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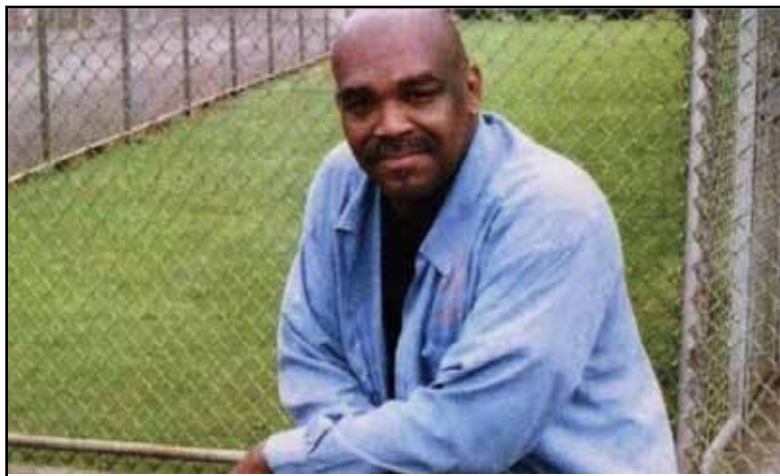
## Oregon man released after years on death row, highlighting racial bias in flawed system

By Stacy M. Brown  
NNPA Senior National Correspondent

Jesse Johnson, a Black man wrongfully convicted for a 1998 murder, was released on September 7, following a reversal of his conviction by the Oregon Court of Appeals two years ago. The case highlighted longstanding racial bias within the justice system.

The Oregon Innocence Project, which handled Johnson's appeal, strongly criticized the state's handling of the case, branding it a "heinous injustice." The Marion County District Attorney's office finally sought to dismiss the charges against Johnson after citing the unavailability of critical evidence and the extended passage of time. A judge granted the motion, allowing Johnson to finally walk free.

Johnson, who steadfastly maintained his innocence, rejected plea deals over the years, and a video captured outside the jail showed the jubilant man, clad in gray sweats, walking beside a deputy, his face lit with a broad smile while supporters showered him with hugs. "I'm happy and excited and ready for the next phase now. Been a lot of years for something I didn't do," Johnson



*Johnson's release coincides with the exoneration of a New York man, who was officially cleared of a 1976 rape conviction, marking the longest-standing wrongful conviction overturned based on new DNA evidence in U.S. history, as stated by the Innocence Project. (Photo via NNPA)*

proclaimed, according to Oregon Public Broadcasting.

Initially sentenced to death in 2004, Johnson's case took a significant turn when former Gov. John Kitzhaber imposed a moratorium on executions in 2011. Then, in 2022, Gov. Kate Brown commuted all 17 of the state's death sentences and ordered the decommissioning of the execution chamber.

The Oregon Innocence Project had pointed out the role racism played in Johnson's wrongful imprisonment. They asserted that Johnson's trial lawyer failed to in-

terview crucial witnesses, including one who observed a white man fleeing the scene. The neighbor in question, Patricia Hubbard, revealed she witnessed a white man entering Thompson's residence shortly before the murder occurred. She also recounted hearing screams, a thud, and then an eerie silence. Hubbard claimed that the responding detective made racially charged remarks, indicating a pre-determined bias. "A Black woman got murdered, and a Black man is

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### People In The News ...



Gabe Amo



Christian LaCour

NDG Quote of the Week: "I am lucky that whatever fear I have inside me, my desire to win is always stronger."  
— Serena Williams



## Gabe Amo

Former White House official Gabe Amo emerged victorious in a crowded Democratic primary, securing his path to represent Rhode Island's deep blue first congressional district. The Associated Press projected Amo's victory after he overcame competition from 10 other Democratic contenders in the primary, positioning him as the likely successor to former Democratic Rep. David Cicilline, who resigned earlier this year to lead a prominent nonprofit organization.



With the general election scheduled for November, Amo faces off against GOP primary winner Gerry Leonard as he seeks to maintain the district's staunch Democratic tradi-

tion. The first congressional district overwhelmingly supported President Joe Biden in the 2020 election. Political experts contend the victory underscores the continued strength of Biden's brand within the Democratic Party's rank and file.

Addressing a jubilant crowd of supporters during his victory speech, Amo, whose father and mother immigrated to Rhode Island from Ghana and Liberia, respectively, expressed his gratitude for the trust and support of Rhode Islanders. "This election, this primary election, showed

that Rhode Islanders believe in a state where one of their sons, the son of two West African immigrants—from Ghana and Liberia—could receive the love and the investment of a community and go from serving the president of the United States a briefing in the Oval Office to being the Democratic nominee from the first congressional district," he remarked.

Amo further emphasized his unique background and tenure working in the White House under Biden and Barack Obama. He created a television advertisement that emphasized his

strong connection with the two Democratic leaders. Through the ad, he presented himself as the candidate who had earned the trust of both presidents, showcasing captivating visuals of himself in the prestigious surroundings of the Oval Office. Notably, neither Obama nor Biden formally endorsed any candidate in the race.

Amo's campaign also benefited from the support of former Biden White House chief of staff Ron Klain, who played a pivotal role in his bid for the congressional seat. Amo's role as deputy director of

the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs was central to his campaign narrative. He described himself as "Biden's principal liaison to mayors and local elected officials." His messaging closely mirrored that of President Biden, with campaign ads emphasizing his experience and invoking the events of January 6th and the presidency of Donald Trump to underscore the importance of his candidacy.

Some political watchers claimed that Amo's victory in the Democratic

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## Christian LaCour

(Allied Universal) — Christian LaCour, the Allied Universal® security professional who made the ultimate sacrifice while protecting shoppers during a mass shooting in Allen, Texas, on May 6, 2023, is the recipient of the 2023 Ralph Day Memorial Security Officer Heroism Award. The award will be accepted by his parents on Sept. 10 at the 2023 Global Security Exchange Conference in Dallas.

An Allied Universal employee since December 2021, LaCour, age 20, was in the process of becoming a supervisor. Nine people,



including the perpetrator, were killed and seven others were injured during the rampage.

During a press conference following the tragedy, Allen Chief of Police Brian Harvey said LaCour evacuated one person from the

shooting before he was shot by the gunman.

"We must also acknowledge the bravery of Allied Security Guard Christian LaCour, who evacuated one individual to safety and was shot while courageously remaining to help others," said Harvey.

"Security guards are unsung heroes who run to danger instead of away from it. It takes a brave, selfless person to move in danger's direction, and Christian was that kind of a person," said Steve Jones, global chairman and CEO of Allied Universal. "During the May 2023 shooting, Christian moved in danger's direction to protect others — the defi-

nition of a hero. His heroic efforts helped save lives and that will never be forgotten. I and the entire Allied Universal team honor him and he will forever be a shining example of heroism for others to follow."

Each year, one security officer is recognized by ASIS International, the world's largest membership

organization for security management professionals and host of the GSX Conference, for outstanding service/acts in the security profession through the Ralph Day Memorial Security Officer Heroism Award. This award is meant for those who perform a heroic act that involves circumstances where a pri-

vate security officer risks their life to protect or save lives and/or property. The award nominees must be employed as a security officer with a contract security company.

The LaCour family has established a GoFundMe page to honor Christian and help with expenses following the unexpected tragedy.

## Robert H. Irvin, Jr.

LOS ANGELES (24-7PressRelease) -- For more than 40 years, Dr. Robert H. Irvin, Jr. has been heavily involved in academia specializing in psychology. Despite his love for the field, he always preferred teaching to treating patients. After graduating from college, he spent his first two years in the U.S. Peace Corps in Central Africa teaching English as a foreign language in the Republic of Chad between 1974 and 1976. He subsequently garnered a long and successful career in academia, most recently as a faculty member of West Los Angeles College (WLAC) as an adjunct assistant professor



until retirement in 2019.

Dr. Irvin taught a myriad of courses at WLAC, formerly teaching at Los Angeles Southwest College, Los Angeles Valley College, Los Angeles City College and as Director of Education at Sylvan Learning Systems Inc..

As a testament to his

success and hard work, Dr. Irvin received numerous accolades, including as an Honoree at the National Distinguished Service Registry, Counseling, and Development in 1990 and with an Instructor Appreciation Award from the Extended Opportunity Programs and Services of Los Angeles Valley College in 2017. Now, Dr. Irvin has been awarded the Albert Nelson Marquis Lifetime Achievement Award.

A career that was backed by a prolific educational background, Dr. Irvin first received a Bachelor of Arts in psychology from Loyola Marymount University in 1974 and a Master of Pub-

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# Faith in democracy is vital

By Lee H. Hamilton

Americans are pessimistic about our democracy, according to a recent poll. It's a worrisome finding. Of course, it's easy to watch the news and conclude our government isn't working. But we must not get to the point where we think we can't solve our problems in a democratic fashion. That's a danger line.

The poll, by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research, found that majorities of American adults don't think our laws and policies represent what most people want. Only about one in 10 gave high ratings to democracy for working well. Disturbingly, 53% said Congress does a poor job of upholding democratic values while only 16% said it does a good job. That's hardly a show of faith in the representatives we have elected.

Another poll, by the Marist Center, found eight in 10 Americans believe democracy is under threat, but they disagree over who's at fault: Half blame Democrats and half blame Republicans. Finally, the

long-running Pew election survey found trust in government at a near-record low. Only 20% of Americans trust the government to do the right thing all or most of the time.

