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25 million Black and Latino Voters are Missing or Incorrectly Listed in U.S. Voter Databases

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Senior National Correspondent

An eye-opening report titled "Surfacing Missing Voters: Addressing Data Systems, Tools, and Engagement Models that Invisibilize Black and Brown Communities," authored by Miriam McKinney Gray for the Democracy & Power Innovation Fund (DPI), has unveiled a concerning reality: Nearly 25 million Black and Latino eligible voters are effectively absent from voter databases, making them virtually unreachable by traditional outreach methods.

The revelation is crucial as America heads toward the all-important November general election between Democratic incumbent Joe Biden and the twice-impeached and four-times indicted former president Donald Trump.

Drawing from U.S. Census data and a recent Stanford study, the report estimated that approximately 24.76 million Black and Latino voters are either missing or inaccurately listed in databases sold by vendors.

The disparities revealed in the report are stark, with 40 percent of Black and Latino individuals missing from voter outreach efforts, compared to only 18 percent of



The revelation is crucial as America heads toward the all-important November general election between Democratic incumbent Joe Biden and the twice-impeached and four-times indicted former president Donald Trump. (Photo via NNPA)

white individuals. The paper-thin margins seen in recent crucial races serve as evidence that such glaring disparities in representation could significantly impact the results of future elections. During the 2020 election, Biden beat Trump in the popular vote by approximately 81.2 million to 74.2 million votes, or a 51.3 percent to 46.9 percent margin.

"For instance, almost half of eligible Black and Latino voters won't be seen or contacted by traditional campaigns. This is a five-alarm fire for our democracy," said Miriam McKinney Gray, founder and CEO of McKinney Gray Analytics, who analyzed the data based on U.S.

Census records and a Stanford study.

"The only way many people will learn about the election is through independent power-building organizations. Groups like Voces de La Frontera in Wisconsin and Detroit Action are using friends-and-family organizing to find missing voters and manually rebuilding lists of voters who have been wrongly purged from government voter rolls."

Twenty-five million Black and Latino people "are invisible to the very campaigns that want their sup-

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People In The News ...



Rev. Lennox Yearwood, Jr.



Ryan Hawkins

NDG Quote of the Week: "Whatever we believe about ourselves and our ability comes true for us."
- Susan L. Taylor

Rev. Lennox Yearwood, Jr.

(Black PR Wire) WASHINGTON — The DC Environmental Film Festival recently announced Hip Hop Caucus' President and CEO, and host of the award-winning climate justice podcast The Coolest Show, Rev. Lennox Yearwood Jr., as the recipient of the Environmental Champion Award for his longstanding environmental and racial justice advocacy.



President and CEO Rev. Lennox Yearwood Jr.

"It's an honor to receive this important award at such a crucial time in the fight for climate justice," said Hip Hop Caucus Presi-

dent and CEO Rev. Lennox Yearwood Jr. "Hip Hop Caucus has been at the forefront of the fight for climate and racial justice, from our early days organizing along the Gulf

Coast during the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, to working with our partners to stand up against Big Oil and protect frontline communities.

"Our work is far from over, and we'll never stop advocating on behalf of all people impacted by environmental harm."

A White House Champion of Change for Climate Leadership and Senior Advisor to Bloomberg Philanthropies' Beyond Petrochemicals campaign, Rev. Yearwood Jr. has launched innovative, national climate campaigns throughout his career. Under his

leadership at Hip Hop Caucus, the Gulf Coast Renewal Campaign advocated for justice in response to Hurricane Katrina and the group's award-winning activism platform, Think 100%, shifted the narrative around fossil fuels.

The festival's award celebration will include a screening of Hip Hop Caucus' upcoming short film "Underwater Project," narrated by comedian Wanda Sykes.

The film underscores the coastal urban flooding in the heart of Virginia's largest economy, shedding light on the urgent need to

address environmental justice issues impacting Black communities and the U.S. Naval base in Norfolk, Virginia.

Rev. Yearwood joins past award winners such as Dr. Jane Goodall and Pulitzer Prize winner, Juliet Eilperin. The event will take place on March 24, 2024 at the Naval Heritage Center in Washington, DC.

Formed in 2004, the Hip Hop Caucus (HHC) is a non-profit, non-partisan organization that leverages Hip Hop culture to encourage young people to participate in the democratic process. Through a collab-

orative leadership network, HHC addresses core issues affecting underserved communities. HHC programs and campaigns support solution-driven community organizing led by today's young leaders.

The DC Environmental Film festival in the Nation's Capital has carried out founder Flo Stone's mission as the world's premier showcase for environmentally themed film. It has reached countless audience members across the world and continues to build an adventurous, collaborative, and diverse network of film lovers and film makers.

Ryan Hawkins

(Black PR Wire) Miami, Fla. – Highly regarded and recognized as one of the pre-eminent federally qualified community health care centers in the nation, the Board of Directors at Jessie Trice Community Health System (JTCHS) have selected Ryan Hawkins as their new President and Chief Executive Officer.



Mr. Hawkins to serve as our CEO at this critically important time in the healthcare industry," said Irene Taylor-Wooten, JTCHS Board Chair. "I, along with the entire board, know that Ryan is not only fully capable, but is a seasoned and expe-

rienced healthcare executive who is acutely aware of our needs, and can develop a firm foundation to ensure our stability and growth. He determined to take us to the next level in our quest to provide quality and affordable support and service to our customers."

Prior to this position, Ryan served as Chief Operating Officer at Jackson North Medical Center. He holds a Master of Business Administration degree from the University of Miami; a Master of Social Work and Master of Public Administration degrees from Florida State University, and a Bachelor of Science degree in Social Work from Florida

A&M University.

Mr. Ryan Hawkins is a highly regarded and well-respected health system administrator and government executive, with over 16 years of experience in the field.

"It is truly an honor and a privilege to have been selected for this position,"

says Mr. Ryan Hawkins. "This is an established and exceptional institution, and my goals are focused to continue to build on its valuable reputation, expand its services throughout the communities we serve, and increase our clientele and team members which will enable us to strengthen our

services and grow and reach our communities throughout the surrounding areas with effectiveness and efficiency."

The Jessie Trice Community Health System, Inc. is one of Miami-Dade County's preeminent federally

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Dr. Joan Wickham

(Black PR Wire) Hampton, Va. – Hampton University proudly announces a transformative donation from esteemed alumna Dr. Joan Wickham, class of '78.



million to establish an endowment fund for Hampton University Concert Choir students embodies the spirit of philanthropy and commitment to excellence that defines the HU community," said HU President Darrell K. Williams. "Her support will empower future genera-

tions of talented musicians to thrive and excel, leaving an indelible mark on our institution and the world of music."

Wickham's connection to HU runs deep. She earned a Bachelor of Science in music education from Hampton University and went on to achieve three additional degrees from the institution: a master's in secondary education with a concentration in voice, a master's in educational leadership, and a doctorate in educational leadership and management with a focus on higher education.

"I want to afford future HU students an opportunity of a Hampton education

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The Democrats, President Biden, and the Black Vote



Dr. John E. Warren
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While President Biden appears to be the only hope for America. As we know this nation, it does not follow that many who understand this crisis could and will engage in not voting this November out of the feeling that there is no real choice given Biden and Trump on the ballot.

The sad truth is that a Third Party candidate on the Democratic side could almost for certain guarantee that former President Trump would be elected. A Third Party candidate on the Republican side would certainly guarantee that President Biden would be re-elected. Likewise, a stay at home vote on the Democratic side could also guarantee that Trump would be re-elected.

Let us not forget that it was the Black vote that put Biden in office. With all he

has done to bring the country back from the brink of collapse, including having a Black Vice President, he has still failed the Black vote.

He has not used the power of his office to break the filibuster in the Senate so that the George Floyd and John Lewis proposed laws could have a fighting chance to become a reality.

How is it that a man who spent 36 years in the Senate and 8 years as Vice President has failed to learn how to use the power of those positions, as such men as the late President Lyndon Baines Johnson did, to get the Voting Rights and Civil Rights laws enacted?

President Biden was more worked up over the Supreme Court's Decision on Roe vs. Wade than the voting rights and civil rights legislation mentioned above. The President and the Democratic Party should understand that Black people can and will live with Donald Trump if necessary, because our fight for equal-

ity and inclusion has never ended.

The Black vote, just like all other votes in an election, needs more than the waving of the flag and promises, many of which have been made before.

Dollars must be invested in our Black communities the same way they are being, and will be, invested in other communities to get out the vote. It should be remembered that Black faces in the White House do not mean Black faces at the voting booths.

