the past year, agencies across the federal government have been developing and executing on programs established under CHIPS to encourage domestic semiconductor manufacturing, invest in research and development, and support supply chain resilience and workforce development," the White House said.

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LEWIS, from Page 9

as the Scarecrow.

"I'm so excited that this is a part of my story because I feel like there's so many people out there who started out with such a small following, and I feel like they're hard on themselves about it," she remarked.

"But I'm like, 'You never know whose watching those videos.' I never knew that 'The Wiz' was looking at my videos."

"The Wiz," an adaptation of L. Frank Baum's timeless "The Wonderful Wizard of Oz" is a book by William F. Brown and is brought to life through the music and lyrics of Charlie Smalls.

Lewis acknowledged the importance of the heroine's quest to discover herself in

a strange world and said she supports others in finding their true selves.

"I feel like it's extremely important for people, especially right now, to see that they can be powerful just by being themselves and just by being individual and unique," she told the AP. "So, I think that's how the show speaks to me."

"The Wiz" originally debuted on Broadway in 1975, earning seven Tony Awards, including the coveted title of Best Musical. The production included memorial songs like "What Would I Do If I Could Feel" and "Ease on Down the Road." It featured Mills as Dorothy, Dee Dee Bridgewater as the good witch Glinda, and Andre

De Shields as the enigmatic Wiz.

A 1978 cinematic adaptation featured Diana Ross, Lena Horne, Richard Pryor, Michael Jackson, Nipsey Russell, and Ted Ross, and in 2015, a live televised rendition featured Queen Latifah, Ne-Yo, and David Alan Grier.

With her mother embracing the news with jubilant tears and ecstatic exclamations, Lewis acknowledged the transformation her life may now take.

"She's like, 'Your life is going to change,'" Lewis spoke of her mother's reaction.

"And I'm like, 'I don't know. It probably will. I feel so blessed, and I'm so glad I get to share it with her.'"



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Embracing Diversity: Building a more inclusive construction industry

By Dennis Yung

HOUSTON -- With Texas ranking as the sixth most diverse state and Dallas as one of the most ethnically diverse cities in the country, it is no surprise diversity has emerged as an essential thread, weaving through various sectors and industries, stirring innovation and growth. The construction industry is no exception when it comes to making this intentional paradigm shift. With every brick laid, beam positioned, and plan realized, the construction industry has the power to mirror the diver-

sity that characterizes our global community. In recent years, the importance of diversity in construction has gained traction, driven by a fusion of economic, social, and ethical factors that propel the industry forward. Traditionally, the construction industry has been male dominated. This no longer reads true as women continue to break through the barriers that confined them to supporting roles in the past. Women are making an impact in every facet of construction, from architectural design and engineering to project man-

agement and site execution. Women not only bring fresh perspectives and problem-solving approaches but also help alleviate the industry's chronic labor shortage by tapping into an underutilized talent pool. STEM education, mentorship programs, scholarships, and advocacy groups work to nurture female talent, fostering an environment where women can thrive in construction. While the gender barrier is knocked down daily, the construction industry must also address racial and ethnic representation. Construction projects transcend

cultures and languages in this interconnected world. This makes it crucial for construction teams to mirror the communities they serve. The industry is making strides toward inclusivity by actively recruiting individuals and subcontractors from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented communities. This not only promotes equity but also enriches problem-solving capabilities and nurtures an environment where cultural sensitivity becomes a key driver of success. The benefits of diversity in construction are not

simply altruistic – they are founded in sound economics and improved project results. Diverse teams easily adapt to challenges and have the wherewithal to tackle complex issues that define modern construction projects. Varied perspectives lead to more creative problem-solving as individuals bring their unique experiences to the table, promoting a culture of innovation. Furthermore, a construction company's commitment to social responsibility and diversity should align with its values, from the top down. This align-

ment will catch the attention of potential clients and business partners who share these same principles, which, in turn, attracts a wider client base and fosters long-term relationships. Diversity in construction requires more than good intentions; there must be a fundamental shift in organizational culture and practices. Companies must actively challenge biases, both implicit and explicit, that may hinder the recruitment, promotion, and retention of diverse talent.

See DIVERSITY, Page 13


MEN, from Page 4

not get all they could have gained from the mentoring programs because of their prior obligations.” Overall, however, otherfathering yields substantial psychological returns, the researchers report. “The cumulative effect of these experiences (i.e., rewards and challenges) appears to have a positive impact on participant mental health and wellbeing that keeps them otherfathering for many years despite the various stressors and challenges experienced,” Hannon and his coauthors wrote.

