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Ethnicity and the rising voice of new voters in American politics

By Lori Lee
NDG Contributing Writer

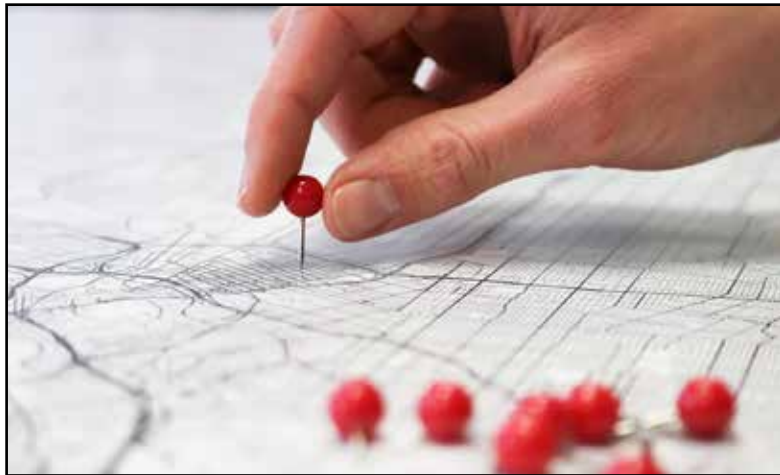
As the nation's diversity continues to grow, ethnic voting patterns will increasingly have a hand in determining our elections, and voters who are new to voting will wield greater influence.

Eligible Latino voters have increased by 4.7 million since 2018, reports the Brookings Institute. This wide increase is due in large part to a growing segment of young Latinos who are coming of age to vote. With a third of Latino voters young or new to voting and their median age much younger than the general electorate, young Latinos will be an essential demographic in 2024, explained Assistant Professor at Loyola Miramar University Claudia Sandoval.

Since young male voters tended to swing Republican from 2016 to 2020, some Democrats are concerned the Latino vote may follow with more movement toward the Republican party.

Yet these numbers do not necessarily represent a mass exodus, Sandoval clarifies. As the Pew Research Center reports, Latino registered voters leaned Democrat nearly two to one, in a 2022 survey, with little shift in party identification over the past few years.

Said Sandoval, Latinos voted



As the nation's diversity continues to grow, ever changing ethnic voting patterns will play a key in the 2024 election, and voters who are new to voting will wield great influence. (Geojango Maps / Unsplash)

Republican in much higher numbers in the early 80s for Reagan, a champion of immigration reform. In 2000, Republicans captured a sizable 35% of the Latino vote, finally peaking in 2004, as 44% of Latino voters leaned right aligning with George W. Bush's bipartisan stance on immigration.

While Trump is not seen as a progressive on immigration reform, some Latinos relate to him as an independent, she explained. Latino voters do not focus solely on immigration, said Sandoval. Highly concerned with the economy, healthcare, and education, they also care about violent crime and gun policy.

Among attitudes that may influence their vote, Sandoval notes

that some Latino males, who are good at running businesses, believe they'd do better under a President from the business world. What is more, a third of Latino males believe the Democratic Party does not care about them.

Similar to Sandoval, Assistant Professor at Georgetown Jami Scott does not see existing dissatisfaction with the Democratic Party as leading to mass exodus. Despite low favorability for Biden, especially among typically left-leaning young voters, Black voters are more tolerant looking forward, said Scott, many having left their 2016 stay-at-home mentality for more of

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MLK and economic freedom

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New research sheds light on antidepressants

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Homeless surge hits Blacks, Latinos

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\$47 million for school infrastructure

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Richardson's 'RAMP' program for business

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People In The News ...



Rev. Mark Thompson



Rep. James Clyburn

NDG Quote of the Week: "Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that."
- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Rev. Mark Thompson

The Rev. Mark Thompson's illustrious and groundbreaking journalism career, which found its roots in the Black Press of America nearly 40 years ago, has come full circle as he assumes a pivotal leadership role with the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA).



From his early days as a journalist with the historic AFRO newspaper in Washington, D.C., under the mentorship of the legendary Frances L. Murphy II, to trailblazing moments as the first talk show host on XM Satellite Radio, Thompson has consistently championed the cause of African American-owned media. Now, in his role as the new NNPA Global Digital Transformation Director, he is poised to drive a new era of innovation, guiding member publishers through the intricate landscape of digital transformation and content distribution.

“After serious contemplation and after a review of the capabilities of more than 75 others who inquired about the job, not only did Mark’s resume and experience rise to the top in the digital space, but in his longevity of advocating the power and impact of the Black Press of America, this was not a difficult decision,” stated NNPA President and CEO Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis Jr.

“In fact,” Dr. Chavis continued, “it was providential. We look forward to working as a team, and I’m very honored to invite Mark to join the NNPA’s national staff as a full-time Global Digital Transformation Director. In addition to Mark’s experience in America, he also has an international perspective, particularly in the African diaspora, where the content produced and distributed by the Black Press of America will also, with his assistance, have extended reach and impact for communities of color throughout the world as the NNPA continues to be the most respected, vital, and trusted voice of Black America.”

Currently a political, human rights, and breaking news podcast host, Thompson’s work in digital social media won his “Make It Plain” recognition among Best Civil Rights Podcasts, Best Human Rights Podcasts, Best Podcasts About Social Justice, and Best Broadcast Television Podcasts in 2021.

A 40-year veteran on the frontlines of the ongoing struggle of African Americans and others, the 104th Annual NAACP Convention in Orlando in 2013 awarded Thompson “For 25 years of crusading journalism and outstanding leadership in furthering the work of civil and human rights.” He not only has been a part of every significant social justice movement and event over the past 40 years, but he has also been a radio broadcaster and journalist for over three decades and has spent over ten years as a national network television

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See THOMPSON, Page 6

Rep. James Clyburn

In a critical assessment of the Biden-Harris reelection campaign, South Carolina Democratic Rep. James Clyburn, a key party influencer, and former President Barack Obama have each expressed reservations regarding the campaign’s struggle to secure robust backing from Black voters and its apparent inability to breach the MAGA wall.



Clyburn, a linchpin in Biden’s victorious 2020 White House bid, and Obama, wielding enduring popularity, particularly among the Black community, conveyed their concerns separately.

During a candid interview on CNN’s “State of the Union,” Clyburn voiced his unease. “I have no problem with the Biden administration and what it has done,” Clyburn stated. “My problem is that we have not been

able to break through that MAGA wall in order to get to people exactly what this president has done.” Despite highlighting these concerns, Clyburn underscored that he was “not worried” but “very concerned,” revealing that he had personally discussed these issues with President Biden.

Delving into specifics, Clyburn focused on student debt relief as an exemplar of Biden’s commitment to fulfilling promises. He addressed the criticism surrounding a segment of Biden’s debt relief plan struck down by the Supreme Court, noting, “I’m still hearing from people as recently as yesterday that he

did not keep his promise on student loan debt relief. And he has.”

Clyburn pointed out the broader achievements. “Eighty percent of what he said he would do, he has done and is continuing to do it, and people don’t focus on that,” he stated. “They only focus on that 20 percent affected by that court decision

rather than what he did to get beyond the court decision.”

Simultaneously, Obama has discussed President Biden’s reelection campaign structure.

Reportedly, Obama has emphasized the need for the campaign to operate independently, making decisions without constant clearance

from the White House. According to the Washington Post, Obama’s concerns stem from the belief that the campaign requires empowerment for effective decision-making.

The newspaper highlighted Obama’s enduring concerns about the po-

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Rep. Hank Johnson

House Democrats are pleading with Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas to recuse himself from the case involving former President Donald Trump’s eligibility to participate in the Colorado Republican primary.



Rep. Hank Johnson of Georgia is leading the request. The call comes in response to the twice-impeached and now four-times indicted former president’s appeal to the Supreme Court after a Colorado court ruling last month disqualified him from the ballot due to his actions leading up to the January 6 attack on the Capitol.

In a letter dated Thursday, January 4, lawmakers claim that Justice Thomas’s fairness is affected by his wife’s public support for Trump’s attempts to overturn the 2020 election. The letter mentions that Ginni Thomas participated in the “Stop the Steal” rally before the Capitol attack,

highlighting her alleged involvement in organizing the event and bringing insurrectionists to the Capitol.

“This time,” the Democrats wrote, “we must urge you to recuse yourself from any involvement in the case of Anderson v. Griswold because your impartiality is reasonably questioned by substantial numbers of fair-minded members of the public.”

They argue that Ginni Thomas’s strong participation in the events before the January 6 insurrection and the financial benefit the Thomas family could get if Trump is re-elected are reasons for disqualification.

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60 YEARS of Illuminating Change

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

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Honoring MLK: The unfinished journey towards economic freedom

By Charlene Crowell

This January 15, our nation again will observe the only national holiday designated as a day of service. The Martin Luther King, Jr. federal was first observed in 1986. But it took another 17 years for all 50 states to recognize the holiday, according to the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History & Culture.