BLACK VOTERS should also remember that in addition to re-electing President Biden, the Democrats need four more seats in the House of Representatives to RESTORE A DEMOCRATIC MAJORITY and to make Hakeem Jeffries the first Black Speaker of the House of Representatives. It takes money to educate a public to save democracy, as we know it, rather than endure the browning of America.

At the end of the day, Donald Trump is not the

problem but the instrument of an old idea that says America has to be 'white in order to be right'. This idea only sees "We the People" as White. Fortunately, there are still people in this nation Black, White, Brown, Yellow and Red, immigrants and citizens by birth who believe that America is all of us, even when we disagree with each other.

The Black vote is still strong enough to once again make the difference. The question is, will WE get the support necessary to make that vote once again, go to the polls and re-elect this President who must do more. The issue is not his age, but his commitment to getting our vote.

People are not as concerned about "saving democracy" or the number of jobs recovered as much as they are concerned about the value of our dollars, food, rent, housing and gas. If the Democrats reach us where we live on these issues, the salvation of democracy will follow.

Commissioner Price to discuss the findings of the Texas Indigent Defense Commission (TIDC) on First Degree and Capital Murder charges in the Dallas County Court System

At the next regular meeting of the Dallas County Commissioner's Court (slated for today), John Wiley Price (District Three) will present the findings of a report he requested from the Texas Indigent Defense Committee in April 2023. The results, as produced, signal a need for change to comply with the Texas Code of Criminal Appeals.

The Texas Legislature created the Texas Task Force on Indigent Defense in 2001 to remedy persistent deficiencies in indi-

gent defense, including access to counsel, quality of counsel, and data collection. In 2011, the Task Force became the Texas Indigent Defense Commission, which is charged with funding, overseeing, and improving public defense in each of Texas's 254 counties via a team of 13 commission members and 18 staff.

Commissioner Price's inquiry focused on the Public Defender's Office and capital murder compliance, pre-trial magistration,

capital appeals, and the appointment of defense attorneys outside the Public Defender's Office. The letter also asked whether merging first-degree felony and capital murder wheels into a single wheel complies with the law.

The Executive Summary laid out three serious concerns for correction.

"First, in instances where the state hasn't provided written notice that it is not seeking death, the courts do not always appoint either two attorneys, or the Public

Defender. Second, courts do not always make a finding of good calls on the record for appointing counsel other than the Public Defender in capital cases. Third appointments of private attorneys are made to individuals who are not the first administrative judicial regions approved capital appointment list.

"TIDC staff stand ready to provide technical assistance to remedy these issues. TDC will conduct a second follow-up review within two years."

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Rising rates of head and facial injuries from exercise and weightlifting

(Newswise) Waltham — Numbers of craniofacial injuries related to exercise and weightlifting have increased sharply over the past decade, reports a study in *The Journal of Craniofacial Surgery*. The journal is published in the Lippincott portfolio by Wolters Kluwer.

“Incidence of craniofacial injury significantly increased between 2013 and 2022, illuminating the need for better education and risk mitigation strategies,” according to the new research by Rohan Mangal, MSc, and colleagues of University of Miami. Rates of exercise-related head and facial injuries appear higher for men than women, and for adolescents and young adults compared to older age groups.

Increasing incidence of exercise-related head and face injuries

Using the Consumer Product Safety Commission’s National Electronic Injury Surveillance Sys-



Jonathan Borba / Unsplash

tem, the researchers identified US emergency department visits for craniofacial injuries related to “exercise and equipment.” The data included a total of 582,972 such injuries occurring between 2013 and 2022.

Over this ten-year period, the annual incidence rate of exercise- and weightlifting-related head and facial injuries increased by 32.7%. While most injuries occurred in men (55.7%), the increase in incidence was nearly twice as high in women (44.5% versus 24.2%).

On analysis by age, ado-

lescents aged 15 to 19 had the highest rate of craniofacial injuries: 9.9%. This figure decreased gradually until age 40 to 44 years, then increased again up to age 65 to 69 years. Head injuries were the most common type of exercise- and weightlifting-related injuries (45%), followed by injuries to the face (26%) and neck (21%). Other injury categories included mouth, eye, and ear injuries (less than 5% each).

Increased craniofacial injuries may reflect rise in gym membership

Internal injuries (25.2%)

and lacerations (24.8%) were the most common types of injuries. Other diagnoses included contusions or abrasions (12.9%) and strains or sprains (11.9%). Only 8.5% of patients were hospitalized, mainly due to internal organ injuries or fractures. For patients with internal injuries to the head, hospital admission rates were higher (15% to 20%).

Studies of injuries related to exercise and weightlifting have focused on other areas such as the limbs and lower back, while craniofacial injuries have been “insufficiently characterized,” according to the authors. Citing a recent report that 22% of people in the United States have a fitness club membership, the researchers estimate that such injuries occur in about 1 out of every 1,264 gym-goers per year.

The higher rate of exercise- and weightlifting-related craniofacial injuries in men may reflect social

pressures to exercise or lift weights beyond their capacity – sometimes called “ego lifting.” A similar inclination to exercise at high intensity may contribute to the higher injury rates in adolescents and young adults.

The researchers note some key limitations of their study – including a lack of specific information on how the injuries occurred. Since the analysis included only injuries leading to emergency department visits, the total number of injuries is “likely underreported.”

The authors discuss “safe exercise practices” that may help to reduce the rates of exercise-related craniofacial injuries, including training in proper technique, certain types of external safeguards at health clubs, and exercise supervision by gym staff. Mr. Mangal and coauthors conclude: “While exercise and weightlifting-related craniofacial injuries are

impossible to avoid altogether, knowledge of their current trends allows for targeted prevention strategies for vulnerable subgroups.”

The *Journal of Craniofacial Surgery*, under the editorship of Mutaz B. Habal MD, FRCS, FICS, FACS, is rated 23 out of 600 surgical journals worldwide. Dr. Habal works with an outstanding editorial board and top global medical organizations to prepare a premiere scholarly journal for the global community.

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Choosing over the counter drugs for COVID 19? It's complicated

(Newswise) — COVID-19 illness may include symptoms such as a sore throat, fever, cough and fatigue. In January, the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued its most recent guidelines for the use of over the counter (OTC) drugs for COVID-19. Specifically, its guidelines state that most people with COVID-19 have mild illness and can recover at home while treating symptoms with OTC medicines such as acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Motrin, Advil).

Researchers from Florida Atlantic University’s Schmidt College of Medicine and academic colleagues say it’s more complicated. They suggest that selecting an OTC medication to alleviate mild symptoms of COVID-19 should be based on the entire benefit-to-risk profile of the patient. Moreover, they say

clinical decisions should be made by the health care provider for each of his or her patients.

In a review, published in *The American Journal of Medicine*, researchers take a closer look at both the potential benefits and risks of acetaminophen, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) – such as ibuprofen, as well as aspirin for the selection of OTC drugs to treat mild symptoms of COVID-19.

Traditional non-specific NSAIDs such as the shorter acting ibuprofen and longer acting naproxen have been used to treat COVID-19. These widely used OTC drugs reversibly and non-specifically inhibit both cyclooxygenase enzyme isoforms. This results in systematic reduction in the synthesis of prostaglandins resulting in anti-inflammatory and fever-reducing effects. The researchers caution, how-

ever, that both ibuprofen and naproxen have similar but greater side effect profiles than aspirin, such as gastroenteritis and peptic ulcers.

Acetaminophen is one of the most frequently used OTC drugs in the U.S. and worldwide as a treatment for fever, allergic symptoms, headaches, myalgia, symptoms of the common cold, and most recently COVID-19. Acetaminophen was originally marketed as an alternative to aspirin for treatment of mild to moderate pain based on reduced mucosal gastrointestinal side effects. The authors caution that even at daily doses of 4,000 milligrams per day, generally accepted as safe for adults, acetaminophen can be toxic to the liver and may result in the onset of acute liver failure. In the U.S., acetaminophen is the leading reason for calls to Poison Control Centers

with more than 100,000 cases per year. These circumstances account for more than 2,600 hospitalizations and 450 deaths in the U.S. due to acute liver failure.

Aspirin, or acetylsalicylic acid, inhibits the production of prostaglandins, which are responsible for mediating pain, inflammation and fever. The authors say that the beneficial effects of aspirin include anti-platelet, analgesic, antipyretic or anti-fever and anti-inflammatory properties. Aspirin is rapidly absorbed when taken orally and has a half-life of around four hours, after which it is mostly metabolized by the kidneys.