The researchers recommend further studies with more participants to help counselors best understand the distinct experiences of Black men who engage in otherfathering. They also urge counselors who work with Black male clients to recognize the burdens and tensions that otherfathering can produce. They recommend counselors suspend preconceived notions and/or stereotypes about Black men, demonstrate a genuine interest in learning about Black men's lived experiences, and engender trust in the therapeutic relationship so that Black male clients are more willing to be vulnerable.

Co-authors on the study were Alfonso L. Ferguson, Ph.D., Saybrook Univer-

sity in California, Raymond Blanchard, Ph.D., of Montclair State, and Jasmine E. Santiago-Ataande, a licensed professional counselor in New Jersey. The report, “Otherfathering and Black Men's Mental Health: A Phenomenological Study,” is part of a forthcoming JMCD special issue: “Understanding the Black Male Experience”. An abstract of the paper is available at <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/21611912?journalRedirectCheck=true>. *Founded in 1952, the American Counseling Association (ACA) is a not-for-profit, professional and educational organization that is dedicated to the growth and enhancement of the counseling profession. ACA represents nearly 60,000 members and is the world's largest association exclusively representing professional counselors in various practice settings. Driven by the belief that all people can benefit from the power of counseling, ACA's mission is to promote the professional development of counselors, advocate for counselors, and ensure that ethical, culturally inclusive practices protect our members' clients and all people who seek counseling services.*



McKinney Housing Authority

Amendment to the 2023 ANNUAL PLAN & SIGNIFICANT AMENDMENT TO THE FIVE YEAR PLAN

PUBLIC MEETINGS NOTICE

The Quality Housing & Work Responsibility Act of 1998 requires the McKinney Housing Authority to submit an Agency Plan each year.

The PHA Plan is a comprehensive guide to public housing agency (PHA) policies, programs, operations, and strategies for meeting local housing needs and goals. There are two parts to the PHA Plan: the 5-Year Plan, which each PHA submits to HUD once every 5th PHA fiscal year, and the Annual Plan, which is submitted to HUD every year. Below is a list of meetings that are scheduled to review and discuss the Agency Plan documents for the 2023 fiscal year. Residents, the public and staff are encouraged to attend the meetings.

Autoridad de Vivienda McKinney

PLAN ANNUAL MODIFICADO

2023 & ENMIENDA SIGNIFICATIVA AL PLAN DE CINCO AÑOS

REUNIONES DARSE CUENTA

La Ley de Vivienda y Responsabilidad Laboral de Calidad de 1998 requiere que la Autoridad de Vivienda de McKinney presente un Plan de la Agencia cada año.

El Plan PHA es una guía completa de las políticas, programas, operaciones y estrategias de las agencias de vivienda pública (PHA) para satisfacer las necesidades y los objetivos de vivienda locales. Hay dos partes en el Plan PHA: el Plan de 5 años, que cada PHA presenta a HUD una vez cada quinto año fiscal de PHA, y el Plan anual, que se envía a HUD cada año.

A continuación hay una lista de reuniones que están programadas para revisar y analizar los documentos del Plan de la Agencia para el año fiscal 2023.

Se alienta a los residentes, al público y al personal a asistir a las reuniones.

Tuesday June 27, 2023	4:30pm	Board of Commissioners Meeting	Merritt Homes Community Center	1200 N. Tennessee St. McKinney, TX 75069
Tuesday July 25, 2023	4:30pm	Board of Commissioners Meeting	Merritt Homes Community Center	1200 N. Tennessee St. McKinney, TX 75069
Tuesday August 22, 2023	4:30pm	Board of Commissioners Meeting	Merritt Homes Community Center	1200 N. Tennessee St. McKinney, TX 75069

A draft of the proposed Amended ANNUAL Plan and Significant Amendment to the Five Year Plan is available for review at the MHA main office located at: 603 N. Tennessee St. McKinney, TX.

Comments can be submitted by hand delivery, mail, or email to McKinney Housing Authority Main Office; 603 North Tennessee Street; Attn: Roslyn Miller; McKinney, TX 75069 or info@mckinneyha.org. The final public hearing for plan adoption will be held on Tuesday, August 22, 2023 at 4:30pm – Merritt Homes community center.