While Rev. King dedicated his life to the pursuit of freedom, peace, and justice for all Americans, too many economically marginalized people are reduced to fighting over scraps while others enjoy the nation’s economic bounty.

In 2022, 37.9 million people – 11.5 percent of the nation – lived in poverty, according to the Census Bureau. Additionally, Black individuals made up 20.1% of the population in poverty in 2022 but only 13.5 percent of the total population. Black indi-

viduals made up 20.1% of the population in poverty in 2022 but only 13.5 percent of the total population, according to the Census Bureau.

The federal minimum wage, currently at \$7.25 an hour, has not increased since July 2009, according to the federal Bureau of Labor Standards.

And despite increases that take effect in many states in 2024, workers still earn only \$7.25 per hour in Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, Tennessee and Wyoming, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL).

On December 10, 1964, Gunnar Jahn, Chairman of the Nobel Committee presented its Nobel Peace Prize to Dr. King saying in part, “[D]iscrimination will still persist in the economic field and in social intercourse. Realistic as he is, Martin Luther King knows this.”

Accepting the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964, Dr.

King said, “I am mindful that debilitating and grinding poverty afflicts my people and chains them to the lowest rung of the economic ladder.”

“The tortuous road which has led from Montgomery, Alabama to Oslo bears witness to this truth,” Dr. King continued. “This is a road over which millions of Negroes are traveling to find a new sense of dignity... I have the audacity to believe that peoples everywhere can have three meals a day for their bodies, education and culture for their minds, and dignity, equality and freedom for their spirits. I believe that what self-centered men have torn down men other-centered can build up.”

“This faith can give us courage to face the uncertainties of the future,” added Dr. King. “It will give our tired feet new strength as we continue our forward stride toward the city of freedom... Today I come to Oslo as a trustee, inspired and with renewed

dedication to humanity. I accept this prize on behalf of all men who love peace and brotherhood. I say I come as a trustee, for in the depths of my heart I am aware that this prize is much more than an honor to me personally.”

Dr. King would urge Americans to remain vigilant and vocal in fighting attacks against diversity, equity, and inclusion.

A true tribute to Dr. King would be a renewed groundswell of advocacy that ensures our march towards full freedom refuses to go back; but instead moves forward in the same determination of his life’s work. Social equity cannot be sustained without economic parity.

As a people and as a nation, let us confront these and other challenges in his memory.

Charlene Crowell is a senior fellow with the Center for Responsible Lending. She can be reached at Charlene.crowell@responsiblelending.org.

Democrats allocate \$35 million for outreach but overlook Black Press in bid for diverse voter support

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Senior National Correspondent

In what the Party is calling a bid to secure control of the U.S. House in the upcoming November elections, the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC) has announced a \$35 million investment in a comprehensive outreach initiative targeting Latino, Black, Asian American, Pacific Islander, and Native Hawaiian voters. “Power the People” aims to persuade, organize, welcome, educate, and reach voters from diverse ethnic backgrounds.

Despite the significant allocation, a notable omis-

sion from the Democratic strategy is the exclusion of the Black Press of America, a move that continues to raise eyebrows given the pressing need to engage African American voters effectively. The Democratic Party, including the DCCC, the Democratic National Committee, and the Biden-Harris re-election campaign, has thus far ignored criticism for overlooking the influential Black Press.

While the DCCC revealed that 2024 spending surpassed the \$30 million expended on these voter groups in the 2022 midterm elections, concerns persist over excluding the Black Press from this financial commitment. Critics argue

that the omission is particularly striking during what is widely acknowledged as modern history’s most crucial and transformative election.

During Biden’s 2020 campaign, he turned to the Black Press when it appeared that Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders and even New York billionaire Michael Bloomberg’s campaigns were gaining steam. In fact, before arriving in South Carolina, Sanders who had just romped in Nevada, held 45 delegates while Texas Democrat Pete Buttigieg was second with 26, and Biden had claimed just 15.

In Charleston, Biden met with a conglomerate of

publishers from the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA), the trade association of America’s 250 Black-owned newspapers and media companies.

A broadcast interview led by NNPA President and CEO Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis Jr. was followed by a national news article about the sit-down that all went viral. And, after the endorsement of South Carolina Rep. James Clyburn, Biden solidified the vital Black vote and dusted his competition all the way to the White House.

Missayr Boker, DCCC Deputy Executive Director

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Keep up with the news

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Neuropsychological effects of rapid-acting antidepressants may explain their clinical benefits, new research finds

(Newsweek) — Rapid-acting antidepressants, including ketamine, scopolamine and psilocybin, have been found to have immediate and lasting positive effects on mood in patients with major depressive disorder but how these effects arise is unknown. New research led by the University of Bristol explored their neuropsychological effects and found that all three of these drugs can modulate affective biases associated with learning and memory.

The paper, published in *Science Translational Medicine* today [10 January] was carried out in collaboration with researchers at Compass Pathways, Boehringer Ingelheim, and the University of Cambridge.

Negative affective biases are a core feature of major depressive disorder. Affective biases occur when emotions alter how the brain processes information and negative affective biases are thought to contribute to the develop-



Myriam Zilles / Unsplash

ment and continuation of depressed mood.

The research team used an affective bias test, based on an associative learning task, to investigate the effects of rapid-acting antidepressants (RAADs) in rats. They found that all the treatments were able to reduce negative affective biases associated with past experiences but there were additional characteristics of the dissociative anaesthetic, ketamine, and the

serotonergic psychedelic, investigational COMP360 psilocybin (Compass Pathways' proprietary formulation of synthetic psilocybin), which could explain why the effects of a single treatment can be long-lasting.

The findings suggest that these sustained effects are due to adaptive changes in the brain circuits which control affective biases, and these can influence how past experiences are

remembered. The effects at low doses were very specific to affective bias modulation and were localised to the prefrontal cortex of the brain, a region known to play an important role in mood.

Emma Robinson, Professor of Psychopharmacology in the School of Physiology, Pharmacology & Neuroscience at Bristol, and lead author, said: "Using a behavioural task we showed that drugs that are believed to have rapid and sustained benefits in depressed patients, specifically modulate affective biases associated with past experiences, something which we think is really important for understanding why they can improve a patient's mood so quickly.

"We also found differences in how ketamine, scopolamine and COMP360 psilocybin interact with these neuropsychological mechanisms which may explain why the effects of a single treat-

ment in human patients can be long-lasting, days (ketamine) to months (psilocybin).

"By using an animal model, we have been able to investigate these important interactions with learning and memory processes and neural plasticity and propose a two-stage model that may explain the effects we observe."

In the task, each animal learnt to associate a specific digging material with a food reward under either treatment or control conditions. The treatment condition is designed to generate a change in the animal's affective state and a choice test is used to quantify the affective bias this generates.

Acute treatment with the RAADs ketamine, scopolamine, or psilocybin prevented the retrieval of the negative affective bias induced in this model. However, the most exciting finding was at 24 hours after treatment when low, but not high, doses of ketamine

and psilocybin led to a re-learning effect where the negatively biased memory was retrieved with a more positive affective valence. Only psilocybin, but not ketamine or scopolamine treatment also positively biased new experiences.

Exploring in more detail the re-learning effects of ketamine in our studies, the researchers found they were protein synthesis-dependent, localised to the medial prefrontal cortex and could be modulated by cue-reactivation, consistent with their predictions of experience-dependent neural plasticity.

The study's findings propose a neuropsychological mechanism that may explain both the immediate and sustained effects of RAADs, potentially linking their effects on neural plasticity with mood.

Paper: 'Rapid-acting antidepressants modulate affective bias in rats' by Justyna K. Hinchcliffe et al. in Science Translational Medicine [open access]

UC study suggests 'thirdhand smoke' may be harmful to children

(Newsweek) — It's long been established that secondhand smoke is a detriment to health and linked to cancer.

Now, researchers are looking more closely at thirdhand smoke, which is the presence of toxic tobacco by-products that remain on surfaces such as furniture, décor, walls and floors.

In a new study, published in the *Journal of Exposure Science & Environmental Epidemiology*, researchers tested the surfaces in smoking households where children reside and found troubling results, says Ash-



Ashley Merianos, PhD, associate professor in UC's School of Human Services. (Andrew Higley/UC Marketing + Brand)

ley Merianos, a tobacco researcher at the University of Cincinnati who led the study.

Researchers found nicotine on surfaces in all of

the children's homes and detected the presence of a tobacco-specific carcinogen (called NNK) in nearly half of the homes, she says.

The study reported that the

NNK levels on surfaces and vacuumed dust were similar, which Merianos says indicates that surfaces and dust can be similar reservoirs and sources of thirdhand smoke exposure for children.

"This is critically important and concerning, since NNK is considered the most potent carcinogen for tobacco-induced cancers," says Merianos, an associate professor in UC's School of Human Services.

Additional findings include:

- Children living in lower-income households had higher levels of NNK and

nicotine found on home surfaces.

- Children living in homes that did not ban indoor smoking had higher levels of NNK and nicotine found on surfaces.