The researchers note that the anti-inflammatory benefits of aspirin should provide symptomatic relief of fever and body aches in COVID-19. They underscore, however, that health providers should view

these in the context of the increased risks of bleeding, principally gastrointestinal. Further, COVID-19 itself may already predispose individuals to bleeding as well as to clotting

abnormalities.

“We believe that health care providers should make individual clinical judgments for each of his or

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Former 'Goon Squad' officers sentenced for violent civil rights offenses in Mississippi

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Senior National
Correspondent

Former Mississippi Sheriff's Deputy Hunter Elward received a 20-year prison sentence on Tuesday, March 19, for the torture of two Black men in 2023. Elward pleaded guilty in August to federal charges of discharge of a firearm during a crime of violence, conspiracy against rights, deprivation of rights under color of law, conspiracy to obstruct justice, and obstruction of justice related to the January 2023 incident.

Jeffrey Middleton, a 46-year-old former sheriff's deputy whom federal prosecutors described as the ringleader of the group, was sentenced to more than 17 and a half years in prison.

The former deputies counted among six former law enforcement officers, self-identified as the "Goon Squad," who were scheduled to face sentencing following their admissions of guilt to federal civil rights violations. The charges stem from the heinous acts of torture and sexual assault perpetrated against two Black individuals and an anonymous white vic-



The former deputies counted among six former law enforcement officers, self-identified as the "Goon Squad," who were scheduled to face sentencing following their admissions of guilt to federal civil rights violations. (Photo via NNPA)

tim. Brett McAlpin, Christian Dedmon, and Daniel Opdyke, as well as former Richland Police Department officer Joshua Hartfield, pleaded guilty to federal charges of conspiracy against rights, deprivation of rights under color of law, conspiracy to obstruct justice, and obstruction of justice related to the incident.

Dedmon and Opdyke will be sentenced on Wednesday, and Hartfield and McAlpin on Thursday. Federal prosecutors sought the maximum sentences for the officers.

McAlpin, Dedmon, Opdyke, and Hartfield each face up to 20 years in prison.

The sentencing arrives months after a lawsuit by the victims that detailed how the officers illegally entered their home and handcuffed, kicked, waterboarded, and tased them and attempted to sexually assault them over nearly two hours. One of the officers placed his weapon in Jenkins' mouth and shot him.

Prosecutors said the officers nicknamed themselves "The Goon Squad" because of their willingness to use excessive force and not report it.

Over three days in Jackson, Miss., federal court, a judge planned to sentence the officers, whom prose-

cutors derided as criminals who hid behind the badge to commit some of the most heinous and violent acts. "I'm so sorry," Elward pleaded, looking out into the courtroom at victims, Eddie Parker, and Michael Jenkins. "I don't want to get too personal with you, Michael. There's no telling what you've seen. I'm so sorry that I caused that. I hate myself for it. I hate that I gave you that. I accept all responsibility."

Jenkins and other victims of the officers also planned to provide impact state-

ments.

The case intensified following a high-profile raid by five Rankin County deputies and a Richland Police detective at the residence of Eddie Parker, 36, and his associate, Michael Jenkins, 33. The raid culminated in the brutal handcuffing, torture, and sexual assault of the occupants.

Notably, Jenkins suffered severe injuries as a result of Elward shooting him in the mouth, leading officers to fabricate a self-defense story. Moreover, three deputies from the department pleaded guilty in a separate incident, underscoring systemic issues within the law enforcement agency.

Alarming accounts of ongoing abuse by Rankin County deputies over almost 20 years have surfaced, with victims recounting instances of handcuffing, torture, and beating, frequently in the course of making drug-related arrests. Despite numerous complaints and lawsuits against the department, including direct appeals to Sheriff Bryan Bailey, allegations remained largely unaddressed.

Many have expressed belief that the sentencing hearings will further unearth the extent of misconduct within the Rankin County Sheriff's Department, including the plight of Alan Schmidt, a victim who recently came forward to share his ordeal with the Goon Squad. Schmidt claimed that deputies falsely accused him of stealing and assaulted him physically, including by pressing a gun to his head and shocking him with a Taser.

District Attorney Bubba Bramlett has initiated a comprehensive review of cases involving "Goon Squad" members, and state lawmakers have introduced legislation to bolster oversight of law enforcement agencies, signaling a potential paradigm shift in accountability.

"The very bad actions of the Rankin County 'Goon Squad' severely impacted me and left a scar on me forever," Parker's statement said, as read by attorney Malik Shabazz. "I don't know if I will ever be able to sleep at night. I fear I will be attacked again and even killed."

Unintentional shootings by children remain a tragic national concern

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Senior National
Correspondent

The devastating consequences of firearm mishandling, and inadequate storage continue to haunt families across the United States. In 2016, 14-year-old JaJuan McDowell fell victim to an unintentional shooting, a stark reminder of the dangers posed by unsecured firearms. Eight years later, JaJuan's mother, Julvonnia McDowell, still

grapples with the pain of her loss, advocating tirelessly for safe firearm storage practices.

"When guns aren't securely stored, the result is unimaginable pain and trauma," McDowell shared during a televised interview with NBC News.

McDowell has dedicated her efforts as a volunteer for Moms Demand Action, a grassroots arm of Everytown for Gun Safety, a nonprofit that advocates for gun control and against gun

violence. "This is an issue that impacts us all. Regardless of whose gun it is, the consequences can be devastatingly personal."

According to data provided by Everytown, at least 157 lives were lost, and 270 individuals were injured last year due to unintentional shootings by children. These incidents predominantly involve teenagers aged 14 to 17 or children aged five and under, often

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DOE reminds Schools of legal obligation to address discrimination against Muslim, Arab, Sikh, South Asian, Hindu, and Palestinian students

The U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) today reminded schools of their obligations to address discrimination against Muslim, Arab, Sikh, South Asian, Hindu, and Palestinian students.

This reminder, sent as a Dear Colleague Letter, is one component of the Biden-Harris Administration's forthcoming National Strategy to Counter Islamophobia and Related Forms of Bias and Discrimination and is issued ahead of the International Day to Combat Islamophobia, which will be observed Friday, March 15.

"I am deeply disturbed by increasing reports of anti-Muslim, anti-Arab, and anti-Palestinian harassment in schools," said U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona. "Hate has no place in our nation's classrooms or on our college campuses, and the Department is committed to providing school communities with the information and resources they need to prevent and combat Islamo-



Umar ben / Unsplash

phobia and related forms of discrimination."

The letter reminds schools of their legal obligation under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI) and its implementing regulations to provide all students with a school environment free from discrimination based on race, color, or national origin, including shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics.

Further, the letter explains that schools that receive federal financial assistance from the Depart-

ment have a responsibility to address discrimination against students, including Muslim, Arab, Sikh, South Asian, Hindu, and Palestinian students, when the discrimination: involves racial, ethnic, or ancestral slurs or stereotypes; is based on a student's skin color, physical features, or style of dress that reflects both ethnic and religious traditions; or is based on the country or region where a student is from or is perceived to have come from, including, for example, discrimination based on a

student's accent or name, a student's limited English proficiency, or a student speaking a language other than English.

"OCR continues to stand ready to fulfill the promise of Title VI to ensure every student, including Muslim, Arab, Sikh, South Asian, Hindu, and Palestinian students, has equal access to educational opportunities that are free from discrimination," said Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights Catherine E. Lhamon.

The release of the letter continues the Depart-

ment's work in advancing the Biden-Harris Administration's National Strategy to Counter Islamophobia and Related Forms of Bias and Discrimination. In November, the Department issued a fact sheet outlining various resources to keep students safe in the classroom and on campuses. Senior administration officials have also conducted site visits to schools and institutions of higher education, as well as held listening sessions with impacted communities.

In addition to today's letter, OCR has issued other resources to support schools in complying with their obligations under Title VI. These resources include:

- Dear Colleague Letter: Discrimination, including Harassment, Based on Shared Ancestry or Ethnic Characteristics (November 2023);
- Fact Sheet Protecting Students from Discrimination Based on Shared Ancestry or Ethnic Characteristics (January 2023);
- Dear Colleague Letter:

Addressing Discrimination Against Jewish Students (May 2023), issued as part of the Department's launch of an Antisemitism Awareness Campaign.

These resources are available on the Shared Ancestry or Ethnic Characteristics page of OCR's website. Information about recently resolved complaints under Title VI, including complaints alleging discrimination based on shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics, is available here.