The findings aren't entirely surprising. Our politics are deeply polarized. Many Republicans don't want anything to do with Democrats, and many Democrats feel the same about Republicans. Social media and partisan cable TV networks have divided us into warring tribes.

And we have come through a difficult period. The COVID-19 pandemic caused a million deaths, increased social isolation, strained trust in medical authorities and gave rise to conspiracy theories. It pummeled the economy and drove millions from the workforce. Employment bounced back, but with it came the highest inflation in 40 years. Now inflation is down, but many Americans aren't confident they can pay their bills. They give President Joe Biden low marks for his handling of the economy.

You would think Congress would work together

to address these concerns. Instead, it seems to be bogged down in partisan stalemates. Gerrymandering of congressional districts has pushed Republicans to the right and Democrats to the left. There's little common ground.

Donald Trump's false claim that the 2020 election was stolen further undermined faith in democracy. His attacks on election officials, the justice system and even the military – echoed by some of his political rivals – have weakened trust in government. Indictments charging Trump with mishandling classified documents and conspiring to overturn the election have outraged his supporters. As the Jan. 6, 2021, invasion of the Capitol showed, that kind of anger can be dangerous.

But it's important to remember that the United States has come through extreme challenges in the past, with our democratic principles intact. The Civil War ruptured the country and killed an estimated 750,000 people, North and South. In the 20th century, we survived two world

wars, the Great Depression, and the Cold War. And our democracy has grown stronger. At the nation's founding, only white men who owned property could vote. Black Americans endured slavery followed by widespread segregation and disenfranchisement. Women didn't gain the vote until the 20th Amendment was ratified in 1920.

Martin Luther King Jr. famously said that the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice. The same could be said for American democracy.

Americans are, fundamentally, a practical and optimistic people. We believe in progress, and we believe in our capacity to overcome challenges. Republican or Democrat, we want the same things. We want to live in a world that's secure and prosperous. We want opportunity for ourselves and our children.

We need to maintain an underlying optimism about our ability to work together to solve problems. Democracy has served us well for nearly 250 years. It's up to us to ensure it continues to thrive.

## Biden needs a Reparations Commission for 2024

By Kamm Howard  
Executive Director  
Reparations United

Mr. President, the call for justice in America is at a historic high. This current call for justice is founded squarely on the issue of Reparations. This is an American call for justice – not only has it been identified as the major issue by Black Americans via a 2021 Congressional Black Caucus poll, but in a recent USA Today poll, 83 % of Americans said racism is a problem facing the US. This explains why an array of Americans has enthusiastically joined this

call for reparatory justice – allied ethnic groups, many of the largest social justice organizations in the country, a diversity of religious orders, America's most prestigious universities, major US corporations, some of the largest philanthropies in America, and of immense importance, following Evanston, Illinois – numerous municipalities and States within the Union. This is proof that much of America wants to see this issue addressed and resolved now!

Leaders within the Democratic Party in the last Congress demonstrated their political will for a

reparations commission. 217 confirmed yes votes in the House and half of the Senate Committee chairs, along with the Senate Leader, and many of their colleagues, signed on to the Senate bill. However, as you are aware, Mr. President, the bipartisanship that is needed to pass the bill in the Senate does not exist. Thus, the only way to move this issue forward, which much of America is demanding, is through an Executive Order.

This must be done immediately as the next Presidential election is approaching. On one side of this issue are those calling

for "No Reparations No Vote", in their attempt to drive Black voters to the Republican Party. On the other side, are those of us who fully understand the significance of the Black vote for a Democratic Party win. Statistics have shown that since 1960, except for 1964, the Black vote was the deciding factor in each of the Democratic Party's wins in presidential elections. In essence, the Black vote gave American Presidents Kennedy, Carter, Clinton, Obama, and you Mr. Biden.

A growing number of

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# Health equity an important aspect of improving quality of care provided to children in emergency departments

INDIANAPOLIS (Newsweek) — A new study finds increasing pediatric readiness in emergency departments reduces racial and ethnic disparities in children and adolescents with acute medical emergencies. The study, which involved Indiana University School of Medicine, Oregon Health and Science University and UC Davis Health, points out that boosts in readiness do not eliminate such disparities, however.

“Ours is a national study group focused on pediatric emergency department readiness,” said Peter Jenkins, MD, associate professor surgery at Indiana University School of Medicine and first author of the study. “A lot of times when we talk about health equity, people are concerned that improving the condition of one group may result in



National Cancer Institute / Unsplash

another group losing out,” Jenkins said. “This study shows the opposite to be true. All groups benefit from improved readiness, and we also have this extra layer of social justice woven into the narrative of improved health care quality. These findings only

strengthen the case to provide resources to hospitals so they’re prepared to take care of all sick kids.”

Jenkins explained, the research demonstrates a child’s chances of survival improve when an Emergency Department achieves pediatric readiness.

“Readiness” can include staffing, materials, training and protocols, said Jenkins, and the more prepared the hospital and the more protocols in place, then the more likely a child is to survive a traumatic injury or acute medical emergency. Until now, it was unclear whether children of all races and ethnicities benefit the same from increased levels of readiness.

“We believe that treatment protocols help to overcome biases and racism because if a child meets criteria, then we do one thing or another,” Jenkins said. “We saw that for kids with traumatic injuries, whose care is largely determined by such protocols, there weren’t significant differences in survival based on race and ethnicity.

“But for children with medical emergencies, where treatment protocols

are often lacking, we found significant disparities in mortality between Black and White kids.

Importantly, the higher the level of readiness of the Emergency Department, the lower the level of disparity between racial and ethnic groups.”

Researchers looked at 633,536 pediatric patients at hospitals in 11 states from 2012-2017, making this one of the largest studies of racial and ethnic disparities among children to date.

In the future, the group plans to look at updated surveys of hospitals to determine if there have been changes in pediatric readiness over time. Jenkins said they also plan to promote the importance of health equity into the national platform for pediatric readiness.

In addition to Indiana

University School of Medicine, the study involved researchers from Oregon Health and Science University and UC Davis Health. The findings were recently published in JAMA Network Open. Other lead collaborators include Nathan Kuppermann, MD, MPH from UC Davis and Craig Newgard, MD, MPH from OHSU. Read the full publication in JAMA Network Open.

IU School of Medicine is the largest medical school in the U.S. and is annually ranked among the top medical schools in the nation by U.S. News & World Report.

The school offers high-quality medical education, access to leading medical research and rich campus life in nine Indiana cities, including rural and urban locations consistently recognized for livability.

## Racial, socioeconomic differences still determine premature survival rates

LONDON (Newsweek) — A developing baby experiences important growth throughout all stages of pregnancy, including its final months and weeks in the mother’s womb. When this crucial growth is cut short, a baby suffers risks. In fact, the earlier the baby is born, the higher its risk of death or serious disability, reports Centers for Disease

Control (CDC). Premature birth, also known as preterm, occurs when a child is born prior to 37 weeks of pregnancy.

Despite its leading economic status, the U.S. has one of the top ten highest rates of preterm births across the globe, and U.S. mothers face large inequalities as a result of their socioeconomic status, race

and geographic region.

A new report led by University College London (UCL) researchers wanted to examine how these inequalities had changed over time. Their research, published in JAMA Pediatrics, finds the United States continues to face stark inequalities in preterm birth and mortality rates between mothers of differing socio-

economic status and race. And although all preterm infants born in 2020 were less likely to die than in 1995, the gap in preterm infant mortality between mothers of differing races had remained constant, with Black infants 1.4 times more likely to die following preterm birth than White and Hispanic infants.

The researchers also found the gap in preterm infant mortality rates between mothers of differing socioeconomic status had widened. For example, the relative risk of preterm infant mortality in mothers of a lower educational level compared to a higher education level has increased from 25% to 40%. Equally, the relative risk for moth-

ers who smoked compared to those who didn’t has increased from 20% to 30%.

Lead author, Dr Tim Venkatesan (UCL Great Ormond Street Institute of Child Health) said: “While preterm infant mortality has improved in the U.S. over the past 25 years, racial and socioeconomic in-

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## REPARATIONS, from Page 3

major publications have recognized this dependence of the Democratic Party on the Black vote. Immediately after your election, Vox reported – “The Black Vote is key to Democratic success”- saying you “could not have been competitive without it.” At this same time, the New York Magazine shouted, Joe Biden

Owes It All to African American Voters. In April of this year, Time Magazine wrote, Black Voters Gave Biden the White House. They May Determine Whether He Stays There – the writer concluded “Put plainly: you can’t win the nomination or the White House as a Democrat without the Black vote. And

finally, just last month, the Washington Post echoed the Times writer, by saying the Black vote “will be crucial in a Biden bid for reelection.”

We are 20% of your base Mr. President, more than all other people of color combined. When we come out and vote, Democrats win! Certainly, Mr. Biden, the Republicans are fully

aware of this as they have directed enormous resources to suppress the Black vote– by spending nearly \$1 billion in the last election and introducing over 900 pieces of legislation, according to Marc Morial of the National Urban League. The Democratic Party needs to both counter these efforts by Republicans and address the low

enthusiasm for the Democratic Party in the Black community.

This counter-offensive must be an immediate statement announcing the implementation of an HR 40-like Reparations Commission via Executive Order by the President of the United States of America. This, and only this, will generate the turnout in the

Black community necessary for a Democratic Party victory in 2024. The Democratic Party can no longer waffle on this issue of reparations. We need a Reparations Commission Now! You, Mr. President, need a Reparations Commission now – for any hope of a 2024 victory.