Collin County housing market shows strong opportunities for savvy buyers

PLANO, Texas — The Collin County Association of Realtors (CCAR) reports that in a market where the winds of change are blowing, shrewd buyers in Collin County are seizing the moment as sellers receive 98.3% of the original list price in June 2023—a bold shift from homes selling for 104.9% of their original

listing price just a year ago.

The median sales price for homes in the county experienced a 5.3% decline in June 2023, compared to the same month in 2022, setting the stage for opportunity-seeking buyers with a median sales price of \$539,580.

“Buyers continue to find more negotiating power in

2023 as homes remained on the market longer and sold for less than they did one year ago. However, buyers who have been waiting on the sidelines have noticed, and not only has the number of homes under contract increased, but the overall demand for homes in the area continues to rise,” said CCAR President

Shana Acquisto.

Despite a 22.7% decrease in new listings, homes under contract surged by an impressive 15.6% in June 2023, indicating strong demand in the area. The average time homes spent on the market also changed in June 2023. Homes took an average of 36 days to sell—19 days longer than the

same period last year.

The month’s supply of homes for sale, a crucial indicator of market balance, indicated the county remained a strong sellers’ market while displaying a notable increase of 14.1% in June 2023 compared to the previous year. With 2.2 months’ supply of homes available, a market is con-

sidered balanced when there is a 6-month supply of homes for sale.

As the Collin County housing market continues to navigate shifting dynamics, potential homebuyers and sellers are urged to work closely with experienced real estate professionals to make informed decisions.

NAAIA holds its Fall Career Fair held virtually nationwide

The National African American Insurance Association is holding its Fall Career Fair on August 31 from 2:00 p.m. until 4:30 p.m. The NAAIA National Fall Career Fair is a dynamic opportunity for early career seekers to find an abundance of insurance industry opportunities in one location.

Candidates should come prepared to meet and interact with industry leaders, recruiters, and hiring managers. The opportunities are exciting and extensive.

Target job candidates will include internship eligible college students, early career insurance profes-



Saulo Nohana / Unsplash

sionals looking for career advancement, and early career non-insurance professionals looking to transition into the insurance industry.

Eligible candidates have the opportunity to explore

a wide range of excellent career options across many different tracks, such as

computer technology, finance, marketing, underwriting, risk control, accounting, legal, actuarial, sales, agency ownership, audit, education and training, human resources, talent development and recruitment, etc.

All are welcome but a special focus will be placed on experienced and executive talent.

Please feel free to register for the online event at <https://BIT.LY/NAAIAFCF>.

The National African

American Insurance Association (NAAIA) was organized to create a network among people of color and others employed in or affiliated with the insurance industry. The association currently has 15 chapters, with 2 others in development, throughout the nation and its members represent every sector of the industry. Pooling this wealth of

talent contributes significantly to the association and its members through the sharing of professional knowledge, information and experiences.

NAAIA attempts on a continuous basis to promote and enhance professionalism in a manner that leads to industry recognition and career opportunities for its members.

DIVERSITY, from Page 12

Transparent hiring practices, internship/mentorship programs, and inclusive policies are instrumental in leveling the playing field. In addition, nurturing a safe and inclusive workplace where individuals feel valued for their contributions, regardless of their background, is key to experiencing the full potential of diversity.

Change in the construction industry can be further driven through education and awareness. It’s paramount for businesses to engage with vocational training centers, schools and universities, like Collin College locally, to promote the industry as an attractive career path for individuals of all backgrounds. Scholarships and apprenticeship opportunities to those in marginalized groups can

help make aspirations a reality and allow individuals to enter the construction sector without the burden of financial constraints.

Diversity in construction is not a buzzword; it is a guiding principle for many in the industry, which will make for more inclusive environments. Embracing diversity unlocks benefits, from innovative problem-solving and enhanced project outcomes to a stronger connection with socially conscious stakeholders. The steps each construction company takes will help transform construction sites, communities, economies, and society.

Dennis Yung serves as the executive vice president/general manager for Skanska’s North Texas building operations. www.skanska.com.

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One More Scam Call and I'm Going to Scream

By Dr. James L. Snyder

Upon retirement, my life changed in few ways. I'm still as busy as before; I just don't get a paycheck for being busy. Nothing has changed that much.

The one thing that has changed is I schedule a nap every day. As most people know, a NAP is simply Navigating A Position. That position is level. At my age, I tell people that having these naps is essential; every day, I schedule a NAP at a particular time known only to myself.

It's important for me to keep this a secret so nobody knows when I'm doing it. I try to keep it from The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage for obvious reasons. Usually, right after lunch, she goes to the store and picks up groceries. As soon as she closes the front door, I'm in my lazy chair, leaning back, ready to snooze away.