Anyone who believes that a school has discriminated against a student based on race, color, or national origin can file a complaint of discrimination with OCR. To file a complaint, visit <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/complaintintro.html>. OCR is available to provide technical assistance on the application of Title VI to discrimination based on race, color, or national origin as described in the letter released today. To request training, please contact OCR at OCR@ed.gov.

Joint statement from equity-minded education orgs on president's FY25 budget

(EdTrust) A group of equity-minded education organizations released the following statement on the Biden-Harris administration's Fiscal Year 2025 (FY25) budget request last week:

"We are pleased to see the Biden-Harris administration's proposed budget includes a 3.9% increase in education funding. The budget shows a strong grasp of current educational issues, particularly given the ongoing challenges presented by pandemic recovery — which are impacting all students, but especially

students of color and students from low-income backgrounds.

If enacted, the proposals made in this year's budget would allocate \$8 billion dollars in mandatory funds to support the evidence-based interventions that we know have made a difference for students: targeted, intensive tutoring and expanded learning time, alongside strategies to prevent chronic absenteeism. There are also increases to IDEA funding streams that are essential to the more than 7 million P-12 students with disabilities, and

more resources for multilingual learners — which are appropriate, given the approaching ESSER fiscal cliff that may negatively impact services provided to assist those students.

Additionally, the budget has proposed an increase in Title I funds to support schools and districts, alongside additional dollars to expand access to early childhood education and dual enrollment, continue to develop and diversify our nation's educator workforce via increases to

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Policy of Non-Discrimination

Compassionate Hearts Inspiring People with Services, Incorporated (CHIPS)

Compassionate Hearts Inspiring People with Services, Incorporated (CHIPS) of Plano, Texas shall recruit and admit individuals of any race, color, or ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs and activities. The Corporation shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin to the administration of the educational programs, community programs, and other administered programs.

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Playing God while playing politics with right to life issues

By Allen R. Gray
NDG COntributing Writer

It is going to take an astute Republican to decipher this intricate paradox, who really knows must tell us: Does humankind stand in opposition to the will of God when an abortion is performed? Or do we oppose God's will by creating life out of mankind's own genius?

To the delight of conservative Christian legal advocacy groups, the ruling in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* was successful in overturning *Roe v. Wade*. The *Dobbs* decision put the power to decide if abortion is legal or illegal back into the hands of the state, and back into the control of governors who are of the mind of Texas' governor. So now it goes down to how an ultra-conservative--even religiously zealous--politician might will his personally-political interpretation of Biblical truth into existence.

By way of military might, it seems that pious touting tyrannical rulers have always been able to



impose their religious beliefs onto indigenous people, this included not only a belief in God but also of birth rights, the right to life and the right merely to pursue one's life as one so decides. This imposition of the unified belief of birth right issues has been a matter of public and criminal concern that reaches as far back as Victorian times.

When Europeans began to colonize southern Africa, they brought a lot of things with them. Surely slavery was one of those items, but another thing they brought has implications for our laws and political decisions even to this day. It was the Christian European's religious beliefs and their might to exact laws based

on their autarchic view of those Christians beliefs.

Back then, the Christian European's view of the point of inception of life was not a matter weeks or months. For them life began with sperm. They believed that it was God's almighty will that sex be for procreative purposes ONLY! Therefore, if an unknowing African were found to have fully pleased himself, he would have been found guilty of an "unnatural offense," or "carnal knowledge against the order of nature," or even "gross indecency." The sentence for that blasphemous offense was death.

One can only imagine what laws and consequences those Christian coloniz-

ers would have promulgated if they had to answer the question of in vitro fertilization (IVF).

In vitro fertilization is the furthest thing from procreative sex as one could imagine.

In vitro fertilization is a process that begins with the removal of eggs from the woman and the collection of sperm from a male partner or donor. The egg and sperm are then united to allow them to fertilize; or your doctor might conduct a process known as intracytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI). In three to five days after fertilization, the doctor will use a catheter to place the embryos into the uterus.

The rancorous and sometimes brutal debate about when human life begins is an enigma that has waged on for many decades. Thankfully the Supreme Court of Alabama was able to solve this morally com-

plex conundrum. The Court determined that human life begins—not in the Garden of Eden nor in a woman's womb, nor with the physical expression of love as some have contended—but, rather, in a petri dish that sits alone in a cold dark laboratory. Or so it was for three otherwise unknown Alabama couples who were seeking to expand their families.

The three couples go to an Alabama fertility clinic for IVF treatment. All three became pregnant and gave birth to what Trump calls "beautiful babies." As a backup plan, additional embryos are created in case the first ones fail, or the embryos are cryogenically frozen in case the parents want to return to have more kids in the future. This is where the case develops.

One day in December 2020, a patient of the hospital goes into the cryopreservation unit, opens a

cryogenic tank, and sticks his hand into the sub-freezing temperatures. The patient tried to lift some of the embryos, burnt his hand and dropped the embryos belonging to the three couples. The embryos (or humans depending on how you see it) were destroyed them.

Alabama's Wrongful Death of a Minor Act, which dates back to 1872, is an avenue that allows a personal representative to sue for punitive damages for the death of a person caused by a wrongful act, omission, or negligence. The act only applies if the person who died could have sued under those same conditions had they not died. This archaic law was used to sue the IVF clinic.

The ultimate decision in this matter rested in the hands of the Supreme Court of Alabama. The legal/mor-

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Remembering Black Dallas is back on the trail with a new tour series



Remembering Black Dallas tours illuminate the human stories behind numerous local landmarks such as the Julia C. Frazier Elementary (above); opened in 1930 and named after the noteworthy educator who was only the third woman to graduate from Howard University. (David Wilfong / NDG, school and bus photos - Frazier portrait from Howard Univ. yearbook)



Remembering Black Dallas (RBD) is a local non-profit that has been working to preserve Dallas history since 2015. Formed by the late Dr. George Keaton, Jr., the organization has engaged in numerous activities for nearly a decade now.

Last Saturday RBD hosted the first of its new "Ukunikia Bus Tours," guiding dozens on a fact-filled jaunt through the southern sector of the city.

The bus made three stops; at the African Ameri-



can Museum in Fair Park, the MLK Community Center and the home of Juanita J. Craft. In between, par-

ticipants were treated to the background story behind a wide range of schools, parks and other sites along

the way.

This was the first of six scheduled tours highlighting the African American history to be found throughout all sectors in the city.

The next tour is scheduled for Saturday, April 13. Dubbed "The Black Church and Reconstruction," it will focus on areas of North Dallas. The series is scheduled to run through August.

For more information on tours and other activities, the organization's website is rememberingblackdallas.org.

DRUGS, from Page 4

her patients in the selection of OTC drugs to treat symptoms of COVID-19. This judgement should be based on the entire benefit to risk profile of the patient," said Charles H. Hennekens, M.D., Dr.PH, senior author, first Sir Richard Doll Professor and senior academic advisor in FAU's Schmidt College of Medicine. "It is our belief that the individual health care provider knows far more about each of his or her patients than anyone, including expert members of guideline committees."

The authors conclude that when the totality of evidence is complete, health care providers can make the most rational individual clinical judgments for their patients and policymakers for the health

of the general public.

The authors believe that, at present, the totality of evidence is incomplete and requires reliable evidence from large-scale randomized trials designed a priori to do so, which is necessary to develop rational guidelines. They also believe that any guidelines should provide only guidance to health care providers. Currently, these considerations pose new clinical challenges for health care providers in prescribing OTC drugs to treat COVID-19.

"The astute and judicious individual clinical decision making of health care providers for each individual patient based on all these considerations has the potential to do far more good than harm. Finally, guidelines should provide

guidance to individual health care providers," said Hennekens.

Study co-authors are Gage Collamore, a second-year medical student; Mark J. DiCorcia, Ph.D., an associate professor and associate dean for educational affairs and admissions; Yash Nagpal, a second-year medical student; and Larry Fiedler, M.D., a board certified gastroenterologist and an affiliate associate professor, all within FAU's Schmidt College of Medicine; Michael A. Garone, M.D., a board-certified gastroenterologist and clinical assistant professor at George Washington University Hospital; and David L. DeMets, Ph.D., emeritus Halperin Professor and founding chair of biostatistics and informatics; and Dennis G. Maki, M.D., the Ovid O. Meyer Professor

of Medicine; both at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health.