EO40 Now! EO 40 now! EO40 now!



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# Dallas CASA's Champion of Children Award Dinner will honor La La Land Kind Café founder

Dallas CASA's Champion of Children Award Dinner will honor Francois Reihani, founder and CEO of the We Are One Project and La La Land Kind Café, with the Judge Barefoot Sanders Champion of Children Award for his commitment to children aging out of foster care.

The dinner will be on October 12 at Fairmont Dallas. All funds raised at the event will benefit children served by the agency.

Dallas CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) seeks to protect children and restore childhood through focused advocacy for children in the protective care of the state. The agency recruits, trains and supervises community members who serve as advocates for children who have experienced abuse or neglect and cannot safely live at home. Advocates work with children, their families, Child Protective Services caseworkers, attorneys, judges, educators, therapists, counselors and all other stakeholders on the case to achieve the best outcomes for child victims of abuse and neglect.

Reihani's unique "cafes with a purpose" focus on



David Ambroz (left) and Francois Reihani (right).  
(Courtesy photos)

providing job opportunities and training for former foster youth who have aged out of the system. Without the support of their families, young people exiting the child welfare system enter adulthood with little guidance and face increased risks of homelessness, food insecurity and unemployment, among many other challenges. At La La Land Kind Cafes, youth are offered job training and mentorship, giving them a solid jumping-off point for the rest of their lives.

"Francois is truly a one-in-a-million person," said Kathleen M. LaValle, president and CEO of Dallas CASA. "Instead of seeing a big problem and turning away, he leaned in and looked for a solution. His

cafes send a message to youth aging out of care that they matter, that there's a place for them and they have bright futures."

Reihani opened his first cafe on lower Greenville in 2019 when he was only 23 years old. Since then, he has expanded to 11 locations in multiple Texas cities and California. The cafes are known for their bright yellow coffee cups, nostalgic music and message of love. Customers are told "I love you" as they leave, and the company's motto is "Kindness first, coffee second." Reihani says he hires people for their personality, not their experience. He wants everyone to leave the cafes feeling uplifted and connected. The New York Times recently featured

Reihani in a series about social media personalities who are doing positive things in their communities. The article reported that La La Land Kind Café's "Drive-By Kindness" TikTok series has over 6.6 million followers.

The cafes have been a tremendous success. Reihani was named to Forbes magazine's 30 Under 30 list for social impact in 2021, and he announced this summer he has secured \$20 million from private investors, which will allow him to expand operations and open new locations across the United States.

Reihani first learned about the challenges youth aging out of foster care face at a continuing education program at Dallas CASA in 2016. After a happy childhood in Mexico, he did not know the difficulties youth in our community faced. At Dallas CASA, he heard from youth who had aged out of care and the struggles and pains they had endured navigating adulthood alone. At the time, he was co-founder of Pok The Raw Bar, a new restaurant concept in Dallas.

"That meeting changed

the whole pathway of my life," he said. "I could not understand how these youth had so little support. How was this even a problem? In Dallas, Texas?"

He went home and did more research, discovering the problem was larger and more daunting than he had imagined. But he was not deterred. He started with the We Are One Project nonprofit that provided mentoring, counseling, life skill classes and help with college and stable housing. When he recognized the need for the additional support of job placement, he opened La La Land Kind Café as a place to provide job training to former foster youth. The beginning was rocky, he admits.

"I wanted to solve the whole problem immediately, so I hired 12 foster youth and it was a disaster," he said. "Due to their trauma, they needed so much more support than I'd imagined. But we regrouped and refocused and it started working. We've hit our stride now."

He admits sometimes his ideas seem too big to believe, so it has been rewarding to see his dream

take root, grow and bloom.

"Some people think I am delusional with some of my big ideas," he said. "It wasn't clear in the beginning that this whole thing would work or how. It's hard enough to make money with a coffee shop, but to make money and support a nonprofit? I guess that was a little delusional, honestly. But it proves something I always say: 'When you do the right thing, magic happens.'"

The Champion of Children Award Dinner is chaired by Stephanie and David Krahe, Retta A. Miller and Megan and Tom Sterquell. The honorary chairs are longtime friends and supporters of Dallas CASA, Fran and Mark Berg.

Guest speaker for the evening is David Ambroz, author of the heart wrenching 2022 memoir "A Place Called Home" which chronicles his childhood of living with his mentally ill mother and ultimately ending up in foster care. He experienced abuse, neglect, homelessness and poverty, but he ultimately found a

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## Federal judge orders immediate relocation of children from abusive confinement at Louisiana prison

By Stacy M. Brown  
NNPA Senior National  
Correspondent

Chief Judge Shelly Dick has ordered Louisiana officials to cease housing children, predominantly Black boys, in the former death row section of the Louisiana State Penitentiary, commonly referred to as Angola. The order dictates the swift removal of the children from the facility by September 15, ending nearly ten months of what the judge deemed abusive conditions.

Following a rigorous seven-day hearing in August, Judge Dick verbally delivered the decision. During the proceedings, lawyers representing the children and their families presented compelling evidence that the minors were consistently subjected to solitary confinement and denied their fundamental right to education, proper treatment, and other vital rehabilitative services while enduring inhumane conditions.

The situation mirrors that of Angola's long and racist

history. State officials built the prison on land that was once an 8,000-acre farm in West Feliciana Parish, a remote part of Louisiana. The farm was named Angola after the country where its former slaves came from. It was first used as a prison in 1880 when prisoners lived in the old slave quarters and worked on the farm. The state took over Angola in 1901, reportedly because of unhinged brutality against inmates. By 2008, Angola State Prison

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# Homeschooling becoming increasingly popular, with about 41% being non-white/non-Hispanic students

LUBBOCK — According to the most recent data released by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) in an open records request to the Texas Home School Coalition (THSC), Texas experienced 29,765 withdrawals from public school to homeschool between grade 7-12 in the 2021-2022 school year.

This high has previously only been matched during the COVID-19 peak in the 2020-2021 school year, when the number was 29,845. Despite many commentators theorizing that the homeschool exodus from public schools would slow after Covid, it instead ap-



Ralston Smith / Unsplash

pears to be keeping pace.

Before COVID-19, 20,000-25,000 students in grades 7-12 withdrew to homeschool each year. Since Covid, that number has reached nearly 30,000 and appears to be staying there.

Withdrawal rates for the

2022-2023 school year will not be available until 2024. The TEA only tracks withdrawals to homeschool between grade 7-12. Many families withdraw to homeschool in grade 6 or below, but the TEA does not track these numbers.

We continue to see concern about safety, parental involvement, and the school environment as the most important reasons parents cite when choosing to homeschool.

Additionally, homeschooling is quickly growing in popularity among minorities. About 41% of homeschool families are non-white/non-Hispanic (i.e., not white/Anglo) according to the National Home Education Research Institute.

Based on averages from other states, as well as Texas' status as one of the most homeschool-friendly states in the country, the Texas

Home School Coalition estimates that between 8-10% of students in Texas are currently homeschooled.

THSC remains ready to serve and be a resource for all Texas prospective, new, and veteran homeschoolers as we have been since 1986.

Signed into law during the close of the 88th Texas Legislative Session, HB 3708 creates an allotment for schools to receive extra funding when homeschool students enroll in UIL extracurricular activities. The bill incentivizes those districts to allow more homeschool participation, while HB 699 protects public schools from higher bracket penalties

when granting UIL access to homeschoolers.

These new laws follow HB 547, passed in 2021, which enabled districts to grant UIL extracurricular access on a district-by-district basis.

According to Jeremy Newman, VP of Policy at the Texas Home School Coalition, the new laws reward districts that would have been punished by having to play larger schools under UIL guidelines.

Together, HB 3708 and HB 699, will encourage more school districts to grant equal access to homeschool students for extracurricular UIL activities.

## VP Harris launches nationwide college tour to galvanize youth advocacy

By Stacy M. Brown  
NNPA Senior National Correspondent

As students return to campuses nationwide, Vice President Kamala Harris is embarking on a month-long college tour, rallying young people to champion fundamental freedoms and rights. The ambitious initiative, dubbed the "Fight for Our Freedoms College Tour," will see Harris crisscrossing a dozen campuses in at least seven states, uniting thousands of students in high-energy, large-scale events.

The whirlwind tour will put a spotlight on critical issues disproportionately



The whirlwind tour will put a spotlight on critical issues disproportionately affecting young Americans. (Photo via NNPA)

affecting young Americans. From reproductive freedom and gun safety to climate action, voting rights, LG-BTQ+ equality, and the banning of books, the vice

president aims to engage and empower the next generation to be at the forefront of these battles.

"This generation is critical to the urgent issues that

are at stake right now for our future," Harris emphasized in a statement issued by The White House. "It is young leaders throughout America who know what the solutions look like and are organizing in their communities to make them a reality. My message to students is clear: We are counting on you, we need you, you are everything."

The "Fight for Our Freedoms College Tour" will encompass historically Black colleges and universities, Hispanic-serving institutions, community colleges, apprenticeship programs, and state schools. During her visits, the vice president will not

only highlight the accomplishments of the Biden-Harris Administration for young people but also outline the forthcoming work required to safeguard these crucial liberties. The White House said she will engage "directly with students who are leading the charge in these pivotal fights, encouraging them to register to vote, use their voices, and remain actively involved in shaping their future."

The tour builds upon the vice president's recent travels and follows her Summer of Action, which encompassed visits to 17 states. In 2023 alone, Harris has already graced 11 college campuses, following 14

schools visited in 2022.