There is only one problem with this scenario. My phone is next to my lazy chair, in case anybody needs to reach me. The truth being said, since my retirement, nobody needs

to get a hold of me. But you never know, and I can only hope. Habits are hard to break.

The other day I was in the middle of sawing some very important logs when a noise next to my chair frightened me. It was my phone. It took me a while to realize the phone was ringing, and I needed to answer. Who knows who's calling me?

Setting up, I cleared my throat and answered the phone. Wouldn't you know it was one of those phone scams? For some reason, the person on the other end knew my car warranty had just expired. For his information, that car warranty ran out 10 years ago, and it was a truck, not a car.

I wasn't too happy with this phone call, and I must confess that I let the person on the other end of the phone know how unhappy I was. It's good I don't know French.

That took me a while to settle down after that kind of phone call, but I soon drifted off into La-la-land, my favorite place.

It wasn't long before I heard the phone ring again,

and without even thinking, I sat up and answered the phone. After all, why would anybody call me the second time? Was it another scam?

This time it had something to do with my Medicare. According to the person on the other end of the phone, he had an amazing offer for me to enhance my Medicare coverage. Being drowsy from sleeping, I didn't quite understand what he was talking about.

"According to our records," the person said most enthusiastically, "you qualify for an upgrade in your Medicare coverage."

I wasn't a happy camper because my nap time is a fairly important part of my day, and how dare somebody interfere with that sacred time.

With a bit of anger, I asked, "Is there any extra coverage for mental insanity? I am about to go crazy."

The next thing I heard was a click on the phone.

My phone buzzed all afternoon, and I was about to lose my mind.

The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage came home and noticed I was sitting up in my chair, fully awake.

She just looked at me and then took her groceries into the kitchen.

Then, surprise, surprise, my phone rang again. I answered it, and a live person was on the other end of the phone. Just then, a thought came to me. I called my wife and said, "My dear, I think there's a thrift store owner on the phone and would like to talk to you."

She almost danced her way to me to pick up the phone. I must say I was dancing in my head when she came.

"Hello," she said enthusiastically, "I've been expecting your call. Thanks for calling."

Then there was a pause, and she said, "Who did you say you were?"

Another pause, and I heard her say, "You better never call me again." And she hung up the phone.

Looking at me with one of "her looks," I could see she wasn't very happy about it. She stood before me, staring a little bit, and then said, "Don't you ever do that again to me. Do you understand?"

What was I supposed

to do? There was so much laughter within me that I didn't know if I could keep it from exploding. When she went back into the kitchen, I softly chuckled to myself. Then I heard, "You're not laughing, are you?"

"No, my dear," I said, "I was just thinking about a joke. Why was 6 afraid of 7? Because 7, 8, 9."

"No, you weren't," she said sarcastically, "and that's not even funny."

That gave me pause to think. Does it matter who is lying? Is a scammer's lie worse than my lie? I then thought about some verses of Scripture that addresses this.

Proverbs 12:22-23, "Lying lips are abomination

to the Lord; but they that deal truly are his delight. A prudent man concealeth knowledge; but the heart of fools proclaimeth foolishness."

It's easy to think that my lying is not as bad as some scammer trying to hook me out of some money. Lying is lying, and I'm trying to process that. Lying is a serious business, no matter who does it.

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 jamesnsnyder2@att.net. The church web site is www.whatafellowship.com.

Let us hear from you!

If there is any news, events or anything else we need to know about, give us an e-mail at: editor@northdallasgazette.com

COOLING, from Page 5

mentioned sites, individuals experiencing homelessness are encouraged to seek shelter at any of the City's existing overnight shelter provider locations, found at <https://dallashomelessolutions.com/>.

Such organizations have a great need for donations of bottled water, or Gatorade. Austin Street also requests in-kind donations of blankets, towels, feminine products, shampoo, conditioner, toothbrush and toothpaste to 1717 Jeffries Street, Dallas 75226 from 9am – 5pm.

The Salvation Army's Dallas locations are also open for cooling and will offer snacks and bottled water during business hours. These include the Social Service Center at

5302 Harry Hines Blvd., the Pleasant Grove Corps Community Center at 8341 Elam Road, and the Oak Cliff Corps Community Center at 1617 W. Jefferson Blvd. They are also distributing bottled water and fans through their food pantries.