Hennekens and Maki served for two years as lieutenant commanders in the U.S. Public Health Service as epidemic intelligence service (EIS) officers

with the CDC. They served under Alexander D. Langmuir, M.D., who created the EIS and directed the epidemiology program at the CDC, as well as Donald A. Henderson, M.D., chief of the Virus Disease Surveillance Program at the CDC. Langmuir and Henderson

made significant contributions to the eradication of polio and smallpox using widespread vaccinations and public health strategies of proven benefit and had extraordinary collaborations with local, state, federal and international health authorities.

WICKHAM, from Page 2

so they, too, can receive an 'education for life,'" said Wickham. "The Concert Choir is my second family and I truly believe we are obligated to give back." Wickham was a member of the HU Concert Choir as an undergraduate and currently assists in its day-to-day operations.

Born and raised in Columbia, S.C., Wickham attributes her life's journey and achievements to the education she received at

Hampton University. Her commitment to the university spans over four decades, during which she has served in various capacities. Wickham currently holds the position of director of Parent Relations in the Office of Alumni Affairs and Parent Relations.

"We are very honored to be the recipient of Dr. Joan Wickham's estate planning gift as well as her faithful financial contributions over the years," said Evelyn

Graham, vice president, Office of Advancement and External Engagement. "Dr. Wickham's gift is a testament to her hard work at Hampton, her dedication and passion that will inspire future generations."

Wickham's generous contribution will not only support current and future students but also perpetuate the legacy of excellence and philanthropy at HU. Her dedication exemplifies the spirit of giving back and empowering the next generation of leaders.

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Film Review: 'Shirley' is a history lesson worth learning

By Dwight Brown
NNPA Film Critic

(**1/2) She was a pioneer. A political warrior. A woman who's earned an esteemed place in herstory.

After Frederick Douglas (1848), Edwin Taylor (1904) and Channing E Phillips (1968). Before Jesse Jackson (1984), Alan Keyes (1992) and Barack Obama (2008). There was Shirley Chisolm (1972). All vied to be president of the United States. She was the only Black woman who dared to enter the ring. First black candidate vying for a major-party nomination. First woman to run for the Democratic Party's presidential nomination. Distinctions that deserve more than just an honorable mention.

Giving Shirley Chisolm her due has been a passion project for actress/producer Regina King (If Beale Street Could Talk) and her producing partner and sister Reina King. Their love and respect for Shirley is in every frame of their bio/dra/history film.



Regina King stars in 'Shirley.' (Courtesy photo)

Respectively the movie chronicles Chisolm's first days in Congress as a U.S. representative from New York City's 12th district, which includes Brooklyn's Bedford Stuyvesant. Then recounts her decision to run for president and all the roadblocks that ensued.

What it doesn't do is give the audience her backstory. Early events that would help viewers understand how she got her drive, ambition and keen ability to stand up to bullies. Many biofilms just show a section of their subject's life. A segment or period that's

usually the most profound. E.g., Bob Marley: One Love concentrated largely on the making of his classic album Exodus. But he's a world-famous figure. Chisolm is not. Viewers will yearn to know more about her childhood, academic accomplishments (Columbia University graduate) and early career.

On the first day of Congress in 1969, on the steps of the Capitol Building in Washington D.C., a new class of freshmen poses for a photo. One member stands out. Shirley Chisolm (King). She's Black.

She's a woman. The rest are white men. Fighting for her place in the U.S.

House of Representative starts immediately, when she's assigned to the Agricultural Committee. Conventional wisdom says take your first assignment and be grateful. Not knowing anything about a farmer's life, Shirley fights her way off that committee and onto another. And so, it begins. Conventions thrown out the window. Chisolm finding her own path.

In the paint-by-numbers script, as written by writer/director John Ridley, historical characters are assembled, and Chisolm's journey is charted. The

depth of the characters is never more than surface. The rivalries, jealousies, saviors, detractors, supporters and backstabbers too. Don't fault the actors, they give solid-to-excellent performances. But none are better than the words on the page. Except King.

When Shirley expresses her intentions to run, her campaign advisor, Wesley McDonald "Mac" Holder (Lance Reddick, The Wire), is blunt: "Shirley if you run you can't win." Shirley chides him: "Well

See SHIRLEY, Page 13

NDG Book Review: Great kids books for the Easter season

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

How do you know when it's spring?

The robins suddenly make an appearance in your back yard. The flowers begin to poke their heads from the ground and in the stores. Mom and Dad start making garden plans and Grandpa finds his garden shears. Trees begin thinking about sprouting leaves, the temperature rises, and the sun feels nice on your face. The calendar helps, too, because it tells you when it's Easter. So why not get a hop on things and read these great Easter



books?

Chances are, you know all about the Easter Bunny. You can guess what he looks like, what he wears, and what he eats. But what if you make a mistake? In **"I am NOT the Easter**

Bunny!" by T.L. McBeth (Flamingo Books, \$12.99), a "regular bunny" sure looks like the real thing. He acts like the Easter Bunny. He wears a plaid vest and bow-tie, he hops along a trail, he carries a basket, he buys eggs at the grocery store and then he paints them! He swears he's absolutely not the Easter Bunny, but who's he kidding? Not your 3-to-5-year-old! This is the kind of book that's so much fun and so funny, you won't mind reading it all year 'round.

Sometimes, there's more to someone than meets the eye, especially when

it comes to cute. In **"The Cutest Brave Little Bunny"** by Joy Steuerwald (Nancy Paulsen Books, \$18.99), a cute little "fluffle" of bunnies is born on the farm one day. They're all so cute and that littlest one is especially so – although he swears he's not! He's absolutely not cute. He's brave, resourceful, smart, and well, he's kind of mean. Is it possible to be brave and resourceful and smart and fun... and nice, too? This story is adorable and a little bit sassy, and your 3-to-6-year-old will love knowing how it ends.

And finally, what's Eas-

ter without a new Easter outfit to wear to church? In **"Elijah's Easter Suit"** by Brentom Jackson, illustrated by Emmanuel Boateng (Doubleday Books for Young Readers, \$18.99), a young boy wants to get a shout-out from his pastor and the adults in his church for wearing the best outfit – but how? He starts at the department store uptown, but nothing looks "quite right." He searches at the local thrift store, but he gets the same results. Even the oldest store in town disappoints him. Then Mama Green and Mr. Brown tell Elijah how they

used to find their Easter outfits, and that gives him an idea. What makes an Easter outfit great? Kids ages 7 to 9 will love this sweet story and the great illustrations.

If these books aren't enough – or if you're looking for something for an older child, a teen, or for your own Easter basket, then hop on over to your favorite bookstore or library. You'll find all kinds of helpers there, who can put the right book directly in your paws. They know the perfect book to make your little bunny the hoppiest this Easter.

ISSUES, from Page 7

al question the Court was faced with was: are embryos human and, therefore, subjected to the Wrongful Death of a Minor Act? The Court reversed the decision of a lower court and said yes, embryos are human.

In its decision the court determined that the Wrongful Death of a Minor Act does apply "to all unborn children without limitation. And that includes unborn children who are not located in utero at the time they are killed." So, the Alabama Supreme Court granted the embryos personhood and allowed the couples to sue.

In making that determination, Alabama Supreme Court Chief Justice Tom Parker used several Biblical references to reach his definition of the "sanctity of life," and to derive this theologically based view:

God made man in His image; therefore each person has immeasurable value in God's eyes; and, you cannot take a human life without incurring the wrath of God, who considers the destruction a personal affront to Himself.

If nothing else the Christian colonizers had conviction behind what they believed. Republicans cannot seem to make up their god-fearing minds about when life comes into existence.

A CNN reporter asked Texas Gov. Greg Abbott if there was cause for Texas couples who were undergoing IVF to worry about their frozen embryos and Abbott began tap dancing (figuratively speaking).

"Well so you raise fine questions that are complex, that I simply do not know the answer to. Let me give you a couple examples and

that is, uh, I have no idea mathematically the number of frozen embryos," Abbott shuffled. "Is it one, 10, 100, 1,000? Things like that matter..." Abbott goes on to say since the issue is "complex" that he is not sure if everybody has thought about the potential problems or the probable answers.

Mankind's ability to manipulate life—and the laws that regulate life—has evolved in ways that are unimaginable. We are now able to select a particular sperm and oocytes, fertilize and culture embryos, select which embryo will be transferred into a woman's uterus—and save the surplus embryos and gametes for later use. It is something akin to some weird science experiment.

In so doing, are we, in fact, circumventing the will of God by ourselves playing creator?

For the people who can afford it, having a child is like ordering a tailor-made suit or a sandwich from Burger King. The power to do this kind of human manipulation is godlike.

Next, we will be manufacturing humans from rib

bones (Genesis 2:22-23).