The Vice President's "Fight for Our Freedoms College Tour" includes the following steps:

- Hampton University in Hampton, VA on 9/14.
- North Carolina A&T in Greensboro, NC on 9/15.
- Morehouse College in Atlanta, GA on 9/26.
- University of Wisconsin-Madison in Madison, WI.
- College of Southern Nevada in Las Vegas, NV.
- Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff, AZ.

The White House said further campus visits and additional details will be unveiled in the coming days.

## IRVIN, from Page 2

lic Health in International Public Health from the University of Hawai'i at Manoa in 1978. He subsequently trained at the East-West Center, Cultural Learning Institute, The Institute of Behavioral Science, in the department of psychology at the University of Hawaii at Manoa from 1978 to 1979. Additional educational pursuits to Dr. Irvin's credit includes a clinical intern-

ship in psychological and counseling services at Muir College at the University of California at San Diego, a graduate teaching fellowship in the department of counseling and educational psychology, a Doctorate of Philosophy in Counseling Psychology from the University of Oregon in 1988, and several credentials in psychology, counseling, and education.

Dr. Irvin co-authored a peer-reviewed article in the Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development in 1995 titled 'The Internal Dialogue of Culturally Different Clients: An Application of the Triad Training Model.' The article was based on a statement analysis of the cross-cultural triad model, a model designed to help counselor trainees understand the problem from the client's point of view.

Among numerous other significant appointments, Dr. Irvin held roles with the Assistant Professor and Director of Student Services, Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science, and Learning Specialist at the University of Southern California, and among other organizations, the Council for Minority Education, University of Oregon. He also devoted time to research as a research analyst II for the Department

of Mental Health of Los Angeles County. During his lengthy career, Dr. Irvin also spent another two and a half years in the U.S. Peace Corps as a Sub-Regional Programming and Training Coordinator in Nairobi, Kenya, from 1996 to 1998.

Dr. Irvin also served as a workshop facilitator, participant, panelist, and presenter at numerous conferences and symposia in his field. Moreover, Dr. Irvin provided numerous educational

consultations and outreach services as a professional in higher education and public education.

Dr. Irvin is a professional member of the American Counseling Association, the Association of Black Psychologists, the Association of Counselor Education and Supervision, the Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development, and the Society for Intercultural Education, Training, and Research.



# With new venue, Frisco Station brings pickleball to the community

The Frisco Station Partnership is launching its first entertainment venue at Frisco Station. Pickle and Social, a pickleball destination with world-class courts, will be paired with Fairway Social, a one-of-a-kind simulation experience featuring 130 golf courses and 10 other sports.

Pickle and Social, a newly launched venture of Competitive Social Ventures (CSV), is opening pickleball venues across the U.S., including Houston, Scottsdale and Tampa, among others. The Frisco location will mark the first U.S. location to feature both



*The dual-concept destination will bring pickleball, the fastest-growing sport in the world, to Frisco. (Courtesy photo)*

Pickle and Social, as well as the Fairway Social concept. The Frisco Station venue will provide both outdoor and indoor pickleball courts for players looking for les-

sons, league play, tournaments or a quick pick-up game with friends or family. You can also improve your short game on the putting green or enjoy live enter-

tainment, a chef-inspired menu, signature drinks, cornhole, beach volleyball and ping-pong.

"We're delighted to welcome both Pickle and Social and Fairway Social to Frisco Station as the entertainment anchor of the community," said Trey Sibley, general manager of The Rudman Partnership. "Frisco has its first premier venue for pickleball, the fastest-growing sport in the world, and the space is the perfect place to host prestigious pickleball tournaments in the future. These two offerings are just the beginning of the entertainment we'll bring to

Frisco Station."

"As one of the fastest growing cities in America, it's fitting for Frisco to become a destination for pickleball, one of the fastest growing sports in the country," said Frisco Mayor Jeff Cheney. "Our residents have been asking for more pickleball courts for quite some time, so I'm confident this concept will be popular with locals and visitors, alike. We're a community with an active lifestyle and look forward to this concept complimenting Frisco Station's development."

CSV was represented by Tim Henson of Venture

Commercial Real Estate, LLC and Bryan Cornelius of Retail Union.

"We're thrilled to bring both concepts to the vibrant community of Frisco Station," said Neal Freeman, CEO of CSV. "Our mission is to bring people together for fun and authentic shared experiences by creating an unbeatable atmosphere, innovative play, amazing food and drinks and top-notch service. Guests will have twice the amount of fun all in one place."

Construction is scheduled to commence in spring 2024 with an opening date in spring 2025.

## Mesquite finds new homes for 107 pets during Clear the Shelters month

MESQUITE – The Mesquite Animal Shelter placed 107 pets in homes in August, national Clear the Shelters month.

Mesquite Animal Services hosted a special one-day event on Aug. 26 with free adoptions.

People could receive discounted adoption fees throughout the month when donating jars of jelly, peanut butter or seed butter to the City's Spread the Love campaign.

To keep the momentum going, Animal Services

will be offering \$25 adoption fees for all available dogs and cats throughout the month of September as a "Fall in Love with Your Next Pet" special. Adoption fees include vaccinations, sterilization, and microchipping.

Clear The Shelters was started in 2015 by NBCUniversal Local and is now cohosted with Telemundo.

To see the pets currently available for adoption, please visit [www.cityofmesquite.com/AnimalsInTheShelter](http://www.cityofmesquite.com/AnimalsInTheShelter).

Not able to adopt? Visit [www.cityofmesquite.com/AnimalServices](http://www.cityofmesquite.com/AnimalServices) to find out how you can volunteer at the shelter and make financial contributions or donations of items.

The Mesquite Animal Shelter is located at 1650

Gross Road in Mesquite. Regular operating hours are 11 a.m.-5:30 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday.

The shelter is open from 1-5:30 p.m. on Saturday and is closed on Wednesday and Sundays.

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# The bell has rung, and we're off to a promising new school year!



**Joyce Foreman**  
Dallas ISD  
District 6

I was pleased to make the rounds with Chief Tiffany Huitt and Executive Directors Dr. Wright and Dr. Kelly on the first day of school. We visited T.W. Browne Middle School, Kimball High School, Carter High School, Birdie Alexander Elementary, Bedford Law Academy, and Adelle Turner Elementary, where the Mavericks' Cyn Marshall joined us.

It was a great start to a great year! And, for me, it was even better because I have a great-niece now in PreK-4 at Birdie Alexander and a great-nephew in the P-TECH program at Carter High School.

So I not only talk about what needs to get done, I'll

## Rooting for a winner

I'd like to shout out a former Carter High School student and track team member, Sha'Carri Richardson, who is the 100-meter world champion! She set a new record in the finals at the 2023 World Athletics Championships in Budapest, Hungary! Richardson is the first American woman to win a 100-meter world title since 2017. She added to that feat by claiming a bronze medal in the 200 meters and anchoring Team USA's gold-medal win in the women's 4x100-meter relay. Her performance should be a lesson for all of us: Never give up! I am extremely proud of this 23-year-old woman, and I'm proud to sport a ring symbolizing the time when she helped the Carter track team win back-to-back championships in 2017 and 2018.



Courtesy photos

be trying to make sure we get it done in my family.

## Summer grads take a big step

It was an honor to speak to our summer graduation class at their commencement earlier in August, where Trustee White joined me. As I told the grads, the village is here

to support them in their future choices of college, career, or military. They have made a significant step by getting their high school diplomas.

## Welcome, new principals

I'd like to welcome the new school leadership in District 6. We don't have a lot of turnover, but I

have three new principals, and I look forward to working with them: At T.G. Terry Elementary School, welcome to Principal Krishaunda Ivery. At Judge Louis A. Bedford Jr. Law Academy, welcome, Principal Kelisha King, and at Clinton P. Russell Elementary School, welcome, Principal Chara Pace.

## Congrats, innovative teachers

Kudos to the 38 Dallas ISD team members who received Junior League of Dallas Grants for Innovative Teaching, and

especially to our District 6 winners, ShaDerika Finley of D.A. Hulcy STEAM Middle School and Pamela Jenkins of Martin Weiss Elementary School.

These grants of up to \$2,500 are awarded to support unique programs that fall outside of school budgets to help improve education in Dallas ISD. These innovative teaching projects span all grade levels and subjects and will contribute to student success. Thank you, teachers, and thank you, Junior League!

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# Eisemann Center presents free screening of '20 Feet from Stardom'

RICHARDSON – Eisemann Center Presents is soon to host a free screening of the Academy Award-winning documentary “20 Feet from Stardom.” The film showcases among others, the fabulous Lisa Fischer, appearing live at the Eisemann Center October 13 with Southern Gullah-inspired group Ranky Tanky. The screening will take place at the Bank of America Theatre on Thursday, September 28 at 7:00 pm.

Film director Morgan Neville underscores how Lisa Fischer not only rocks, but also swoops, whispers, and scats. The film depicts her defying music scales, illuminating a Sting concert, stirring reverence in Chris Botti, and bringing a Samuel Barber piece to life through a “choir” of four intertwined vocal parts. Fischer’s history with both Tina Turner and the Rolling Stones is one of several



Lisa Fischer (Alex Logaiski / Eisemann Center)

connections she shares with the artists spotlighted in the film. She’s one of a few background vocalists in the industry whose solo career has reached the level of Grammy honors (two nominations, one award) and number one hits (the chart-topping R&B single “How Can I Ease the Pain.”)