Merianos says that NNK and nicotine were still detected in homes with voluntary indoor smoking bans, which highlights the persistence of thirdhand smoke pollutants on surfaces in children's homes.

"This research highlights that home smoking bans do not fully protect children and their families from the dangers of tobacco," she

adds.

Merianos is a prolific researcher and has extensive training and experience in the epidemiology and prevention of substance use with an emphasis on tobacco, as well as quantitative statistical methods and clinical and translational research in the pediatric health care setting.

She is also a research affiliate member of Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, the Thirdhand Smoke Research Consortium and the American Academy of Pediatrics Tobacco Consortium.



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Homelessness surges, disproportionately affecting minorities

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Senior National
Correspondent

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has released its 2023 Annual Homeless Assessment Report, revealing a distressing 12% surge in homelessness since 2022. The report, encompassing the Housing Inventory Count, paints a bleak picture of the current state of homelessness, with a staggering 653,104 individuals experiencing homelessness on a single night in January 2023—the highest since the national reporting on the Point-in-Time count began in 2007.

Of significant concern is the disproportionate impact on Black communities, constituting nearly 4 in 10 of those experiencing homelessness. Despite comprising just 13% of the total U.S. population, individuals identifying as Black accounted for 37% of the



Of significant concern is the disproportionate impact on Black communities, constituting nearly 4 in 10 of those experiencing homelessness. Despite comprising just 13% of the total U.S. population, individuals identifying as Black accounted for 37% of the homeless population. (Photo via NNPA)

homeless population.

Equally alarming is the plight of the Latino community, as almost one-third of people experiencing homelessness identified as Hispanic or Latino. The number of homeless individuals in this demographic surged by 28% between 2022 and 2023, contributing to 55% of the total increase in homelessness during this period.

“Our society is selective

on who is worthy enough to receive sympathy and assistance: Black or white, sober, or addicted, mother or father, married or single. We choose according to personal politics who is worthy of stability, who doesn’t deserve support, and when it is acceptable for someone to be without shelter,” author, poet, and blogger Archuleta Chisolm wrote for BlackGirlNerds.com.

While the latest report

indicates progress in addressing homelessness, with HUD projecting to serve 330,000 people through increased grants to homeless service organizations, challenges persist. The expiration of resources from President Biden’s American Rescue Plan (ARP), the largest single-year investment in preventing and ending homelessness in U.S. history, has played a role in the current rise.

The 2023 Point-in-Time Count data underscored the urgency of the situation, revealing increases across various demographics:

- Sheltered homelessness rose by 13.7%
- Unsheltered homelessness rose by 9.7%
- Homelessness among individuals rose by 10.8%
- Homelessness among people in families with children rose by 15.5%
- Homelessness among unaccompanied youth rose by 15.3%
- Homelessness among veterans rose by 7.4%
- Chronic homelessness among individuals rose by 12%

HUD Secretary Marcia Fudge acknowledged the gravity of the issue. “Homelessness is solvable and should not exist in the United States,” Fudge declared. “From day one, this administration has put forth a comprehensive plan to tackle homelessness, and we’ve acted aggressively

and in conjunction with our federal, state, and local partners to address this challenge. We’ve made positive strides, but there is still more work to be done. This data underscores the urgent need for support for proven solutions and strategies that help people quickly exit homelessness and that prevent homelessness in the first place.”

The report further attributes the overall increase to a rise in the number of people experiencing homelessness for the first time, with a 25% increase between fiscal years 2021 and 2022. Data from the report emphasized the pressing need for sustained, collaborative efforts to combat homelessness and support vulnerable populations nationwide.

“HUD has substantially invested in addressing the housing needs of those facing homelessness, particularly the most vulnerable populations,” officials wrote in a release.

Congress working to avoid shutdown inches close to deal

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Senior National
Correspondent

Following weeks of negotiations and just before Congress reconvened from its holiday recess, key Sen-

ate and House members announced their consensus on setting the total spending at nearly \$1.66 trillion. The deal aligns with the agreement struck last year between President Joe Biden and then-Speaker Kevin

McCarthy, a deal that faced strong opposition from conservative factions and led to McCarthy’s ouster by MAGA Republicans.

The agreement includes a boost in Pentagon spending to \$886.3 billion while

keeping nondefense funding unchanged at \$772.7 billion. The figure incorporates an additional \$69 billion agreed upon through an informal arrangement between McCarthy and the

White House. As a compromise, lawmakers would accelerate \$10 billion in cuts to I.R.S. enforcement and reclaim \$6 billion in unspent COVID funds and other emergency alloca-

tions. The agreed framework does not include the additional \$14 billion requested by Senate appropriators from Republican

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2483	TOPAZ 7s Overall Odds are 1 in 4.75	\$1	2/21/24	8/19/24
2478	\$100,000 Jackpot Overall Odds are 1 in 4.35	\$5	2/21/24	8/19/24
2488	HIT \$100,000 Overall Odds are 1 in 4.09	\$5	2/21/24	8/19/24
2491	Ruby Mine 9X Overall Odds are 1 in 3.70	\$5	2/21/24	8/19/24
2460	\$100,000,000 Riches! Overall Odds are 1 in 3.66	\$20	2/21/24	8/19/24

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\$47 million allocated to support school infrastructure investments

The Biden-Harris Administration announced eight new grant awards today totaling more than \$37 million over five years under the Supporting America's School Infrastructure (SASI) program and one new grant for \$10 million over five years under the National Center on School Infrastructure (NCSI) program. This \$47 million investment, issued by the U.S. Department of Education (Department), bolsters the capacity of states to support school districts in improving school facilities with the goal of more equitable access to healthy, sustainable, and modern learning environments for all students. U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona will highlight this announcement during a visit to Virginia today with Ranking Member of the House Education and Workforce Committee, U.S. Rep. Bobby Scott, and U.S.



CDC / Unsplash

Sen. Tim Kaine, a member of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions.

“These new investments in modern, healthy, and sustainable school infrastructure reflect the Biden-Harris Administration’s commitment to both promoting student success and protecting our planet for generations to come,” said U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona. “Research has shown that modern, well-maintained facilities and healthy learning environments can help schools Raise the Bar by increas-

ing student achievement, reducing absenteeism, and improving teacher retention. At the Department of Education, we’re going to keep fighting to provide every student in every community with access to safe and healthy 21st-century schools that inspire learning, unleash imagination, and motivate children and youth to bring their best each day.”

“Chronic neglect of America’s public schools has forced students and teachers across the country to learn and work in outdated and hazardous school

buildings. Moreover, dilapidated and poorly ventilated school facilities pose significant health threats that make it harder for teachers to teach and students to learn,” said Rep. Robert C. “Bobby” Scott (VA-03). “These new investments announced by the Education Department will help increase school districts capacity to improve school infrastructure. It is far past time to improve public education infrastructure.”

The SASI program is the first in the Department’s history intended to increase state capacity to support underserved school districts to improve their school facilities. States receiving SASI funds will be able to conduct school facility needs assessments in high-need school districts; hire new staff; and develop or improve public school infrastructure data systems, among other actions. The NCSI program

will establish a national clearinghouse and technical assistance center that will consolidate federal resources related to public school infrastructure improvements that support safe, healthy, sustainable, and equitable public school facilities. NCSI will also provide targeted technical assistance to SASI grantees to expand state expertise in school infrastructure.

Additionally, today, the U.S. Department of the Treasury (Treasury) is releasing new information on how school districts can file for tax credits for clean energy infrastructure through the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). The IRA provides for the largest investment in clean energy in U.S. history and has created a unique opportunity for K-12 school districts under provisions for direct pay. The NCSI will provide technical assistance to states and districts on federal oppor-

tunities that support school infrastructure, including these new tax credits.

The Department works closely across the Biden-Harris Administration to lead school infrastructure efforts, including through an Infrastructure and Sustainability initiative, which includes the U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools recognition award, private sector school infrastructure and sustainability commitments, an annual Green Strides Tour, monthly Infrastructure and Sustainability News, as well as other public engagement on these topics.

The Department also partners with federal agencies such as Treasury, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and others to provide resources, funds, and tax incentives that enhance equi-

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THOMPSON, from Page 2

commentator.

“In this pivotal time as it pertains to the Black Press of America, we need new blood and new vision that would take us to higher heights which include making a huge footprint in the digital transformation of Black-owned media,” NNPA National Chairman and Westside Gazette Publisher Bobby Henry added. “Mark has a proven track record in his endeavors of achieving success in bringing Black-owned media to the forefront. We are positioned at the right time where a fresh undertaking would complement the 197 years of the rich history of the Black Press. Digital transformation is on the horizon for all media, and this is especially of benefit to Black-owned media. The Black Press is here to stay and to be complemented by our digital platforms will only enhance our presence.”

Among Thompson’s many academic and professional achievements, he graduated from the University of the District of Columbia with a bachelor’s degree in mass media journalism long before the advent of the internet and social media, a testament to his foresight in the ever-evolving journalism world. He said his mandate with NNPA extends beyond technical aspects, encompassing a strategic approach to content distribution that emphasizes revenue generation.