Alphonse Frankenstein issued a warning to his son Victor when the elder discovered his son was going down a dark path by indulging in the writings of German theologian Cornelius Agrippa, who wrote

primarily about occult sciences. "Ah? Cornelius Agrippa? My dear Victor, do not waste your time upon this, it is sad trash."

Victor refused to heed his father's warning.

The story of Frankenstein did not end well...

HAWKINS, from Page 2

qualified community health care centers, governed by a remarkably dedicated Board of Directors (51% of which are users of the medical and dental services) and a diverse, incredibly talented, committed family of providers and staff. The 1st Federally Qualified Health Center in the state and 5th in the nation, Jessie Trice

Community Health System, Inc., is a Florida 501 (c) 3, not-for-profit organization that has been serving Miami-Dade County since 1967. JTCHS served its first patients from a trailer. Now, more than fifty (50) years after its founding, JTCHS owns and operates eleven (11) Comprehensive Primary Care centers, a 40

bed Women's Residential Center for substance use, and are located in two (2) universities and forty (40) school-based health suites.

JTCHS knows and specializes in comprehensive health, offering a myriad of services to improve the health of the community. For more information on the Jessie Trice Community Health System, call 305-637-6400 or visit jtchs.org.

Historic antitrust settlement reshapes real estate landscape: NAREB prepares for industry shift

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Senior National
Correspondent

In a development reshaping the real estate industry, the National Association of Realtors (NAR) finalized a historic settlement late last year following a multibillion-dollar antitrust ruling. This \$418 million settlement, expected to go into effect by July pending judicial approval, marks a significant shift in loosening the powerful trade group's grip on America's housing market.

The settlement comes after a Missouri lawsuit challenged the decades-old system requiring the agents of home sellers to split the commission on sales with the agents of home buyers. Most commissions range between five and six percent of home sale prices. Under the settlement, home sellers and their agents can no longer outline compensation for agents repre-



This \$418 million settlement, expected to go into effect by July pending judicial approval, marks a significant shift in loosening the powerful trade group's grip on America's housing market. (Photo via NNPA)

senting buyers within their MLS listings. They can, however, negotiate outside of the official listing.

Still, the agreement effectively ends decades of the NAR's profound influence, with its 1.5 million agents shaping industry practices. Central to the lawsuit was the standard commission structure, typically around 6% of a home's sale price, split between the seller's and buyer's brokers. Critics argued that specific

NAR rules have artificially inflated these commissions, maintaining them at levels far above international standards.

The settlement allows brokers to advertise rates and consumers to seek better deals. Projections indicate a potential reduction in commissions by 25% to 50%, according to TD Cowen Insights, heralding a new era of affordability in real estate transactions.

Meanwhile, the National

Association of Real Estate Brokers (NAREB) said it is gearing up to support its members, who predominantly serve Black communities. Dr. Courtney Johnson Rose, President of NAREB, acknowledged the profound implications of the settlement on the organization's members, particularly those representing buyers.

"NAREB recognizes that this settlement, if approved by the judge, will bring dramatic changes to our industry," Rose stated. "Our members often represent Black families and individuals who struggle to raise money for the down payments needed to purchase homes due to decades of discrimination and a lack of generational wealth."

To address these challenges, NAREB has outlined a series of initiatives:

- **Special Task Force:** A dedicated task force will analyze the settlement's impact and recommend strategies to assist members and promote Black homeownership.

- **Realtist Toolkit:** NAREB will develop a comprehensive toolkit providing members with essential information and resources.

- **Black Developer Academy:** Expansion of the Black Developer Academy will offer training and support to members interested in real estate development, diversifying revenue streams and increasing housing inventory in communities of color.

- **Community Engagement:** Leveraging national initiatives such as the Building Black Wealth Tour, NAREB aims to strengthen connections between members and their

communities while educating consumers on homeownership.

While the settlement promises increased transparency, concerns persist regarding potential burdens on buyers, especially first-time buyers. Moreover, the anticipated commission reduction could precipitate a significant upheaval in the brokerage industry, potentially prompting a mass exodus of brokers.

"NAREB is prepared to lead in this changing environment and ensure that our members, Realtists, are strong and remain valuable assets in communities," Rose said. "NAREB is committed to the advancement of Black real estate professionals, increasing Black home ownership and our enduring pursuit for Democracy in Housing."

Waterford Property Company, The Vistria Group, and Northern Liberties acquire Class A multifamily complex in Dallas to convert to workforce housing

(BUSINESS WIRE)-Waterford Property Company (Waterford), The Vistria Group (Vistria), and Northern Liberties, in partnership with the Dallas Housing Finance Corporation (DHFC), have announced the acquisition of a 395-unit class A multifamily community located at 8169 Midtown Blvd. in Dallas.

The joint venture purchased the property, known as Domain at Midtown Park, and at the same time entered into a long-term

ground lease with the DHFC. With this acquisition, the owners will immediately restrict rents for new qualified residents to create stable workforce housing as part of an agreement with DHFC in exchange for 100 percent property tax abatement for 99 years.

"Core to our investing and impact philosophy is that creating more affordable housing is a crucial element in building more resilient households and vibrant communities," said

Margaret Anadu, Senior Partner and Head of Real Estate at The Vistria Group. "We are thrilled to partner with Waterford Property Company and Northern Liberties to ensure housing is affordable at Domain for years to come and look forward to working alongside our community partners to deliver essential services to our residents."

Created by the City of Dallas in 1984, DHFC provides tax-exempt mortgage

See HOUSING, Page 13

BUDGET, from Page 6

the Teacher Quality Partnership program, and the Hawkins Centers of Excellence, and increase resources for student mental health supports.

While acknowledging

these relative increases, we continue to oppose the imposition of arbitrary budget caps that hinder the ability of the federal government to invest fully in the resources needed so every

child in our country has the opportunity to access a quality and equitable education.

We urge Congress to set aside the caps in FY25 and enact the Biden-Harris administration's priorities."



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Physical and Drug Screen Required
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Or email your resume to: careers@edbellconstruction.com

Descendants of 1811 Revolt heroes acquire Woodland Plantation to preserve Black history

Jo Banner and Joy Banner, founders of The Descendants Project, have taken a significant step towards preserving the historical legacy of Black Americans by acquiring the Woodland Plantation in LaPlace, Louisiana. According to TheGrio, their unwavering commitment stems from a deep-rooted understanding of the plantation's pivotal role in history and a determination to authenticate its story.

Raised on the West Bank of the Mississippi River, Jo Banner and her sister Joy Banner were steeped in the tales of their grandmother, who recounted the harrowing events of the 1811 revolt by enslaved people. The uprising, often overshadowed in historical narratives, saw the brave resistance of individuals like



After years of discussions with the previous owner, Timothy Sheehan, about safeguarding this heritage, the sisters finalized the purchase in January for \$750,000. With the transaction completed, they now hold stewardship over a property that witnessed one of America's largest uprisings of enslaved people. (Photo via NNPA)

Charles Deslondes and approximately 25 others who sought freedom amidst the brutal oppression of slavery.

The Banners' acquisition of the plantation marks a significant moment in the ongoing struggle to preserve Black history. After years of discussions

with the previous owner, Timothy Sheehan, about safeguarding this heritage, the sisters finalized the purchase in January for \$750,000. With the transaction completed, they now hold stewardship over a property that witnessed one of America's largest uprisings of enslaved people.

Their nonprofit organization, The Descendants Project, focuses on preserving and protecting the Black descendant community in Louisiana's River Parishes. The Woodland Plantation, nestled in St. John the Baptist Parish, holds immense historical significance, encompassing 4,000 square feet of space on four acres of land.

According to Sharlene Sinegal-DeCuir, an associate professor of history at Xavier University, the Banners' initiative is profoundly impactful. It provides an opportunity for descendants of the enslaved to reclaim their narrative, offering a counterbalance to historical accounts that often marginalize their contributions.

In addition to preserving

the plantation's history, the Banners said they intend to use the space as a hub for community engagement. By offering genealogy resources and facilitating discussions on environmental justice, they aim to create a welcoming environment where Black voices are heard and honored.

The fight against environmental degradation in the region, epitomized by Greenfield Louisiana LLC's proposed construction of a grain elevator export plant, underscores the ongoing struggle for justice. For Jo Banner, the significance of their ownership extends beyond mere property rights. It represents a reclaiming of space and identity, ensuring that future generations connect meaningfully with their

heritage. As they embark on this journey, the Banners said they are determined to ensure that the Woodland Plantation remains a beacon of hope and empowerment for all who visit.