After four decades of featured background singing with icons like Luther Vandross, The Rolling Stones, Chaka Khan, Tina Turner, and Nine Inch Nails, Ms. Lisa Fischer set out to take center stage with her own

humble, heartfelt song. The 2013 Best Documentary Oscar-winning film “20 Feet from Stardom” altered the course of Lisa’s musical journey. After telling her story with clips of legendary duets with Mick Jagger on “Gimme Shelter” and Sting, Lisa took a chance and set out on her own, reinventing classic songs with JC Maillard and Grand Baton, among others.

Tickets for Ranky Tanky with special guest Lisa Fischer on October 13 are \$37-\$57 and are avail-

able for purchase online at [www.eisemanncenter.com](http://www.eisemanncenter.com) or by calling the Eisemann Center Ticket Office at 972.744.4650. Group discounts are available for 10 or more persons. Lobby and ticket office hours are 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday and during all public events.

## StepAfrika! offered for one performance

Eisemann Center Presents continues the 2023-2024 Season with Step Afrika! on Sunday, October 22 at 7:30 pm in the Hill Performance Hall. Step Afrika! blends percussive dance styles practiced by historically African American fraternities and sororities, traditional West and Southern African dances, and an array of contemporary dance and art forms into a cohesive, compelling artistic experience.

Performances are much more than dance shows-- They integrate songs, sto-

rytelling, humor, and audience participation. The blend of technique, agility, and pure energy makes each performance unique and leaves the audience with their hearts pounding.

Founded in 1994 by C. Brian Williams, Step Afrika! is the first professional company dedicated to the tradition of stepping—a polyrhythmic, percussive dance form that uses the body as an instrument. Under Mr. Williams’ leadership, stepping has evolved into one of America’s cultural exports, touring more than 50 countries across the globe.

Step Afrika! promotes stepping as a contemporary dance genre through critically acclaimed performances and arts education programs. Creatively engaging audiences in this nascent art form, the Company creates full-length productions that expand on stepping’s unique Ameri-

can history. Step Afrika! is one of the top 10 African American dance companies in the world.

The Company reaches tens of thousands of Americans each year through a 50-city tour of colleges and theatres and performs globally as Washington, DC’s one and only Cultural Ambassador. Step Afrika! has earned Mayor’s Arts Awards for Outstanding Contribution to Arts Education (2005); Innovation in the Arts (2008); and Excellence in an Artistic Discipline (2012). Step Afrika! has been performed at the White House for President Barack Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama. On Juneteenth the group also performed for President Joe Biden and First Lady Dr. Jill Biden.

Critically acclaimed works, such as The Migration: Reflections on Jacob

See Eisemann, Page 12

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# Richardson's Core District hosts Light Up Lockwood Sept. 16

The City of Richardson and the CORE District have scheduled the annual "Light Up Lockwood" to take place Saturday, Sept. 16, 2023, from 6 to 10 p.m. at 510 Lockwood Drive, Richardson, 75080. Light Up Lockwood is an outdoor community event that will culminate with a laser light show on the Lockwood neighborhood water tower in the heart of Richardson's eclectic CORE District, a thriving entertainment and cultural center, that includes the Chinatown, Downtown, Heights, Interurban and Lockwood neighborhoods.

For the second year, the now annual event will showcase a newly reimagined and customized laser light show featuring exciting choreography and an accompanying performance by the Richardson Symphony Orchestra to fully highlight the event's festivities and the City's rich community spirit. Parking and admission are free.

Home to many independently owned and oper-



*The annual, family-friendly event in Richardson's CORE District will feature a dazzling, choreographed light show along with food, drinks, shopping and live entertainment. (Courtesy photo)*

ated businesses, the CORE district event will serve a variety of local culinary options, drinks, shopping, and live entertainment. Popular Lockwood vendors Communion Neighborhood Cooperative, Lockwood Distilling Co., Greenville Avenue Pizza Co., Monkey King Noodle Company, the House of Saint Anita, Lizzie Bee's Flower Shoppe and Happy Hippie Brewing Co. will all

be offering a selection of food and drinks for guests to purchase. Attendees can also expect an exhibit from Envision Richardson, a community-wide engagement process to solicit feedback from people on what Richardson's future growth should look like.

"Our Light Up Lockwood Event is growing and becoming one of our many annual events that makes the CORE and the City of

Richardson a true family destination," said Richardson Mayor Bob Dubey. "This is our second year to hold this event, and we hope to see our residents and neighbors across North Texas come and enjoy the CORE and its top-notch

restaurants, shops, and entertainment."

Also new this year, the City has engaged Event Southwest (ESW), a Dallas-based consulting agency specializing in public events, to manage Light Up Lockwood and future CORE District events. ESW has safely and successfully hosted over 2 million guests at its client events. The company operates other prominent events locally and regionally, such as the Dallas Marathon, Dallas Dia De Los Muertos, the Chevron Houston Marathon, the Oklahoma City Memorial Marathon and the Texas Distance Challenge.

Parking will be available at lots around 510 Lockwood Drive. For parking and event maps, and to learn more about Light Up Lockwood, visit <https://www.richardsoncoredistrict.com/events>.

Lockwood is the newest addition to The CORE District, featuring several adaptive reuse projects that have transformed a once forgotten retail center into a booming social hotspot. This new trendy street features excellent food, coffee, modern co-working space, art shows and Richardson's first and only distillery.

The CORE District is home to: DFW Chinatown, a regionally recognized major food, retail and cultural event destination; Lockwood Drive and its on-trend offerings including diverse food options, unique coffee shops, a modern co-working space, art shows and Richardson's first and only distillery; and Richardson Heights, home to Dallas-Fort Worth's first location of the Austin-based Alamo Drafthouse.

To learn more, please visit [www.richardsoncoredistrict.com](http://www.richardsoncoredistrict.com).

## Following in her father's footsteps, Sarah Jakes Roberts brings 'Women Evolve' conference to Arlington

Picking up the mantle of ministry and empowerment to women passed on from her father T.D. Jakes at last year's conclusion of the long-running event "Woman, Thou Art Loosed!" Sarah Jakes Roberts is bringing her fifth annual women's conference, "Women Evolve" to Globe Life Field in Arlington, Texas, Sept. 14-16, 2023. Woman Evolve is shaping up to be an event of Texas-sized proportions with more than 30,000 tickets already sold.

While Woman, Thou Art Loosed! built a community of women up, Woman Evolve will pick up the torch and leverage innovation to catapult the community further to help women

feel more connected in every aspect of their lives including in mind and body. Ultimately, the movement and event will help women progress toward the lives they desire to live. Jakes Roberts is at the forefront of an intergenerational movement helping women from all socioeconomic backgrounds erase the limits put on women. Her goal for Woman Evolve is to create a space for women to learn and grow together.

"It's not about what women can build on their own but going further together through Woman Evolve as opposed to doing this fast and alone," said Jakes Roberts. "I believe the power of connection and community allow us

to facilitate a chartering of new paths so that we can go forward deeper and together."

Woman Evolve will cover topics including courage, loving your body, mental health, finances, a man's perspective and ministry.

Jakes Roberts is redefining what it means to be a modern woman of faith. As a wife, mother, author and businesswoman dedicated to honoring her father's mission of empowering underrepresented communities—including the disappearing middle class—her messages have spread throughout the world defying cultural, religious, gender, and socio-economic

See WOMEN, Page 13

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# Texans can apply to sit on Advisory Board for Texas Department of Licensing Regulation

AUSTIN – Texans interested in serving as volunteer members of the new Texas Department of Licensing Regulation (TDLR) Mold Assessment and Remediation Advisory Board have until September 22 to apply for one of 11 slots on the board. Members will serve staggered six-year terms. The board will provide technical knowledge and industry expertise to TDLR and the Texas Commission of Licensing and Regulation.

Senate Bill 1213 (88th Legislature, Regular Session) created the board and requires that members be appointed no later than Dec. 1, 2023.

Members of the new ad-



Clark Van der Beek / Unsplash

visory board will include:

- Three members who are licensed and engaged in mold assessment as consultants.
- Three members who are licensed and engaged in mold remediation as contractors.
- Two members who are building contractors prin-

cipally engaged in home construction and who are members of a statewide building trade association.

- One member who is a representative of the insurance industry.
- One member who is a representative of an accredited mold training provider.
- One member who rep-

resents the public.

Board members will be appointed by the Chair of the Texas Commission of Licensing and Regulation and approved by members of the Commission.

As volunteers, members of the board are not compensated; they must cover their own expenses if they need to travel to Austin as part of their duties. Most TDLR advisory boards and commissions meet via videoconference, so any travel may be limited.

Anyone interested in serving as a member of the board can submit an application online (<https://www.tdlr.texas.gov/Advisory-Board/login.aspx>). TDLR will respond to all appli-

cants.

TDLR provides regulatory oversight for a broad range of occupations, businesses, facilities, and equipment in Texas. The agency protects the health and safety of Texans by ensuring they are served by qualified, licensed professionals. Inspections of individuals, businesses, and equipment are done on a regular basis to safeguard

the public. Currently, the agency regulates 38 business and occupational licensing programs with almost 1,000,000 licensees across the state.

TDLR's Customer Service line is available anytime between 7 a.m. until 6 p.m., Monday through Friday, at 1-800-803-9202. TDLR representatives are fluent in English, Spanish and Vietnamese.

## ← PREMATURE, from Page 4

equalities still exist and are having a devastating effect on many families.

"Quantifying these differences is important for highlighting both the size of this issue and the need for health and social policy to close these gaps," he said.