“As media evolves, we’ve all had to adjust. I learned the importance of digital and social media at least ten years ago and jumped right in when others were resistant,” Thompson asserted. “When ‘Make It Plain’ was on Sirius XM, I pioneered a lot of digital and social media. Some people didn’t like it; only some were ready to embrace going into social

media. However, we’ve all found something critically important: reaching a larger audience because more information is consumed via social media, and it’s an ever-growing and ever-standing market to reach our audience. We must keep ourselves on the pulse of that and make our publications more and more accessible digitally and on social media. That is important to the future and survival of the African American print media.”

Thompson noted that he and Chavis began the “Meet the Black Press” segment on his “Make It Plain” show some years ago and said the importance of that component was again amplified at the time of his NNPA hire.

“Without realizing it, this moment for the NNPA is timelier than we may have thought,” Thompson insisted. “On the very weekend that ‘Meet the Press’ has given a platform to someone (GOP Rep. Elise Stefanik of New York) who questioned the legitimacy of the past

election and called insurrectionists hostages, shows how relative and timely it is to meet the Black Press not just as a segment, but to meet the Black Press as a way of life going forward.”

Hiring Thompson in this role underscores the NNPA’s commitment to fortifying the 250 African American-owned newspapers and media companies within its membership, Chavis exclaimed.

Chavis and Thompson proclaimed that the NNPA Digital Network is now positioned as the most prominent African American-owned digital network in America, with an ultimate goal of global dominance in becoming the most influential, engaging, and impactful digital news and content distribution network globally.

“Everyone knows about the downsizing and contraction of print newspapers,” Thompson said. “What the NNPA represents is what really boils down to is more than 200 bureaus, independent to some ex-

tent, but each local Black-owned newspaper has an important role in letting the world know what’s happening in local communities. The more we work together and promote that, the more it sets NNPA apart because there are so few major print media have organizations of that size and depth anymore.”

Already, in a testament to the NNPA’s commitment to innovation, strategic collaborations have been forged with key players such as the Google News Initiative (GNI), the US Black Chambers of Commerce, the National Association of Black-Owned Broadcasters, the NAACP, and the National Urban League. Chavis said those partnerships are designed to aggregate and disseminate digital content, solidifying the NNPA’s position as a frontrunner in the digital realm.

“With NNPA, journalism is still taking place, not sensationalism,” Thompson continued. “We’re seeing much of the mainstream [seeking] click-bait mate-

rial. As the Black Press, we must continue to be the moral conscious and moral authority of objective journalism. That’s most important as we set the example to educate the next generation of journalists because we want Black students inspired.”

Chavis cautioned that, since 1827, when Freedom’s Journal was first published, there have been naysayers and turncoats that have tried unsuccessfully to silence the Black Press.

“I see clearly that 2024 will be another year of growth and expansion for the NNPA and the Black Press of America,” he said. “The acquisition of Mark Thompson as the Global Digital Transformation Director will greatly enhance not only what we do in 2024 in the digital and print space, but also as we approach the 200th anniversary of the Black Press of America in 2027, we are all grateful that Mark Thompson has agreed to join the NNPA for this vital and transformational objective.”

City of Richardson launches 'RAMP' initiative as pilot program to fuel innovation and economic growth in local businesses

The City of Richardson is proud to announce the launch of a new economic development initiative that is a pilot program aimed at fostering research, innovation and growth within the local business community. The Richardson Research Award Match Program (RAMP) is intended to complement the federal Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs and is designed to attract and support research and development in Richardson.

“The Research Award Match Program underscores Richardson’s dedication to continuing our role in the DFW Metroplex as a hub of innovation,” said Richardson Mayor Bob Dubey. “Backing local businesses in their pursuit of groundbreaking ideas is a strategic investment in the future success of our community and builds on our reputation as a place for big ideas and successful enterprise.”

Richardson’s pilot RAMP program was designed to empower small businesses to unlock their technological and economic potential. The program aims not only to facilitate research and development



Kvalifik / Unsplash

but also to support the eventual commercialization of emerging technologies.

“While RAMP funds are available to all research-focused, for-profit, privately owned small businesses located throughout the city, the program will be especially helpful in stimulating groundbreaking technology in the Richardson Innovation Quarter, or The IQ®,” said City Manager Don Magner. “By providing additional financial assistance to startups that have proven strong potential for commercialization of R&D projects, we will continue to strengthen the IQ’s mission of being the premier tech hub in Texas.”

Richardson is among the state’s leaders in SBIR

funding, and The Richardson IQ® is also uniquely developed to host start-ups and scale-ups due to its flexibility and affordability. Unlike other office parks or industrial parks in the region, The IQ® has a combination of both office and industrial space.

RAMP Program

Features:

1. Financial Support: The Program will provide matching grants to qualifying businesses, supplementing existing financial resources for research and development projects.

a. Phase I eligible companies may qualify for up to \$50,000 in Program funding.

b. Phase II eligible companies may qualify for up to an additional \$100,000

in Program funding.

c. The total Program award funding available to a business (Phases I and II) is capped at no more than \$150,000 per fiscal year.

2. Innovation Focus: Emphasis will be placed on projects that demonstrate

innovative solutions, cutting-edge technologies and advancements that contribute to the economic vibrancy of Richardson.

3. Collaboration: The Program encourages collaboration between businesses, research institutions and the City, fostering a dynamic ecosystem that supports growth and development.

4. Application Process: Interested businesses can apply through a streamlined application process on the economic development website, ensuring accessibility and efficiency in securing financial support for their projects.

RAMP Program

Eligibility

RAMP will award funds to research-focused, for-profit, privately owned

small businesses that have received federal SBIR or STTR Phase I or Phase II grants. It is intended to support startup companies that have a high potential for commercial viability. Recipients must be located in Richardson, or commit to relocating to and operating in Richardson, for a minimum of five years after receiving funds. Program eligibility and qualifications will be assessed at the end of the first year, and adapted as needed.

RAMP Program

Application

Businesses interested in applying for the RAMP are encouraged to visit www.telecomcorridor.com for detailed information on eligibility criteria, application procedures and program guidelines.

← CLYBURN, from Page 2

litical strength of the twice-impeached and four-times indicted former President Trump, citing Trump’s devoted following, a conservative media ecosystem favoring him, and a polarized nation as potential advan-

tages for Trump in the 2024 election.

In a statement, Eric Schultz, a senior adviser to Obama, affirmed the former president’s commitment to supporting Democrats. “We place a huge emphasis

on finding creative ways to reach new audiences, especially tools that can be directly tied to voter mobilization or volunteer activations,” Schultz remarked. “We are deliberate in picking our moments because our objective is to move the needle.”

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1 million deaths

**Get Ready, Stay Ready:
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Three years after January 6th attack on capitol: investigations and prosecutions mount

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Senior National
Correspondent

The United States Attorney's Office is marking the third anniversary of the unprecedented attack on the U.S. Capitol, which shook the nation and much of the world when supporters of the twice-impeached and now four-times indicted former President Donald Trump stormed the building and disrupted a joint session of Congress where members were attempting to affirm the results of the 2020 presidential election.

"In the wake of this historic event, the U.S. government has been tirelessly working to investigate and prosecute those responsible for the breach," the U.S. Attorney's Office said in a release.

In October 2022, officials pegged the approximate losses resulting from the Capitol siege at a staggering \$2.8 million. The sum accounts for damages to the Capitol building and grounds, both inside and outside, along with costs incurred by the U.S. Capitol Police.

"Under the continued



In an overview released on Friday, January 5, the Justice Department noted that more than 1,265 defendants from almost all 50 states and the District of Columbia have faced criminal charges. (Photo via NNPA)

leadership of the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia and the FBI's Washington Field Office, the investigation has progressed at an unprecedented speed and scale," officials declared, adding that the Department of Justice remains steadfast in its commitment to holding those who committed crimes on January 6, 2021, accountable.

In an overview released on Friday, January 5, the Justice Department noted that more than 1,265 defendants from almost all 50 states and the District of Columbia have faced crim-

inal charges.

Four hundred fifty-two defendants were charged with assaulting, resisting, or impeding officers, including 123 individuals charged with using deadly or dangerous weapons.

One hundred forty police officers were assaulted on January 6, with approximately 80 from the U.S. Capitol Police and 60 from the Metropolitan Police Department.

Eleven individuals were arrested for charges related to assaulting members of the media or destroying their equipment.

Of those charged, 1,186

were indicted for entering or remaining in a restricted federal building or grounds, 116 for entering a restricted area with a dangerous or deadly weapon, 71 for destruction of government property, and 56 for theft of government property. Additionally, prosecutors charged 332 individuals with obstructing an official proceeding and 57 for conspiracy counts related to obstructing a congressional proceeding, obstructing

law enforcement during a civil disorder, or injuring an officer.

Approximately 718 individuals pleaded guilty to federal charges, with 213 pleading guilty to felonies and 505 to misdemeanors. Eighty-nine individuals who pleaded guilty to felonies faced federal charges of assaulting law enforcement officers, and four individuals pleaded guilty to the federal charge of seditious conspiracy.