"Knowing that home's history and everything that happened, that our names are going to be put in the paperwork of this home, that you're going to see it going all the way from the 1700s and white ownership and all of a sudden that they got more melanin on that title history, we're already seeing how impactful that is for us to be in this space just as Black women," Jo Banner told The Grio. "We're going to provide access to the history in a way that Black people can feel welcome in the space."

VOTERS, from Page 1

port. From our research on Black values, we know who they are and the tools needed to reach them," said Dr. Katrina Gamble of Sojourner Strategies. "It's not too late to change course, but that takes breaking barriers that campaigns have blindly accepted for decades. We think democracy is worth it, and so are the people who have been excluded."

Gamble is conducting groundbreaking nationwide research into the differences in values and political behavior of the Black electorate and analyzing clusters or segments of Black voters for the first time.

All involved said the report spotlights the systemic marginalization of Black and brown communities within the ostensibly inclusive, data-driven digital systems of voter engagement prevailing in the United States. It identifies aggressive voter purges and biases inherent in vendor-generated models appended to voter files as key

factors exacerbating this invisibility.

According to the Democracy & Power Innovation Fund report, "One serious consequence of missing or incorrect data in purchased voter databases is that it distorts the algorithms that assign vote propensity scores to individual voters."

"Traditional campaigns regularly and intentionally leave out people with low vote propensity scores, deeming them not worth the investment. To put it plainly, this approach is wrong," stated Ranada Robinson, Research Director for New Georgia Project.

Similarly, Prentiss J. Haney, Senior Advisor to the Ohio Organizing Collaborative, highlighted the limitations of relying solely on political industry databases, noting that such dependence leads to the exclusion of millions of Black and Latino voters and inaccurate race modeling.

To address these disparities and ensure a more equitable electoral process,

the report proposes philanthropic investments in community-based data collection, support for antiracist modeling efforts, and adopting broad relational organizing strategies.

The report called for concerted efforts to rectify the systemic biases ingrained within existing data systems and engagement models. The author asserted that a failure to address these issues risks perpetuating the disenfranchisement of marginalized communities and undermining democratic principles.

"The people unseen by voter files are still capable, if organized, to make moves and wield their latent power," added Joy Cushman, Senior Advisor to DPI. "People deemed 'low propensity' by models and the political industry are defying the odds and still turning out to vote. And many are doing even more than that: they are becoming active members and leaders in power-building organizations, mobilizing their friends and family to vote as well."

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HOUSING, from Page 11

revenue bonds and other support for the acquisition, construction, or substantial rehabilitation of multifamily housing as part of Dallas' department of housing and neighborhood revitalization.

"Through this acquisition, Waterford is continuing its mission to pursue innovative essential housing solutions. We've worked diligently over the last few years in California to build a portfolio of workforce-focused housing using a creative approach to lower costs for residents impacted by the high cost of living. Now we're able to focus

on a similar much-needed solution in Texas with our partners and the City of Dallas," said Waterford Co-Founder John Drachman.

"Northern Liberties' entry into the Dallas market highlights our investment thesis to acquire well-located assets in high-growth markets where we can create or preserve workforce and affordable housing. Our mission is to create housing stability while providing year-round services that empower our residents. By acquiring properties, investing in people, and creating community, people prosper," said Northern



Courtesy photo

Liberties Co-Founder and CEO Sharif Mitchell.

"As Dallas has experienced strong growth over the past 10 years, its rents

have continued to climb, like many across the country, and the city is dealing with affordability issues. The cost of housing has

gone up as much as anywhere in the United States and police, teachers and other essential workers are the ones who are at risk. This is just the beginning of our focus on Texas and the opportunity to be part of the solution to bring more affordability into the market," said Waterford Co-Founder Sean Rawson.

Domain at Midtown Park was built in 2016. The community is located within the suburban neighborhood of Lake Highlands in Dallas, strategically positioned in the commercial district of Midtown Park. The property offers an abundance of amenities including clubhouse, fitness center,

business center, BBQ grill area, outdoor lounge, cabana/pergola, dog park, and resort-style pool, storage units and a golf simulator.

The community's current tenant base is comprised primarily of moderate-income workforce employees and families. As noted, the joint venture will restrict rents at the property setting aside 51 percent of the units for residents who make 80 percent average median income (AMI), 39 percent of the units for families who make 140 percent AMI, and 10 percent of the units at market rate.

Freddie Mac through Walker & Dunlop provided debt for the transaction.

SHIRLEY, from Page 9

not with that attitude!" And so, she builds her inner circle: Arthur Hardwick Jr., (Terrence Howard), who'd served with Shirley in the New York State Legislature helps with strategy. Stanley Thompson (Brian Stokes Mitchell) campaign manager. Robert Gottlieb (Lucas Hedges, Manchester by the Sea), a white Cornell law student becomes her student organizer. While Barbara Lee (Christina Jackson, Devotion), Chisolm's young protégée, acts as her liaison to the Black community and a link to the influential Black Panthers.

Treachery is sprinkled along the way. Some of the sneaky trickery comes from Black politicians, like Walter Fauntroy (Andres Holland, Moonlight) and Ron Dellums (Dorian Missick). Add in noted figures George Wallace (W. Earl Brown) and Huey P. Newton (Brad James), and this film becomes a fairly intriguing who's who in Black politics and American history.

The direction seems perfunctory. No great artistry exhibited. No huge mistakes made. Ramsey Nickell's (American Crime) camerawork captures the at-home and tense confrontations between Shirley and her overly understanding husband and head of secu-

rity Conran (Michael Cherie). An awkward outdoor meeting between Shirley and Huey at the home of Diahann Carroll (Amirah Vann, Underground) is displayed, too. Shirley "I'm going to force all the politicians to earn our votes!" Huey: "You gonna do all that? Schoolteacher from Brooklyn?" Shirley: "Yes I am just a schoolteacher from Brooklyn, and Harriet was just a slave." In general, the dialogue is thoughtful. But it's likely these conversations are not verbatim, and at times seem too manufactured.

All production elements are adequate for a TV movie: production design Dina Goldman; costumes Megan Coates; set decoration Jon L. Bush and Imogene Lee and art direction Danny Brown. That's minus some parts of the soundtrack that seem like place holder music, and not a score. A theatrical release would expose flaws. A Netflix release on the little screen is just right. Plot pieces, peaks and valleys are pulled together decently. Slowly it all starts to gel, build momentum and become educational and fascinating. But there isn't a real climax. No satiating crescendo.

Through it all, Regina King releases a fire that retrieves the spirit of Shirley

Chisolm from the less-read pages of history books. The accent, courage and determination are all in King's bravura performance. She was right to champion this production. For Chisolm's sake, and as a showcase for her supreme talent. Another acting kudo goes to Ter-

ence Howard who shows great restraint as Arthur Hardwick, Jr., the voice of reason. His performance is nuanced. Magnetic in the most subtle way.

This is a history lesson worth learning. A political shero worth knowing. Some viewers will wish

Chisolm's legacy was kept alive in a more unique and distinguished way. While some will be grateful for any introduction to her

groundbreaking achievements.

Visit Film Critic Dwight Brown at DwightBrownInk.com.



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Touch My Coffee And You Die

Dr. James L. Snyder

Recently, illegitimate aliens of the worst kind have invaded our house illegally.

It came to a head just the other day when we were sitting down to lunch, and The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage had a lovely bowl of tomato soup. I forgot what I was eating because all the attention went to her bowl.

As I was eating my lunch, I glanced over at her bowl of tomato soup. The top of it was covered with little black dots of some sort. Looking at it, I asked her, "Oh, my dear, what kind of soup are you eating today?"

She looked down at her soup, and her world came to a crashing end. She jumped up and yelled, but I had no idea what was happening.

Looking at her soup again, I noticed that those little black dots were swimming around in it. As I looked closely, I noticed they were the tiniest little bugs I had ever seen, but there they were, swimming cheerfully in her soup.

Being the affectionate



Clay Banks / Unsplash

husband I am, I laughed uncontrollably as I pointed to her soup. "You do make the best soup in town." And then I laughed some more.

Looking at her, I noticed she was not laughing. She was doing the opposite of laughing, so I had to calm down just a bit.

I don't believe in karma. I think it's a bunch of knucklehead idiocy. But in my experience, I have had things come back on me in a very alarming way. I wasn't thinking of that as I was making fun of The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage and her bug-infected tomato soup.

That was just the beginning. From then on, the bugs were everywhere in our house. Whenever I saw

a bug, I would look at The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage and say, "Do you want this one for your tomato soup?"