The researchers found that overall, the adequacy of antenatal care received by the mother was one of the biggest predictors of preterm mortality across

the study period. Mothers receiving inadequate antenatal care remain at over 50% higher risk of preterm infant mortality than those with adequate care.

Dr Venkatesan said: "We must aim to tackle the complex financial, structural, and geographical barriers that contribute to parents' ability to access antenatal care. The findings from our study add support to calls for provision of free universal antenatal care for all

pregnant Americans."

The study examined data from the U.S. National Centre for Health Statistics Birth Infant/Death Dataset, of over 12 million preterm infant births over the course of 25 years, between 1995 and 2020. Using information reported on an infant's U.S. birth certificate, the team considered the race of the mother, alongside her smoking status, educational attainment, antenatal care and insurance status, to see how these issues affected preterm mortality rates.

The research was funded by the NIHR Great Ormond Street Hospital Biomedical Research Centre.

## ← INNOCENCE, from Page 1

going to pay for it," Hubbard said a detective told her.

The Oregon Court of Appeals underscored the failure of Johnson's defense team to interview Hubbard, a critical oversight that led to the reversal of his conviction in October 2021. Further, requests for additional DNA testing, which might have unveiled alternative suspects, were met with resistance from the state.

"For 25 years, the State of Oregon has fought to defend their deeply flawed

case against our former client, Jesse Johnson," declared Steve Wax, the legal director of the Oregon Innocence Project. "There can be no more heinous injustice imaginable than for Mr. Johnson to have heard a sentence of death pronounced against him all those years ago... and to then waste away for years on death row."

In asking the judge to dismiss the case finally, prosecutors admitted to the absence of any identified alternate suspect in Thompson's murder despite ongoing

investigations. Wax said Johnson, now a free man, finds himself with nothing, not even the customary release funds because of the dismissal.

A GoFundMe campaign launched on Johnson's behalf garnered over \$10,000 in support as of Thursday. Johnson's release coincides with the exoneration of a New York man, who was officially cleared of a 1976 rape conviction, marking the longest-standing wrongful conviction overturned based on new DNA evidence in U.S. history, as stated by the Innocence Project.

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# Controversial new immigration group claims to advocate for Black workers

By Stacy M. Brown  
NNPA Senior National  
Correspondent

Black America for Immigration Reform, a new group in Washington, D.C., that works on immigration policy, has been making waves in the political world. Even though the name sounds progressive, the group's founder, William W. Chip, is a white person with a history of making controversial racial posts. The organization's primary goal is to limit immigrants, which many groups have criticized.

Chip served as Donald Trump's senior counselor at the Department of Homeland Security, and is the only person named as an agent for the new group.

Chip, who claims that more immigration could hurt Black Americans, has worked as a tax attorney and written for the Center for Immigration Studies, which wants to limit immigration.

Politico, which broke the story about the new group, noted that some see the start of this non-profit as an attempt to get more people to agree that immigration hurts Black workers and the federal government should limit immigrants. Critics argue that it might be a deceptive way to stop efforts to overhaul immigration. Chip claimed that he assembled the group on behalf of two Black board members of the Center for Immigration Studies, T. Willard Fair and Frank Morris. He asserted that he

wouldn't sit on the board, but he, Fair, and Morris will work with three other group members.

Chip said that any study that says there should be less immigration often gets pushback from the mainstream media and left-leaning groups, who sometimes call people who support it "white racists." He believes they could counter this by having an authentic African American group with well-known Black individuals on the board, providing more credibility to their views.

The head of the Urban

League in Miami, T. Willard Fair, said that the idea for the group came from worries about how immigration would affect Black neighborhoods. "In Dade County, having experienced the Haitians coming here, I knew how if it was not controlled, how it could impact negatively the progress of my constituents, who happen to be Black Miamians," Fair told Politico, noting that he has been talking about this issue for decades. "And then Chip came up with the idea that we ought to begin to react again based

on what's going on at the southern border, and how it was going to impact us going forward. So, he said, 'let's organize a group.'"

According to Politico, Chip's group aligns with organizations such as Numbers USA, the Federation for American Immigration, and the Institute for Sound Public Policy (formerly known as Project for Immigration Reform). These organizations share a common belief that immigration negatively impacts Black workers and advocate for immigration restrictions.

Even though the group is just starting, it plans to apply for 501(c)(3) status and launch a website. Initially, Chip's group doesn't plan to lobby. Still, it plans to bring attention to studies that suggest that less-educated immigrant workers compete for jobs with less-educated U.S.-born workers. They plan to use that argument to push for more restrictive immigration policies, including reducing legal immigration.

Politico noted that the discussion about how im-

**See WORKERS, Page 16**

## EISEMANN, from Page 9

Lawrence and Drumfolk, tour major U.S. cities. Step Afrika! is prominently featured at the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History & Culture with an interactive exhibit on the art form of stepping. Learn more about Step Afrika! at [www.stepafrika.org](http://www.stepafrika.org).

Tickets are \$47-\$57

and are available for purchase online at [www.eisemanncenter.com](http://www.eisemanncenter.com) or by calling the Eisemann Center Ticket Office at 972.744.4650. Group discounts are available for 10 or more persons. Lobby and Ticket Office hours are 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday and during all public events.



Step Afrika! (Drago Videmsek / Courtesy photo)

## AMO, from Page 2

primary underscored the enduring appeal of Biden's vision within the party and his ability to rally support from diverse constituents in Rhode Island's first congressional district. In se-

curing victory, Amo also defeated Aaron Regunberg, a former state representative who had the support of Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) and Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-N.Y.)

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- Gathering Utility source information
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# Black Economic Alliance Foundation joins Fearless Fund in fighting lawsuit

By Stacy M. Brown  
NNPA Senior National  
Correspondent

The Black Economic Alliance (BEA) Foundation, a leading organization mobilizing Black business leaders and advocates, announced the submission of an amicus brief advocating against a preliminary injunction to halt the Fearless Foundation, a foundation that aids women of color in securing venture capital for their startups, mainly focusing on Black women entrepreneurs.

BEA CEO Samantha Tweedy emphasized the importance of entrepreneurship, highlighting its pivotal role in achieving the Ameri-

can dream and economic prosperity. She noted the systemic obstacles Black entrepreneurs, particularly Black women, faced in establishing and expanding their businesses.

The amicus brief by the BEA Foundation focuses on the challenges confronting Black women entrepreneurs. It highlights the persisting discriminatory systems, pointing out that Black women business owners encounter a rejection rate three times higher than their white counterparts. Moreover, Tweedy noted that Black women receive less than one percent of venture capital funding. The Fearless Strivers Grant Contest, one of the initiatives, aims to

rectify these historical injustices and unleash a reservoir of untapped talent and innovation for the betterment and growth of the economy.

The legal action against Fearless Fund represents a broader trend of attempts to roll back advancements in racial diversity within the business sector, civil rights advocates stated. Recent polling shows widespread support for businesses promoting racial diversity in America. The support is robust across different races, ideologies, and generations. It is also rooted in the belief that diversity drives greater profitability and innovation.

Earlier this year, Edward Blum's American Alliance for Equal Rights launched

legal action against Fearless Fund. The lawsuit, brought before the U.S. District Court in Atlanta, alleges that the Fearless Fund discriminates against non-Black women. Experts said the suit could present a pivotal moment in the ongoing discourse on race in the workplace.

Renowned civil rights advocate Ben Crump and others have vowed to combat Blum's actions. Founded in 2019 by three Black women, Fearless Fund has championed economic empowerment and opportunity for women of color. Their flagship initiative, the Fearless Strivers Grant Contest, has provided substantial financial support to Black women

entrepreneurs, with awards reaching up to \$20,000. However, Blum's American Alliance for Equal Rights contends that this program violates a section of the Civil Rights Act of 1866, which prohibits racial discrimination in contracts.

Blum asserts that certain members are being excluded based on race, and they demand redress for what they perceive as a violation of their rights. Alphonso David, a civil rights attorney, President, and CEO of The Global Black Economic Forum, emphasized the undeniable inequality in today's playing field. "Today, the playing field is not level — that is beyond dispute," said David, a civil rights attorney,

and President and 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 severely underestimated the resilience of Fearless Fund. "Blum thought they would be the easiest ones to pick off. Oh, was he wrong," Crump remarked. Support for Fearless Fund's cause extends to organizations like the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, the National Women's Law Center, and the law firm Gibson, Dunn, and Crutcher.

## WOMEN, from Page 10

conomic boundaries. She has a unique way of reaching people who are seeking to make peace with their past, maximize their present and deepen their relationship with God.

Woman Evolve will feature the following speakers, with more to be named in the coming weeks.

- Sarah Jakes Roberts, founder of Woman Evolve.
- T.D. Jakes, CEO of T.D. Jakes Group.

- Touré Roberts, founder of ONE | A Potter's House Church.

- Serita Jakes, executive director of women's and children's affairs at The Potter's House of Dallas.

- Brené Brown, scholar and research professor at University of Houston.

- Devon Franklin, president and CEO of Franklin Entertainment.

- Sheryl Brady, pastor of The Potter's House of

North Dallas.

- Yvonne Orijji, actress, author and comedian.

- April Daniels, philanthropist of "The Girlfriends Corner."

- Priah Ferguson, actress and founder of Bold Honey Creative Company.

- Linda Griffin, advisor of Church of God in Christ.

- Love McPherson, marriage and family counselor.

- Anthony O'Neal, host of "The Table" podcast.