The U.S. Attorney's Office tried 139 individuals who were found guilty, including three in the Superior Court of the District of Columbia. Further, 32 individuals were convicted following an agreed-upon set of facts, and 76 were found guilty of assaulting, resisting, or impeding officers and obstructing officers during a civil disorder.

Finally, the U.S. Attorney's Office reported that approximately 749 federal defendants have received sentences, with 467 sentenced to periods of incar-

ceration and 154 received home detention. This figure includes 28 who also received time behind bars.

Trump, who has also been found civilly liable for sexually assaulting the writer, E. Jean Carroll, and ordered to pay her \$5 million in damages, faces four criminal indictments, including federal charges of inciting the January 6 attack, which led to the deaths of five law enforcement officers.

The DOJ said they're still seeking more January 6 perpetrators, including Evan Neumann, Jonathan Daniel Pollock, Joseph Daniel Hutchinson III, Adam Villarreal, Paul Belosic, and Olivia Michelle Pollock.

"Citizens from across the country have played a crucial role in aiding the investigation," DOJ officials said. "The FBI continues to seek public assistance in identifying individuals believed to have committed violent acts on Capitol grounds."

USPS celebrates judiciary trailblazer Constance Baker Motley with 47th Black Heritage Stamp

(Black PR Wire) Constance Baker Motley started her career in 1945 when she began working for the future U.S. Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall at the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) Legal Defense and Educational Fund.

From 1945 to 1965, Motley worked on about 60 cases that reached the Supreme Court. She won nine of the 10 cases she argued before the Court.

In 1966, Motley was nominated by President



Lyndon B. Johnson to a seat on the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York — the

largest and busiest federal trial court in the country. She rose to chief judge in 1982 and senior judge in 1986.

The stamp features a portrait of Motley by artist Charly Palmer, based on an Associated Press photograph. Rendered in acrylic on canvas work, the portrait displays elements of Palmer's signature style. The stenciled circular shapes around the head suggest royalty, and the heavy brushstrokes and scratches

See STAMP, Page 12

Film Review: 'Society of the Snow' is a horrific true life tale

By Dwight Brown
NNPA Film Critic

(***) "If I die, I give you permission to feed on my body." Sounds like the opening line of a cheesy vampire movie. Instead, it's the turning point in a based-on-fact drama that pits men against the elements and their only weapons are ingenuity, an unflagging will to survive and courage.

In 1972, a Uruguayan rugby team of 16 players heads to an exhibition match in Chile. As they, along with friends, family and a crew, fly from Montevideo to Santiago over the Andes mountains their plane experiences turbulence. It crashes onto a mountainside, into deep snow and plunging, freezing temperatures. Forty-five people on board, only 33 survive. Over the course of 72 days more die. Hard



Cast of Society of the Snow (Courtesy photo)

decisions are made. Eating corpses of friends is only one of the unspeakable challenges they face.

In 1993, director Frank Marshall's film Alive covered this tragic event. His approach seemed ghoulish, focusing more on the cannibalism than the human spirit. None of the crash's

survivors allowed their names to be associated with that film. For this production, they acquiesced. Under the tutelage of Spanish director J.A Bayona (The Orphanage), with a script he co-wrote with Bernat Vilaplana, Jaime Marques-Olearraga and Nicolás Casariego, based on the

book by Pablo Vierci, those who experienced this tragedy finally have their story told cinematically, with compassion and certain artistry.

The homogenous looking cast blends together like cloned, virile young athletes. Under closer scrutiny each has his own role. Med student, pragmatist, adventurer, pessimist... All find the essence of their characters and display it with an undeniable authenticity. It's enough to keep viewers glued to their plight. Credit: Enzo Vogrincic, Agustín Pardella, Matías

Recalt, Esteban Bigliardi, Diego Vegezzi and Fernando Contigiani García.

The screenplay makes each scene purposeful, establishing the twentysomethings' comradery, character traits, problem solving abilities, setbacks and triumphs. A hierarchy emerges, but nothing as sinister as the one in Lord of the Flies. As the players new bleak reality sets in, deep thoughts are expressed, raw emotions shown and a sense of giving up and persevering fluctuates provid-

See SNOW, Page 10

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The Apollo celebrates its 90th anniversary and new Apollo stages at The Victoria with upcoming winter/spring season of programs

(Black PR Wire) Harlem, NY — In celebration of The Apollo's 90th anniversary in 2024, the renowned institution announced today a selection of upcoming concerts, comedy shows, and educational programs across its stages as part of its Winter and Spring 2024 season—adding to the recently announced programming at The Apollo Stages at the revitalized Victoria Theater, set to open in February 2024.

Exciting new programming across the multiple stages of The Apollo includes an array of Apollo commissions, including the recently announced Soul Science Lab's The Renaissance Mixtape, an immersive theatrical concert that uses elements of hip-hop culture and visual storytelling to highlight voices of the Harlem Renaissance led by Brooklyn-based artists Chen Lo and Asante Amin, four-time Grammy nominee and Apollo New Works artist Stefon Harris and his band, Blackout, as well as In the Same Tongue,



a vibrant movement, sound, and language-based work by legendary choreographer Dianne McIntyre with original music by celebrated composer Diedre Murray and poetry by the late Obie award-winning playwright Ntozake Shange.

The legendary Amateur Night at The Apollo returns for an abbreviated season from February to June, announcing a winner just in time for the Historic Theater renovations to begin, alongside other crowd favorites Apollo Comedy Club and Apollo Music Café. From conversations with prominent artists and creatives to annual audience favorites,

this season's programming continues to center and amplify Black artists, voices, and culture.

In honor of The Apollo's inaugural season at The Victoria, thanks to generous support from The Jerome L. Greene Foundation, all tickets to Apollo-presented programming in those spaces will be capped at \$20.

Explore the Winter and Spring 2024 season programming below. Additional programs with artists such as theater playwright and director Talvin Wilks will be announced at a later date. To learn more, visit <https://www.apollotheater.org/spring-2024/>

SNOW, from Page 9

ing a forward momentum that lasts for 2h 24m.

Editors Jaume Marti and Andrés Gil clip scenes to their core, not letting them languish. Cinematographer Pedro Luque Briozzo Scu perceptively captures the frigid wilderness, stark-white snow and intimate moments in what's left of the fuselage. Always shooting from the perfect angle with eye-catching composition. Michael Giacchino's musical score starts with dissonant chords and strings that whine in agony. Then it segues into more melodic sounds and finally euphoric ones. Costumes (Julio Suarez), production design (Alain Bainée), sound mixing (Jorge Adra-

dos), and the hairdressing (Belén López-Puigcerver) are near perfect.

Bayona's direction accentuates the personal despair, not the horror. He exposes the danger, making it look formidable, but not insurmountable. The ensemble cast shines under his guidance. Though no actor stands out, no performance seems dispensable. His thoughtful, consistent mixture of fear, anger, dread and determination is as devastating to watch and feel, as it is wondrous. If he's made an error, it's not ending the story succinctly.

Compared to the macabre 1993 adaptation, this version of events is more poignant, compelling and

humanizing. Audiences will wish the crash never happened, feel bad for the victims and elated by their chance for survival. It's the kind of programming that's perfect for streaming on a Saturday night when a scary, fact-based adventure film with substance is preferred over a shallow genre movie.

The survivors and families of the deceased were right to withhold their support until a responsible director, production team and cast could tell their story with the great respect it deserves.

Perilous and horrific. Yet life-affirming and miraculous too.

Visit Film Critic Dwight Brown at DwightBrownInk.com.

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Paris Dudson

Biden declares 2023 a 'great year for american workers' as labor market continued resilient path in December

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Senior National
Correspondent

With companies adding 216,000 jobs in December, the labor market continued a resilient path, indicating that the economy is still growing quickly, even though hiring may slow down as rising borrowing prices reduce consumer demand for goods and services.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics released its employment report on Friday, Jan. 5, revealing that total nonfarm payroll employment increased while the U.S. maintained a 3.7 percent unemployment rate.

According to the report, the job gains were particularly notable in the government, health care, social assistance, and construction sectors, while transportation and warehousing experienced job losses.

In the household survey, the unemployment rate remained at 3.7 percent, with 6.3 million unemployed. Although the figures were slightly higher than the previous year, the



The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics released its employment report on Friday, Jan. 5, revealing that total nonfarm payroll employment increased while the U.S. maintained a 3.7 percent unemployment rate. (Images via NNPA)

rates for various demographic groups, including adult men and women, teenagers, whites, Blacks, Asians, and Hispanics, showed minimal changes.

The long-term unemployed, defined as those jobless for 27 weeks or more, accounted for 19.7 percent of all unemployed persons in December. The labor force participation rate and the employment-population ratio both decreased by 0.3 percentage

points in December.

Additionally, the number of people employed part-time for economic reasons remained stable, but it increased by 333,000 over the year. Those not in the labor force but wanting a job rose to 5.7 million, marking an increase of 514,000 over the year.