Union Gospel Mission Dallas has converted its chapel area into a pop-up cooling area and is extending check-in times to 7:00 p.m. at Calvert Place Men's Shelter, 3211 Irving Blvd. UGM needs donations for an outdoor misting system. Please visit ugmdallas.org.

Austin Street Center also offers their lobby for cooling, hydration and phone charging from 8am – 6pm. They are waiving the ID requirement and increasing their bed count to ensure

the most vulnerable can gain access to a shelter bed. For a detailed list of needed items, visit austinstreet.org/donate.

And as long as the heat index remains at 105 degrees or above, the Our Calling facility will also be open Monday-Saturday until 5:00 p.m. Please visit www.ourcalling.org.

Staff from The Bridge Homeless Recovery Center, 1818 Corsicana St., will be patrolling the immediate area and offering water. Staff encourages unsheltered homeless citizens to go to The Bridge's campus to shower, cool down, and take advantage of all services. For more information at about The Bridge, visit www.bridgehrc.org.

For more information, please visit dallashomelessolutions.com.

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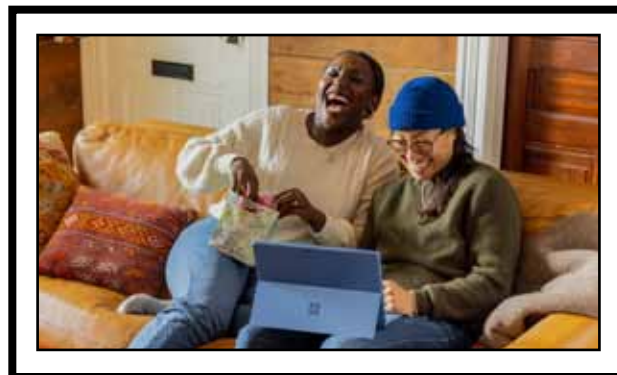
Sister Tarpley
NDG
Religion
Editor

Discussing a friend, I was asked, "What is a Friend?" it started me to thinking. In college and in my adult life, I have met a few life-time friends; the following is something that I received years ago.

A Friend Does Most or All of These From A to Z: Accepts you as you are. Believes in "you." Calls you just to say "Hi." Doesn't give up on you! Envisions the whole of you (even the unfinished parts.)

Forgives your mistakes. Gives unconditionally. Helps you. Invites you over. Just "be" with you. Keeps you close at heart. Loves you for who you are. Makes a difference in your life.

Never judges you. Offers support. Picks you up.



Quiets your fears. Raises your spirits. Says nice things about you. Tells you the truth when you need to hear it.

Understands you. Values you for who you are. Walks beside you. Explains things you don't understand. Yells when you won't listen; and Zaps you back to reality, when you need to be.

Something to Ponder -- Don't Tell It Like It Is: "Death and life are in the power of the tongue; . . ." (Proverbs 18:21)

Words are serious business; I have often told my children, be careful what

you say; once words are spoken, you can never take them back. As believers, we need to get serious about learning how to use words.

We need to put them to work for us like God does. The Bible tells us that He uses words to, "Call those things which be not as though they were."

(Romans 4:17)

Most of us don't have the faintest idea how to do that. We have spent our lives "telling it like it is." We constantly use our mouths to report on the sorry state of affairs around us, and there is plenty to talk about!

Thus, the very thought of calling "things which be not as though they were," seems crazy.

"You mean that I'm supposed to say, 'I am healed,' when I'm feeling sick? Or that, 'I am prosperous,' when I'm penniless?" We would say, "That sounds like lying to me."

There's a difference between lying and speaking by faith. A lie is meant to deceive. It's designed to make someone believe something that's not true.

But to speak by faith is simply to speak words that agree with the Word of God instead of the circumstances around you.

It's speaking from your spirit instead of from your mind. Apostle Paul said, "We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we

also believe, and therefore speak;"

(2 Corinthians 4:13.)

This is simply saying, "I have believed, and therefore have I spoken."

There are people, who speak the words, but they do not have the faith to back them up, and as a result, they fall flat on their spiritual faces.

They didn't actually "call things" that be not as though they were." They called things that be not,

the way they wished they were.

Those are two very different things. The words may be the same; but just wishing and hoping won't get the job done. You've got to "believe."

Bring both your tongue and your heart in line with the Word of God. Stop "telling it like it is" and start speaking and believing the promises of God. Put the power of words to work for you.

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Please forward this invitation to friends and colleagues who you think would be interested in becoming Dallas CASA volunteers.





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