- Dr. Anita Phillips, trauma therapist.

- Naomi Raine, Grammy

Award-winning singer and songwriter.

- David Mann, singer, producer and comedian.

- Dr. Natalie Sampson, founder of Symmetry Physical Therapy & Wellness.

## CASA, from Page 5

way out. He was recognized by President Barack Obama as an American Champion of Change. He previously led corporate social responsibility for Walt Disney Television and has served as a California Child Welfare Council member. Today, he is a foster dad living in Los Angeles and working in corporate community engagement.

The Champion of Children Award is named in honor of Judge Barefoot Sanders, a revered United States District Court judge for the Northern District of Texas, past award recipient and steadfast supporter of Dallas CASA. The award is given annually to recognize

community leaders who significantly improve the lives of youth in our community, particularly those whose lives have been marked by abuse, neglect or other adversity. His wife Jan Sanders served as a Dallas CASA volunteer advocate.

Award winners from the recent past include Jessica and Dirk Nowitzki, The Meadows Foundation, The Junior League of Dallas, NorthPark Center and the Dallas CASA Classic hosts Goldman Sachs, Pioneer Natural Resources and AT&T.

To learn about underwriting opportunities, contact Megan Dion (mdion@dallascasa.org).

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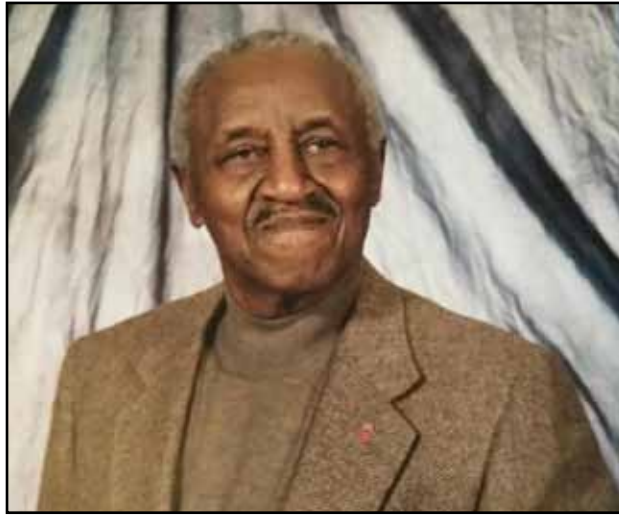


## En Memoriam: Garland Ledru Washington

*"For when the One Great Scorer comes to mark against your name, HE writes - not that you won or lost - but HOW you played the Game."*

— Grantland Rice

Garland Ledru Washington was born in the New Bethel Community near Tyler Texas, to the parentage of John Albert Washington and his wife, Ethertie Smith Washington. Garland was the 11th of 12 children, all have preceded him in death: McKinley, Johnny, Beatrice, Governor, George, Arlene, Tyeska, Rather, Wavely, Travis, Garland and Ross Earl.



Garland Ledru Washington (Courtesy photo)

Garland came to Christ early in life in that close knit church community of

New Bethel and under the loving care of his father and mother. He joined the

fellowship at Cedar Crest CME in the 60's and faithfully served in teaching the E.M. Wyatt Sunday School class, the Music Ministry (Male Chorus) and also serving on the Finance Committee.

He graduated from Stanton High School and then entered the US Army, serving honorably during WWII. Returning home after the war, he used his veterans benefits to complete his Bachelor of Science degree at Prairie View A&M University. Later he went on to earn his Master of Education degree at the then North Texas State Uni-

versity, now UNT-Denton.

He chose education and administration as his career path and excelled in it. Beginning in the West Texas communities of Ranger and Eastland, Garland was principal, teacher, coach and Scout Leader. Later he moved his family back to Dallas, and served as a science teacher and coach at Seagoville HS. DISD promoted him to Assistant Principal, serving under Mrs. Eleanor Doty at Zumwalt Jr. HS. And then serving as Assistant Principal at South Oak Cliff High School, where he retired from his DISD career in the

mid-1980's.

Garland is lovingly survived by one son Douglas Carl Washington, two daughters Vickie Washington-Nance (Norvis) and Cheryle Washington; one step daughter, Michele Crear; grandchildren: Djore' Nance, Terence Nance, Classi Nance, Nelson Nance, Tony Swindle, Everett Little, and Jemahdi Blueford; great-grandchildren: Malakai, Jahsir, Talib, AnuAsha and Audwin; special friend, Doris Hart and many loving nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.

## Why Do Some Cute Babies Grow Up Ugly?

By Dr. James L. Snyder

Our second great grand baby was born at the end of last year. Since then, it has been a delight to watch her grow.

I will not say she is the cutest baby in the world, but I haven't met any cuter. She was born cute, and I'm not sure what part of the family she got that.

Sometimes, when in the hospital, I walk by the maternity ward and look at all the new babies. Look-

ing at them, I can see how cute everyone is. I have not found an ugly baby in the maternity ward yet.

The other day, I had to go to Walmart to pick up some items. Walking down the aisles, I saw a few babies pushed around in shopping carts. I looked at each one and smiled, noticing they were all very cute.

Walking down the last aisle was another baby in a shopping cart, and I stopped to look and smile. Then I did something I had

not done before. I looked up to see the mother that was pushing the shopping cart. Boy, was I shocked.

I'm not an expert on ugly, but that mother was the ugliest mother I have ever seen. It got me thinking about that cute baby. Will she grow up to be as ugly as her mother?

I have never seen an ugly baby, so I had to ponder why some babies grow up ugly.

That evening, as I was getting ready for bed, I

looked into my bathroom mirror. Staring back at me was one of the ugliest persons I have seen in a very long time. I was shocked. How in the world did I get so ugly? Was I born ugly?

The next day, I got out one of my old photo albums to look through it and see what I looked like as a baby. Sure enough, there were several baby pictures of me. You won't believe it, but I was a cute baby. I

never gave that a thought before.

Growing up, I never thought of my parents as ugly. After all, they were my parents. I noticed some of my school friends had really ugly parents. I tried to keep their secret because I didn't want to embarrass them.

Looking through my photo album, I saw all those pictures from when I was a cute baby up to my wed-

ding. I will not brag, but I was a cute little guy when I was young. After looking in the bathroom mirror, I wondered what happened to make me so ugly.

The only thing different in my life was that I got married. I'm not going to go there for obvious reasons.

If a baby is born cute, why doesn't it stay cute for

See BABIES, Page 15

## Powder puff football

By Daris Howard

My daughter told me she was playing Powder Puff football. I found out the girls played against each other—it was much different from when I was in high school.

I remember Coach gathering us football players in the dressing room before practice on Thursday, the day before a big game. I thought he was going to give us a pep talk, but the topic was about the next week.

"Okay," he said, "Monday is the first day of Homecoming week, so first thing in the afternoon, before practice, we have the Powder Puff football game. Those of you who are start-

ers will be playing, so come here right after you eat lunch. The rest of you are cheerleaders."

"Hey, Len," I said as we headed to practice, "what's Powder Puff football?"

"What planet are you from?" Lenny answered. "Haven't you seen a Powder Puff game before?"

I shook my head. "I only started football in my junior year, and besides, my dad needed me for harvest every minute possible in the fall."

"Well, the starting football team plays against the girls," Lenny said.

"Won't the girls get hurt?" I asked.

"Don't worry," he replied. "Things are equalized in their favor, and they

always win. In fact, the boys have never scored a point no matter how hard they've tried. You'll see."

On Monday afternoon, we went to the football field. We had a slight introduction before the game. The first thing I learned was that every boy had one arm, his dominant arm, tied behind his back. We all had flags in our back pockets. The girls were allowed to tackle or grab the flag. The boys could not tackle; they could only grab flags. It didn't take me long to see the challenge.

When the game started, the girls opted to receive. I got ready to kick off. But just before I could, our

See POWDER, Page 16

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# I Wish You Enough!



**Sister Tarpley**  
NDG  
Religion  
Editor

A father and daughter at an Airport were overheard talking. The daughter's plane departure was announced. Standing near the security gate, they hugged and the father said, "I love you." "I wish you enough."

The daughter said, "Daddy, our life together has been more than enough. Your love is all that I have ever needed. I wish you enough, too, Daddy." They kissed; and she boarded the plane.

The father walked toward the window where I was seated. Standing there I could see he wanted to, and needed to cry.

I tried not to intrude on his privacy, but he asked me, "Did you ever say



good-bye to someone knowing it would be forever?"

"Yes, I have, I replied. That brought back memories that I had of expressing my love and appreciation for what my Dad had done.

Recognizing that his days were limited, I told

him face to face how much he meant to me. So I knew what this man was experiencing. "Forgive me for asking, but why is this good-bye forever?" I asked.

"I am old and my daughter lives far away. I have challenges ahead and the

reality is that her next trip back home will probably be for my funeral," he said.

When you said good-bye I heard you say, "I wish you enough." What does that mean?"

The father smiled. "That's a wish that has been handed down from other generations. My parents used to say it to everyone." He paused for a moment and looked up as if trying to remember it in detail.

"When we say, 'I wish you enough,' we are wanting the other person to have a life filled with just enough good things to sustain them," he continued and then turning toward me he shared the following, reciting it from memory.

"I wish you enough sun to keep your attitude bright." "I wish you enough happiness to keep your spirit alive."

"I wish you enough pain so that the smallest joys in

life appear larger." "I wish you enough increases to satisfy your wanting." "I wish you enough loss to appreciate all that you possess."