"This morning's report confirms that 2023 was a great year for American workers. The economy created 2.7 million new

jobs in 2023—a year when the unemployment rate was consistently below 4 percent—more jobs than during any year of the prior Administration," President Biden said in a

statement.

"The strong job creation continued even as inflation fell to the pre-pandemic level of 2 percent over the last six months, and key prices have fallen over the last year—for a gallon of gas, a gallon of milk, toys, appliances, car rentals, and airline fares. American workers' wages and wealth are higher now than before the pandemic began, adjusting for inflation," the president asserted.

The report highlighted that payroll employment rose by 2.7 million in 2023, with an average monthly gain of 225,000, a decrease from the 2022 average monthly gain of 399,000.

Government employment saw an increase of 52,000 jobs in December, continuing an upward trend in local and federal government jobs. Health-

care added 38,000 jobs, with ambulatory health-care services and hospitals experiencing notable gains. Social assistance employment rose by 21,000, primarily in individual and family services.

Construction employment increased by 17,000 last month, with nonresidential building construction contributing to the rise. However, transportation and warehousing experienced a decline of 23,000 jobs, particularly in couriers and messengers.

Employment in leisure and hospitality changed little, rising by 40,000 jobs last month. Retail trade employment also saw little change, with a slight increase of 17,000 jobs in December. Professional and business services employment increased by

See LABOR, Page 14

DEAL, from Page 5

and Democratic sides for increased domestic and military spending.

"By securing the \$772.7 billion for nondefense discretionary funding, we can protect key domestic priorities like veterans' benefits, health care, and nutrition assistance from the draconian cuts sought by right-wing extremists," Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer and House Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries said in a joint statement.

Describing it as a "favorable arrangement for Democrats and the nation," Schumer and Jeffries, stressed the necessity for a bipartisan approach in Congress to "prevent an


expensive and disruptive shutdown."

In a communication to his GOP colleagues, House Speaker Mike Johnson highlighted the Republicans' achievement in securing spending reductions, particularly the additional money from the I.R.S. He argued that the outcome translates to tangible savings for American taxpayers and genuine reductions in the federal bureaucracy.

Although Johnson hailed the agreement as a favorable spending deal for Republicans, he acknowledged that the final spending levels "may not satisfy everyone and do not achieve as much spending reduction as many would prefer."

Biden acknowledged that the deal "offers a pathway" to fund the government without significant cuts. He urged Congressional Republicans to fulfill their responsibilities, cease government shutdown threats, and allocate funding for critical domestic and national security priorities, including his supplemental request for Ukraine and Israel.

With the initial deadline for passing four spending bills on Jan. 19, securing an overall agreement on total funding is just the initial phase of avoiding a shutdown. A subsequent deadline for finalizing the remaining eight appropriations bills, including the one for the Pentagon, looms on Feb. 2.



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T.D. Jakes Real Estate Ventures partners with New Urban Development to address housing crisis in South Florida

(Black PR Wire) DALLAS — T.D. Jakes Real Estate Ventures, LLC (TD-JREV), a real estate company leading the creation of healthy and sustainable communities in a global marketplace, today announced a partnership with New Urban Development, Miami's largest Black-owned real estate developer, to build two affordable housing developments in Hallandale Beach, Fla., and Miami Gardens, Fla. The strategic partnership signifies a concerted effort to provide affordable housing for in-need areas of South Florida while also helping to revitalize and stabilize the communities. This project is the continuation of Chairman T.D. Jakes' push to create affordable, accessible housing nationwide for those who need it most.

"Florida continues to grow and the need for more living options is at an all-time high," said Marcus Dawson, managing partner of T.D. Jakes Real Estate Ventures. "It is our mission to create the necessary alliances that help address the most glaring issues like affordable housing. New Urban Development shares our vision for community transformation for seniors and underserved populations, and their accomplishments in South Florida model what development should look like in our communities."

As Miami's largest Black-owned real estate developer and real estate development affiliate of The Urban League of Greater Miami, New Urban Development has been revitalizing neighborhoods

in South Florida for nearly two decades. The company has facilitated the development of more than 13 housing projects including multi-family and senior living units.

"The relationships and access to funding sources through T.D. Jakes Real Estate Ventures will help us expand the work we've been doing to improve the housing options in overlooked and underserved neighborhoods of Miami-Dade County and surrounding areas," said Oliver

Gross, president of New Urban Development. "We all believe in a holistic approach to community revitalization that values transformation over transactions and incorporates education programs, financial literacy and other resources to residents."

The multifamily, mixed-income development located in Hallandale Beach will feature 200 units on five acres, located at the center of an historic African American community with limited affordable housing

options. The development is expected to break ground in Q1 2024.

The senior living development in Miami Gardens will consist of 150 units on seven acres. Located adjacent to Miami Gardens Senior Family Center, this will be the first housing complex developed for seniors in Miami Gardens and will feature a clubhouse and walking trails. The City of Miami Gardens awarded the land to New Urban Development to complement the exist-

ing senior recreation center while Miami-Dade County awarded funding for the housing development.

"It is my absolute honor to welcome the partnership between T.D. Jakes Real Estate Ventures and New Urban Development to Miami-Dade County," said Oliver G. Gilbert, III, Chairman of the Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners. "Their joint venture in Miami Gardens exemplifies

See JAKES, Page 14

STAMP, from Page 8

provide added textures. Stenciled curlicues embellish the lower background and continue onto Motley's black dress. Her colorful corsage and a brooch further enliven the image.

The Constance Baker Motley stamp will be issued in panes of 20. Forever stamps will always be equal in value to the current First-Class Mail 1-ounce price.

FUNDS, from Page 6

table access to healthy, safe, sustainable, and modern school facilities. For example, the DOE now administers the Renew America's Schools program focused on energy improvements at public school facilities. In addition, its Efficient and Healthy Schools Program leverages DOE labs' technical expertise to benefit schools and offers recognition for their efforts. The Energy CLASS Prize builds capacity within districts to identify and implement energy and health improvements. There are currently numerous air quality initiatives at the EPA, including a significant investment in clean school buses, including both grants and rebates, with another \$500 million

round of rebates open until Jan. 31, and water quality programs such as the Voluntary School and Childcare Lead Testing and Reduction Grant. An additional \$2 billion for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and pollution in underserved communities is available through the Community Change Grants.

Working together with these various agencies at the intersection of schools, climate, environmental justice, and infrastructure, the White House published a toolkit sharing Federal resources for addressing school infrastructure needs in April 2022 with an update to this toolkit anticipated to be released in 2024.

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- Execution
- Respect

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VOTERS, from Page 1

a hold-your-nose-and-vote strategy toward the upcoming election. Their choice to withhold the 2016 vote, born out of a dissatisfaction for desired policy changes, according to Scott, was also triggered by Russian influence in social media, according to The Guardian, which drove Black voters to boycott the election or vote third party.

While pointing to record low unemployment among Blacks and increasing opportunities for Black businesses and Black judges, Scott notes that the divided political and judicial spectrum has made some Biden Administration failures inevitable, such as the shortcomings in student loan forgiveness, which she attributes to a conservative Supreme Court.

When it comes to the Asian American and Pacific Island (AAPI) vote, polls have not always accurately reflected their preferences, explains Professor of Public Policy and Political Science, UC Riverside Karthick Ramakrishnan. As founder of AAPI Data, Ramakrishnan has worked toward improving the accuracy of polling data, assisted by support in native languages. The group recently revealed data that they believe is a more accurate representation of AAPI views and leanings.

Asian Americans have consistently identified with the Democratic Party at about a 2 to 1 ratio, explained Ramakrishnan. Though some Vietnamese and Chinese Americans moved toward the Republican party in 2016, these groups moved away from the party while under Trump as President, with just over a quarter of Asian Americans now connected

to the Republican party, said Ramakrishnan.

The tendency of the Democratic party to hold the AAPI vote has remained stable over time, he explained, recently showing a strong tendency to favor Joe Biden and Kamala Harris, while disfavoring Donald Trump and Ron DeSantis.

This tendency for AAPI voters to favor Democrats remains constant despite having Asian American candidates in the political spectrum, including Nikki Haley and Vivek Ramaswamy, who are both Asian American candidates. It is rare for someone who identifies as a strong Democrat to have a favorable view of either of these candidates, said Ramakrishnan.

Identification with a party shapes political opinion more so than ethnicity and even a candidate's own stand on the issues, said Ramakrishnan, and Indian and Japanese Americans tend to be among the strongest AAPI Democratic party supporters, with only about a quarter to a third being persuadable when party identification is weak, Ramakrishnan said. Those who identify strongly with a party are more likely to be moved by partisan shifts than even their own opinions, he said.

As Sandoval explained, none of the nuances in voter preferences will matter unless the ethnic groups show up in large numbers at the polls. Research tells us that grass roots efforts at canvassing and mobilization will be key, she said, warning that all too often, the parties fall short on investing in the Latino vote, while failing to fund the subgroups who would get out the vote.