For some reason, I'm not sure why, she didn't find any of that very funny.

But things were about to change.

Those bugs flew around my head, and one landed on my nose. Not thinking, which is my MO, I smacked that bug with my right hand as hard as possible. Of course, I did not consider that the bug was as small as it was, and it was on my nose. I'm unsure if I hurt the bug, but my nose began to bleed.

The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage caught me and said with a little

smirk, "Are you having fun playing with your little bug friends?"

I wouldn't say this out loud in her presence, but I deserved that.

The next incident was a bunch of those bugs flying up my nose. I sneezed 17 times, and the bugs went everywhere in the room.

Laughing at me again, The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage said, "The next time you sneeze cover your nose and mouth with your hand." I think she was having a giggle attack at the time.

Later that afternoon, the bugs were still flying all around. As I sat in my easy chair drinking coffee, I noticed bugs flying around my coffee.

I grabbed my coffee and shouted to those illegitimate aliens, "Touch my coffee and you die!"

I'm okay if they spoil the tomato soup, but my coffee is an entirely different situation. Something about my coffee prohibits these illegitimate aliens from drinking it.

Where these illegitimate aliens come from and how they got in our house, is a

mystery to me.

For example, the cats on the porch are allowed to look in our house, but they're not allowed to be in our house. The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage has some idea that they have fleas and other things. But if they're not allowed in, what gives these bugs the right to enter our house? Do they have permission from The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage?

To take control of the coffee in my cup is a severe malfunction of what is right. Therefore, there must be consequences to that kind of activity.

I saw these little bugs flying around everywhere I walked in our house. Something has to be done to deal with this major calamity in our house.

The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage noticed that I was getting somewhat agitated by these bugs. No matter what we did in the house, they were still there.

Towards suppertime, The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage looked at me and said, "Why don't we go out for supper tonight and celebrate a bug free zone?"

I know my wife is right all the time, and this time, she was more than right, so I was all in with her on this.

A little later, I thought of a bible verse along this line. James 3:5, "Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!"

Sometimes I don't realize how important such little things are. Looking back on my life, I remember some small events that turned into big events.

The biggest distractions in my life are the little things we sometimes ignore.

Sometimes just a few words can cause a big problem, which can last for a long time and cause a big problem. Say one wrong word and the problems begin.

No matter how big a fire is, it always starts with a small flame.

Dr. James L. Snyder lives in Ocala, FL with the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. Telephone 1-352-216-3025, e-mail jamesnsnyder51@gmail.com, website www.jamesnsnyderministries.com.

TRAGIC, from Page 5

resulting in self-inflicted injuries or harm to another child.

Sarah Burd-Sharps, senior director of research at Everytown, highlighted the familial bonds shattered by such tragedies. "In many cases, the victim is a sibling, cousin, or friend, leaving multiple families grappling with sorrow and regret," she stated.

Everytown urges federal and state authorities to enhance efforts in tracking and disseminating data on these incidents to formulate effective preventive strategies.

"Nearly every day, a child gains access to a loaded firearm with tragic outcomes. Yet, these incidents are entirely preventable," emphasized Burd-Sharps.

Heartbreaking stories abound, including the death

of a 2-year-old girl in Indiana who found a gun at home and the shooting of an 8-year-old boy in Alabama with a firearm taken from his mother's car. In Florida, a 12-year-old boy died, and 15-year-old sustained injuries because of the negligent handling of a gun by a 14-year-old.

Last year, the nation witnessed the highest number of unintentional child shootings recorded by Everytown since tracking began in 2015, with 411 incidents resulting in injuries or fatalities. However, data collection has faced challenges due to inconsistent reporting and documentation.

Dr. David Hemenway, a prominent expert in injury prevention, noted the credibility of Everytown's count of fatal shootings, aligning

with broader trends observed in federal data.

Despite a decline in the overall rate of unintentional shooting deaths since the 1990s, firearms remain a leading cause of accidental child deaths. A 2015 survey estimated that 4.6 million American children lived in homes with loaded and unlocked firearms, a concerning statistic exacerbated by the recent surge in gun sales.

Everytown's 2023 report, "Preventable Tragedies: Unintentional Shootings by Children," offered a detailed analysis of incidents from 2015 to 2022, which detailed how critical secure gun storage remains.

Researchers stressed that "ensuring firearms are stored securely—unloaded, locked, and separate from ammunition—is paramount."

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Women's History Month (continued...)

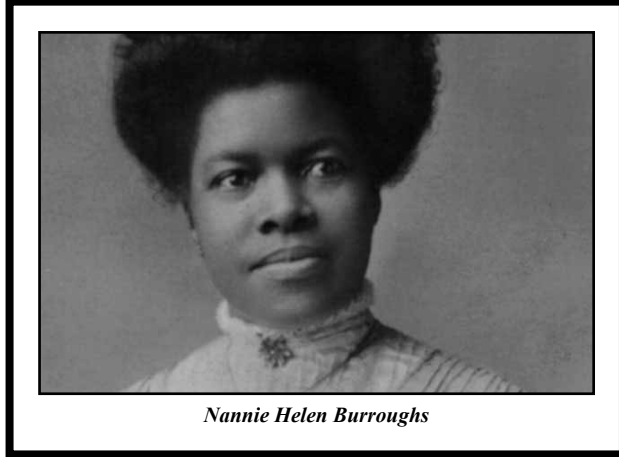


Sister Tarpley
NDG
Religion
Editor

Nannie Helen Burroughs was one of the best known and well-respected African Americans of the early twentieth century. She was called 'The Black Goddess of Liberty'. She was an educator, institution and organization-builder and a major figure in the Black church and secular feminist movement.

In 1900, at the annual meeting of the National Baptist Convention (NBC) in Virginia, Burroughs gave a speech, "How the Sisters are Hindered from Helping." This oration gained her national recognition and served as a lightning rod for the formation of the largest Black women's organization in the United States, the Woman's Convention (WC) an auxiliary to the NBC.

Furthermore, in 1896, Burroughs joined other women and formed the National Association of



Nannie Helen Burroughs

Colored Women (NACW) to promote political mobilization of Black women. Burroughs became a much sought after participant, particularly by the Republican Party. When Herbert Hoover was elected President in 1928, he chose Burroughs to head a fact-finding commission on housing. In 1909, she founded the National Training School for Women and Girls, which was renamed the Nannie Helen Burroughs School in 1964.

Patricia Roberts Harris (May 31, 1924 – March 23, 1985). In 2000, she was a committed public servant and champion of civil rights, the first Black woman to hold a U. S. Amba-

sadorship in Luxembourg under President Lyndon B. Johnson, and the first to enter the line of succession to the Presidency in case the President is unable to perform his duties. She served as the United States Secretary of Health and Human Services in the administration of President Jimmy Carter.

Roberts was born in Mattoon, Illinois, the daughter of a railroad dining car waiter. She graduated Summa Cum Laude from Howard University in 1945; and she participated in one of the nation's first lunch counter sit-ins, in 1943. She was also the first national executive of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority. Her first

position with the U.S. government was as an attorney in the appeals and research section of the criminal division of the Department of Justice in 1960. President John F. Kennedy appointed her co-chairman of the National Women's Committee for Civil Rights.

Vernice Armour is a former Captain in the United States Marine Corps. She was the first Black female naval aviator in the Marine Corps; and America's first Black female combat pilot in the U.S. military. Armour flew the AH-1W SuperCobra attack helicopter in the 2003 invasion of Iraq; and served two tours in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Armour was born in 1973 in Chicago, Illinois to Gaston Armour, Jr. and Authurine Armour. She was raised in Memphis, Tennessee where she was a member of the mathematics honor society at Overton High School. In 1993,

while a student at Middle Tennessee State University Armour enlisted in the Army Reserves and later the Army ROTC.

Mae C. Jemison (October 17, 1956) is an American physician and NASA astronaut. She became the first Black woman to travel in space when she went into orbit aboard the Space Shuttle Endeavour on September 12, 1992. Jemison served in the Peace Corps from 1985 to 1987. She is also a dancer and a T.V. actor and has appeared in an episode of Star Trek: The Next Generation. Jemison

holds nine honorary doctorates in science, engineering, letters and the humanities.

Jemison was born in Decatur, Alabama, the youngest child of Charlie Jemison who was a maintenance supervisor for a charity organization and her mother, Dorothy Green, was an elementary school teacher of English and math at the Beethoven School in Chicago; and she said that she was inspired by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

(Editor's Note: This column originally ran in March 2012.)

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