"I wish you enough 'Hello's' to get you through the final 'Good-byes.'" He sobbed and walked away. -- Author Unknown.

Trust the Lord when trials come; don't doubt nor question His Wisdom. Believe God's Word; no matter how difficult things may be; press on and trust Him. Rejoice and give Him praise.

Trust in the Lord with your whole heart. The times when you begin to doubt; lift your eyes and shout . . . "He's my God, Who carries me through, no matter what, I'll trust Him!

No matter what my eyes may see, I'll walk by faith and trust in Thee!" It doesn't matter where He lead, follow Him faithfully.

Through the valleys, over the hills, in darkened times, trust Him still. In everything . . . Trust in the Lord!

(Editor's Note: This column originally ran in September 2016.)

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## BABIES, from Page 14

the rest of its life? What happened to me that I lost my cuteness, as I got older?

Following this thought about cuteness, I was in Walmart and happened to go down the aisle of beauty products. This is the first time I have looked in this aisle, so I was unsure what I was looking at. All of those products guaranteed that if I used them, I would look beautiful.

I don't want to look beautiful; I just want to look cute! [Sigh!]

I was tempted to get some of the products, but I didn't know where to start. Where does the journey back to cuteness start?

As I was looking at these products, one of the workers at Walmart came by and said, "Can I help you with anything?"

You do not know how tempted I was to ask her what I needed to restore my cuteness. I stuttered and said, "No, ma'am. I'm just looking for some products

for my wife." That got me out of a sticky situation. My wife does not need anything to look cute; she has maintained it since I met her. I have been tempted many times to ask her her secret, but then I was afraid she would tell me.

Maybe when I was young, if I had paid more attention to my cuteness, I might have retained it much longer than I did. But nobody told me what to do along this line. I blame my parents who should have told me how to retain my cuteness. Maybe I can find a lawyer to help sue them for allowing me to become so ugly. How much is ugly worth?

I may have to settle with the fact that I'm just not cute. Maybe the secret is not to regain my cuteness but to slow down my ugliness.

If I'm as ugly as my mirror suggest, how in the world do people around me tolerate me? I'm not sure I

could tolerate me. I don't have an inferiority complex, but I do have an exterior complex and I'm not sure what to do about it.

In my devotions recently, I read this verse. "And even to your old age I am he; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you" (Isaiah 46:4).

That verse got me thinking about growing old. I don't need to worry about the past because God will carry me through everything. The secret to this is allowing God to be God and allowing Him to do what only He can do in my life.

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.

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# NDG Book Review: 'One Drop' is a book to drop everything for

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

One drop.

That's all they said it took to determine someone's race. Just one drop, the tiniest of amounts, and everything changed: no access, no rights, no cold drink from a fountain on a hot day, no freedoms. No safety. No say in the matter. And in the new novel, "One Blood" by Denene Millner, no way to change it, but time.

The first night Grace saw her Maw Maw catch a baby, she had a mess of feelings: a little sick, scared, but mostly awed at what Maw Maw called a



miracle. Grace was small then, but she paid attention. One day, Maw Maw promised, Grace would be the one catching babies.

Just days after her own mother died, though, the

sheriff came for Maw Maw, who'd falsified a birth certificate to protect a newborn from a white man not its father. The sheriff beat Maw Maw and dragged her off, and Grace was spirited away north to Brooklyn, to safety, to be cared for by an Auntie who didn't want her.

Hattie made no bones about that.

She treated Grace no better than a common maid, and she warned that a country gal like Grace had no business in Brooklyn society. Hattie didn't want the embarrassment of an illegitimate child around, either, and so when Grace

got pregnant, Hattie tricked her into losing her baby to adoption.

Lolo never told Tommy the truth because she knew he wanted children.

She'd been terribly mutilated down there when she was younger, so she let him think he was the cause of their infertility. She didn't want children anyhow, but she became a mother with the adoption of a boy first, then a girl, and she didn't tell either of her children.

On a sunny day when she was thirteen, Rae learned a truth about herself, and she kept it close. She loved her mother, she appreciated Lolo's sacrifices and didn't

want to hurt her. But as she grew into a woman with the same troubles she'd seen in her mother's life, Rae wondered where her blood came from...

Here's some advice: if you're not completely immersed in "One Blood" by page ten, you might want to get yourself checked out. There could be something wrong with you.

Covering just a matter of decades, author Denene Millner introduces readers to a family of women, each of whom leave an unknown legacy for the next generation. They do it while dealing with the issues of

the day, racism, violence, classism, and infidelity, and with a little help from the ethereal connection they share – all of which dip and soar throughout this four-part tale. Millner is a great teller, sharing each woman's story with brutal reality, the kind that can shock you emotionless, but also with a lightness that feels like skipping.

It's a mix you can't miss.

Readers who want a novel that includes a little bit of last-century history and current events will eat this book up. "One Blood" is a book you'll drop everything to read.

## WORKERS, from Page 12

migration affects the job market is complicated. Most economists say immigrants help the labor market as a whole and have few harmful effects on native-born workers with less education. But some

people agree that some groups, like Black workers in certain parts of the business, may pay small costs.

Critics argue there is more than just a debate about the economy. They say that there is a cynical

political strategy at play: trying to put immigrants and Black Americans against each other. Many remain skeptical of Chip, particularly giving his ultra right-wing and racist views.

"While writing about immigration for the Cen-

ter for Immigration studies for nearly two decades, Chip did not hide his views on race," Politico noted. "During 2021, he posted a series of inflammatory posts on Twitter, now known as X, including one tweet that questioned whether Derek Chauvin,

the Minneapolis officer who killed George Floyd, was racially motivated." In another, he talks Native Americans' concerns about European settlement in America.

"If there are some whites who are concerned about becoming the minority and

having other racial groups become the dominant force in society, and so they're basically at the mercy of the other groups — I mean, they're not the only ones who felt that way. The Native Americans felt that way," Chip said, when explaining the tweet.

## PRISON, from Page 5

was the size of Manhattan, with 18,000 acres. In the maximum-security jail, almost all the inmates are African American, and all the officers who watch over them are white. The prison officers are called "Freemen," not guards. Today, Angola houses about 6,300 prisoners, more than 75% of whom will be Black.

Judge Dick unequivocally determined that the conditions in Angola con-

stitute cruel and unusual punishment. She further highlighted that the prevailing punitive environment, coupled with systemic failures in programming, clearly violates the 14th Amendment and federal laws safeguarding children with disabilities.

Furthermore, the judge's ruling underscored that the state had reneged on every assurance it made during a prior court hearing in Sep-

tember of the preceding year, where it pledged not to mete out punitive measures against children. The judge found the state guilty of:

1. Confining children to cells for extended periods as a punitive measure.
2. Resorting to handcuffs, the use of mace, and denying family visits as punishment.
3. Failing to ensure sufficient staffing, including the absence of licensed social workers or professional

counselors.

4. Neglecting to provide adequate standard and special education services when required.

5. Failing to administer necessary and appropriate mental health treatment or social services.

Lead counsel David Utter spoke on behalf of the litigation team, expressing gratitude towards the clients and their families for their courage in coming forward and opposing these

cruel conditions. Utter emphasized the urgent need for Louisiana's leaders to redirect their efforts toward providing the necessary care and support to enable these children to thrive and realize their full potential.

Utter's statement concluded with a resounding call for investment in children, advocating for transforming the juvenile justice system in Louisiana to rectify long-standing systemic failures. He stressed that

a state where all children, regardless of race or ethnicity, have equal access to opportunity is entirely achievable.

Prominent organizations joined the lawsuit, including the American Civil Liberties Union's National Prison Project, the ACLU of Louisiana, the Claiborne Firm and Fair Fight Initiative, and the Southern Poverty Law Center, and with attorneys Chris Murell and David Shanies.

## POWDER, from Page 14

teammates on the sideline, who were all dressed in cheerleading costumes from their mothers, swarmed us, and the kick went nowhere. The girls had the ball at midfield. The girls had no rules, and after the ball was hiked, all girls except the ball carrier grabbed a guy and held onto his jersey so he couldn't do anything. Two held onto me. That was when I real-

ized there were more than the normal eleven girls on the field.

With the other girls holding onto us, the girl with the ball made a touchdown. It was then our turn to receive. But have you ever tried to catch a ball or pick one up with one hand tied behind your back? It was a comedy of errors, and the crowd roared with laughter. We had barely gotten

the ball when the girls all grabbed the boy who had it and piled on him. We tried to defend, but it's hard with one hand tied behind your back and girls grabbing your jersey.

The game went the same way all afternoon, and the score was 41 to zero. We had possession and came to a huddle for the last play of the game.

"Okay," Lenny said. "We can't win, but we can still make history if we score a

point."

We decided to do a big fake. The quarterback would act like he was giving the ball to the halfback, then all of the team, except the quarterback and me, would move to the right with the halfback. The quarterback and I would go left and move quickly down the field.

The fake worked beautifully. All fifteen or so girls moved with the team, leaving an open field in front

of the quarterback and me. With me flanking him, getting in the way of any girl who came at us, the quarterback moved quickly toward the goal line. It seemed sure that we would score the first points ever for guys playing Powder Puff football.

But we forgot about all the boys in the cheerleader outfits on the edge of the field. Just about the time we reached the ten-yard line, the boys flooded onto the field and took both the

quarterback and me down. Then the girls all piled on to end the game.

And so, the score stayed 41 to 0. We didn't go down in history, we just went down, and we still laugh about it.

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