Jessica Siles, Deputy Press Secretary at Voters of Tomorrow, tends to agree that mobilization is crucial. The Gen Z-led organization that Siles represents engages young Americans in politics. The organization works to harness the power of the Gen Z vote in order to affect legislation. Making calls and knocking on doors, the organization contacted millions of young people during the 2022 election to help teach them the importance of political action.

Though Gen Z is more ethnically diverse than any other generation, they have displayed both unity and action over the past decade, said Siles. Shared concerns about gun violence and a common experience of growing up with climate change have united youth, who continue to march in the streets for change. Voting democrat by a 28 point margin, according to the Tufts Center for Information and Research on Civic

Engagement, it's not that young people are so loyal to the party, said Siles. It's that they really care about a few core issues and vote on their behalf.

With the highest youth turnout in about 30 years, Gen Z made up the entire 18 to 24 age block in 2022, said Siles. Their number one issue--the economy, as workers and taxpayers who are extremely concerned about being able to find a good job and pay for a house, she said. Though fairly united in their tendencies to lean left, disparities remain in this group in terms of race and gender, said Siles.

But it's issues like climate action, gun violence and abortion that bring them to the polls. Though there's been some confusing polling out there, said Siles, when it comes to top issues like climate change and abortion, only one party is somewhat acceptable, and Siles said she believes young voters will continue

to see that.

In terms of barriers to getting out the vote, Ramakrishnan cites misinformation affecting AAPI voters, while Siles points to a lack of information affecting youth. With numerous reports of voters never being contacted by candidates, compared to other generations, Siles said young people get their information from a lot of different places. Candidates should meet voters where they are online, said Siles, but they should also show up on college campuses and put in real effort to engage youth.

Transportation and voter I.D. issues create other barriers, which break down to be more of an issue for Black voters, said Siles. Voters of Tomorrow has physically mobilized, supporting ride share pro-

grams, and through its voter champion pledge, pushes people to go out of their way to engage at colleges and on social media.

Whether Black voters will see 2024 as a moment when they need to step up for democracy remains to be seen, said Scott. In 2024, excitement may be the issue, she said, but unfortunately, the parties are not reaching out to grass roots organizations to mobilize the vote.

Black voters have been dissatisfied before, and they still showed up, said Scott. With high unemployment among Blacks during the 90s, they still came out on Election Day. There are a lot of things that Black people have not been happy with for a very long time, but they have still been willing to show up to vote, she said.



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What's New About A New Year?

By Dr. James L. Snyder

On New Year's Eve, The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage and I were celebrating in our living room with some hot apple cider.

We wanted to end the year together. At our age, with so many children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren, that's a tough agenda. We love all our family, but sometimes it is just good to be by ourselves.

As we were sipping our hot apple cider, we heard the roar of firecrackers around our neighborhood. We listened to it and chuck-

led as we leaned back in our chairs, enjoying the time together.

I must confess that this past year was filled with all kinds of things. It is hard to define what a "thing" is these days. Time, however, has a way of bouncing along without any indication of stopping.

As we were coming to the end of our hot apple cider, The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage looked over at me and said, "Happy New Year." How she said it caused me to believe she was anticipating a "New Year."

Even though it's another

year, I still am who I am, so I looked at her and said very seriously, "What's so new about this coming New Year?"

I surprised her, and she did not understand what I was saying. She looked at me and said, "Well, it will be 2024 and not 2023. I'm sure you can see how that's new?"

I took a deep sip of my hot apple cider, looked at her, and said, "I've looked at the calendar for the year 2024, and all of the months are the same as they were in 2023. Every month has the same seven week days and each of those days have 24

hours. What in the world is new about that?"

She looked at me as though I was a bit crazy, and I must say, she is never wrong.

Of course, she did know how to respond to my question.

"Maybe, just maybe this New Year will be the year that you get a little bit mature."

I was a little confused because I didn't quite know what she was talking about. I thought about what she said and responded, "I'm as mature as I ever want to be."

I couldn't help but think

of the time we went out to a restaurant to celebrate my last birthday. As we finished our meal, she looked at me and said, "So, how does it feel to be old?"

Without thinking, which is my MO, I reached across the table, took hold of her upper arm, gently squeezed it, looked at her, and said, "Old is feeling just fine."

As I remember that incident, she wasn't laughing.

Then, I did one of the dumbest things I have done throughout my life. I looked at her and said, "What do you think I need to do to improve my maturity?"

I think she set me up for that question.

"Well," she said with one of her infamous grins, "maybe you could improve your listening ability this New Year. You just don't listen when I say things and I have to repeat them over and over again."

"What did you say?" I asked.

"That's exactly what I mean. You may hear what I'm saying but you don't listen to what I am saying. Maybe this year you could practice listening a little more."

See SNYDER, Page 15

JAKES, from Page 12

a purposeful commitment to not only create housing options but to create an environment tailored to the unique needs of our senior residents, embodying a vision of dignity, comfort, and community."

TDJREV established a development in Dallas called Capella Park, which is a master planned community spearheaded in 2007. TDJREV is also slated to break ground on

Ft. MacPherson, a former U.S. Army base in Atlanta, which will be transformed into mixed-income housing, businesses, and a master planned community. Similar developments are planned for Chicago, Houston and other areas across the country.

Nationwide affordable housing is a top concern for all Americans, but particularly, African Americans and those living on the

margins of society. Recent reports show the Black homeownership rate was 45% in 2022, 30% lower than White households, making the gap wider than it was 50 years ago. In addition to soaring interest rates and home prices plaguing all homebuyers, other obstacles to Black homeownership still include discriminatory public and private housing policies that hinder Blacks from being approved for loans, the devastating impact of student

loan debt, which disproportionately impacts Black women, and the wage gap where Black employees are still paid substantially less for equal work.

TDJREV is a Dallas-based real estate company dedicated to implementing T.D. Jakes' vision of creating attainable and sustainable communities in a global marketplace and developing 21st Century solutions to address rudimentary needs in targeted

communities with a focus on economic development, job training, financial literacy and education enrichment. Its real estate portfolio includes Capella Park, a 400-plus acre community in south Dallas that includes single-family homes, live-work space and a pre k-8 school.

Founded in 2005 as the housing development affiliate of the Urban League of Greater Miami, Inc., New Urban Development's pri-

mary responsibility is the financing, acquisition, development, construction oversight and asset management of the myriad of commercial and residential housing developments owned and/or managed by the Urban League of Greater Miami and its subsidiary entities. New Urban Development transforms dwellings into homes, homes into neighborhoods, and neighborhoods into opportunities.

LABOR, from Page 11

13,000 jobs.

Average hourly earnings for all employees on private nonfarm payrolls rose by 0.4 percent to \$34.27 last month. Over the past 12 months, average hourly earnings have increased by 4.1 percent. All employees' average workweek increased by 0.1 hours to 34.3 hours.

Overall, financial analysts said the employment report suggests a positive trend in the U.S. labor market, with moderate job gains and a stable unemployment rate.

"I won't stop fighting for American workers and American families. I know that some prices are still too high for too many

Americans, and I am doing everything in my power to lower everyday costs for hard-working Americans—from bringing down the price of insulin, prescription drugs, and energy to addressing hidden junk fees companies use to rip you off to calling on large corporations to pass on savings to consumers as their costs moderate," Biden declared.

the absence of collaboration with the Black Press of America remains a point of contention.

In response to criticisms, José Muñoz, a DCCC spokesperson, emphasized the party's commitment to "smart, targeted outreach," which he claims recognizes the nuances not only between different ethnic groups but also within various regions and districts.

PRESS, from Page 3

for Campaigns, defended the "Power the People" initiative, stating that it honors the commitment to a multiethnic coalition crucial for a robust democracy. The initiative focuses on persuading and mobilizing Latino, Black, Asian American, Pacific Islander, and Native Hawaiian voters to counteract what the DCCC

perceives as efforts by extremist Republicans to suppress the votes of people of color.

The DCCC said its approach includes conducting in-depth research, creating multilingual media content, organizing with local leaders, and countering disinformation targeting specific communities. However,

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Happy Birthday Dr. King! (Jan. 15, 1929)



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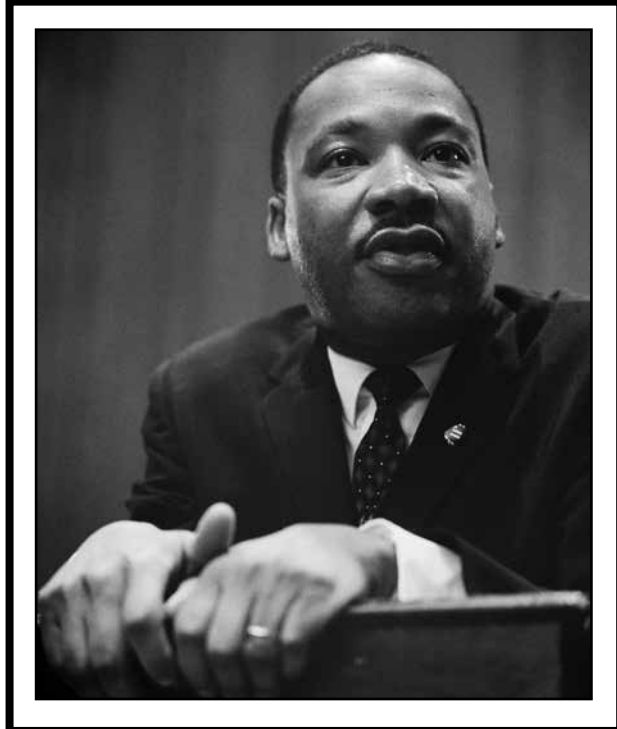
It has been said that it is not when a man was born or when he died, that makes the difference in his life and his legacy; it is the dash or space between his birth and his death.

A son, brother, husband, father, uncle, a humanitarian, civil rights leader, author, teacher, preacher and a pastor – Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was all of these and more.

Plainly put, Dr. King proudly changed the consciousness and character of America.

With his urgent messages of non-violence and justice for all Americans, Dr. King reached more people than any other Black leader in history, at the time.

Dr. King was a Baptist minister and social activist, who led the Civil Rights Movement in the United States from the mid-1950s until his death by assassina-



tion in 1968.

Among many efforts, Dr. King headed the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC.) Through his activism, he played a pivotal role in ending the legal segregation of Black citizens in the South and other areas of the nation, as well as the creation of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

He became the young-

est recipient of the world famous and coveted Nobel Peace Prize in 1964, among several other major honors.

Dr. King was assassinated in April 1968, and continues to be remembered as one of the most lauded Black leaders in history, often referenced by his 1963 famous speech, “I Have a Dream.”

Without a doubt, “I Have a Dream” was Dr. King’s most famous and beloved

speech; it was delivered to more than 200,000 people at the “March on Washington” at the Lincoln Memorial.

In the summer of 1963, the nation was seething with racial tension and frequent riots were tearing apart communities. In the midst of this crisis, Dr. King conveyed his vision in a very powerful language that the world has not forgotten and probably never will forget.

Mrs. Coretta Scott King, Dr. King’s wife, recalled, “At that moment it seemed as if the Kingdom of God appeared; but it only lasted for a moment.”

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tennessee. He was only 39 years old.

Some Timely Quotes of Dr. King: “A nation or civilization that continues to produce soft-minded men purchases its own spiritual death on an installment plan.”

“Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can

do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.”

“We will have to repent in this generation not merely for the hateful words and actions of the bad people but for the appalling silence of the good people.”

“Faith is taking the first step, even when you don’t see the whole staircase.”

“Let us rise up tonight with a greater readiness.

Hatred paralyzes life; love releases it. Hatred confuses life; love harmonizes it. Hatred darkens life; love illuminates it.

If a man is called to be a street sweeper, he should sweep streets even as Michelangelo painted, or Beethoven composed music, or Shakespeare wrote

poetry. He should sweep streets so well that all the hosts of heaven and earth will pause to say, here lived a great street sweeper who did his job well.

Let us stand with a greater determination. And let us move on in these powerful days, these days of challenge, to make America what it ought to be. We have an opportunity to make America a better nation.”

Something to Ponder: Four Things You Can’t Take Back: 1) A rock, after it’s thrown. 2) The word, after it’s said. 3) The occasion, after the loss. 4) The time, after it’s gone.

(Editor’s Note: This column originally ran in January 2017.)

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← SNYDER, from Page 14 →

I almost asked, but I didn’t, what she would recommend that I do to practice listening. I’m sure she had an agenda there.

She was not finished.

“Also, you could improve your memory. You forget so many things and I have to remind you of them all the time. Maybe you could do something to improve that part of your maturity.”

Those two things would take up my whole year, and I would have no time to do anything else. I was so afraid she would have a number three on her list.

Then it came, “And thirdly, maybe you could do something about your snoring at night. You snore so loud every night that sometimes it wakes me up.”

I’m not sure how I can do

all three things in one year, but that was the recommendation from The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage.

As I sat in my chair sipping some hot apple cider, I thought about these things, and then, she had something else to say.

“And there’s another thing you could do,” she said with a very serious perspective in her voice, “you could tell me some things I need to do to improve my maturity.”

That caught me by surprise, I didn’t see it coming. How I respond to her statement will determine how happy my life will be in this next New Year.

I just looked at her, smiled, and said, “My dear, you are the most perfect person I know, and I could

never think of anything that you need to do that would improve your maturity.”

She just looked at me and smiled.

It’s not very often that I get out of a mess, but I think I got out of this one. Let’s see how long this lasts.

Thinking on this, I thought of Ecclesiastes 1:9, “The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun.”

What more can be said?

Dr. James L. Snyder is pastor of the Family of God Fellowship, 1471 Pine Road, Ocala, FL 34472. He lives with his wife in Silver Springs Shores. Call him at 352-687-4240 or e-mail jamesnyder2@att.net. The church web site is www.whatafellowship.com.

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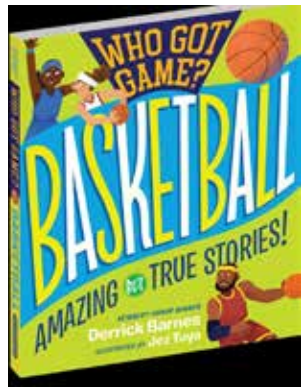

Parkland

NDG Book Review: 'Who Got Game? Basketball' is a fan's fave

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

A little less than two feet. That's how far you can get your two feet off the floor if you're an average kid doing an average vertical jump. Not quite twenty-four inches, but don't worry: the taller you grow, the higher you could be able to jump. Practice some, dribble a little, shoot more three-pointers, and you might jump right into a book like "Who Got Game? Basketball" by Derrick Barnes, illustrated by Jez Tuya.

Here we are, football season's almost over, and your mind has turned to



Courtesy Workman Publishing

other things – namely, hoops set high over your head, and a round bouncy basketball. Kids like you who "got game" have had it for more than a century. Yes, the game of basketball was created by Dr. James Naismith in 1891 in Mas-

sachusetts.

In the years since, basketball has changed a lot, thanks to what Derrick Barnes calls "pioneers." Julius "Dr. J" Erving improved the dunk. Before that, in 1950, the NBA first allowed Black basketball players on the teams. There have been super-tall players (Manute Bol and Gheorghe Muregan were both seven feet, seven tall) and smaller b-ballers – five-three Muggsy Bogues had a vertical jump of nearly four feet! – and just two years after the game was invented, America had its first women's team.

A lot of off-court people

poured themselves into the game, too. Barnes writes, for example, about Pat Summitt, hoopster, leader, and "one of the greatest coaches in all of sports history." Her record of 1,098 wins ranks her at first-place in coaching women's basketball, and as the coach with the second-most wins overall.

You can probably guess that in a book about buckets, there are bucketfuls of stats. Barnes includes a list of NBA players who jumped to a team right out of high school. He writes about the greatest basketball park ever, he explains why winners cut down the

net, how Title IX changed the game, why backboards rarely break into a zillion pieces anymore, high scores, bad injuries, "hoops movies," and where in the world you can pick up a game today.

So your 9-to-13-year-old loves basketball so much that they dribble a ball in their sleep? They think their favorite jersey is church-wear? Then you'll be the hero of the day when you bring home "Who Got Game? Basketball."

But first, there's one big thing you need to know: this is not a how-to book. There aren't any instructions inside here, no rules

or plays to follow. Instead, author Derrick Barnes makes young b-ballers happy by sharing little-known info about the game they love so much, short lists, great stories about great players, wins and losses, and phrases they should know to talk the talk. All this knowledge is supported by colorful illustrations by Jez Tuya that kids will enjoy alongside the facts.

This book is for die-hard young b-ballers, but don't be surprised if an adult finds a thing or two to learn here. "Who Got Game? Basketball" is a book any fan will want to jump on.

JOHNSON, from Page 2

"Not only did your wife attend the January 6 rally, but she was instrumental in planning it and bringing the insurrectionists to the Capitol," the letter stated.

It goes on to claim that Ginni Thomas was one of nine board members for a

conservative political group that played a significant role in the "Stop the Steal" movement, which culminated in the Capitol attack.

The Democrats also drew attention to Justice Thomas's previous recusal in a case related to the Capitol

attack involving former Trump legal adviser John Eastman, one of Thomas's former law clerks.

The letter highlights concern about Ginni Thomas and her consulting firm, Liberty Consulting, having financial interests that align with Trump's interests.

"It is foreseeable that

your wife's earning capacity will be positively impacted should the Court grant the relief sought by the former president," the Democrats wrote.

"The value of Ms. Thomas's consulting firm sky-

rocketed from only 'up to \$15,000' before Mr. Trump was elected to 'between \$100,000 and \$250,000' during his presidency, and then fell again to 'between \$15,001 and \$50,000' the year Mr. Trump lost the

White House. Ms. Thomas' professional and financial interests are aligned with Mr. Trump becoming president again, and should he be re-elected, it is likely that your wife's income will be favorably impacted."

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