



# North Dallas Gazette

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## Advocacy Groups Call on U.S. Dept. of Transportation to tackle racial bias in traffic enforcement

By Stacy M. Brown  
NNPA Senior National Correspondent

A coalition of advocacy groups is urging the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) to address racial bias in traffic enforcement, citing concerns over its ineffectiveness and disproportionate impact on Black motorists.

In a recent report co-authored by the Center for American Progress, the Vera Institute of Justice, and Color of Change, it's revealed that despite roughly 20 million traffic stops occurring annually in the United States, Black drivers are more likely to be stopped and searched, especially for minor infractions, which continues to raise grave concerns about racial profiling and the safety of African American motorists.

The coalition's report presents several recommendations to incentivize reforms at the state and local levels.

"To honor Tyre Nichols and so many others who have been surveilled, harassed, and, too often, killed while doing something as simple as driving while Black, DOT must take swift, public action to consider and adopt policies that advance safety and equity on our



The coalition's report presents several recommendations to incentivize reforms at the state and local levels. (Photo via NNPA)

nation's roadways," said Patrick Gaspard, president, and CEO of the Center for American Progress.

Nick Turner, president, and director of the Vera Institute of Justice added that routine traffic enforcement doesn't make people safer. "It makes many communities feel less secure," said Turner, who urged the DOT to support state and local innovations that reduce police involvement in minor traffic infractions.

Rashad Robinson, President of Color of Change, also emphasized the need for increased support for national research to bridge existing studies with emerging approaches.

"DOT must take seriously the recommendations provided and take actionable steps to prioritize alternative traffic enforcement practices for traffic safety," Robinson asserted.

Moreover, the coalition's report criticized the DOT's current Equity Action Plan for its failure to address specific goals related to reducing racially biased police traffic enforcement.

The report noted that his administration has championed a "whole-of-government equity agenda since President Joe Biden's inaugura-

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### People In The News ...



Ramona Edelin



Fred Moses

NDG Quote of the Week: "Never underestimate the power of dreams and the influence of the human spirit. We are all the same in this notion: The potential for greatness lives within each of us."

- Wilma Rudolph



## Ramona Edelin

Once upon a time, Black Americans were simply known as colored people, or Negroes. That is until Ramona Edelin came along. The activist, renowned for her pivotal roles in advancing civil rights, education reform, and community empowerment, died at her D.C. residence last month at the age of 78. Her death, finally confirmed this week by Barnaby Towns, a communications strategist who collaborated with Dr. Edelin, was attributed to cancer.

Born on September 4, 1945, in Los Angeles,



California, Edelin's early years were marked by a commitment to education and social justice. According to her HistoryMakers biography, after graduating from Fisk University

with a Bachelor's degree in 1967, she pursued further studies at the University of East Anglia in England. She earned her master's degree before completing her Ph.D. at Boston University in 1981.

Edelin's contributions to academia and activism were manifold. She was pivotal in popularizing the term "African American" alongside Rev. Jesse L. Jackson in the late 1980s.

Jackson had announced the preference for "African American," speaking for summit organizers that included Dr. Edelin. "Just as we were called Colored,

but were not that, and then Negro, but not that, to be called Black is just as baseless," he said, adding that "African American" "has cultural integrity" and "puts us in our proper historical context."

Later, Edelin told Ebony magazine, "Calling ourselves African Americans is the first step in the cultural offensive," while linking the name change to a "cultural renaissance" in which Black Americans reconnected with their history and heritage.

"Who are we if we don't acknowledge our motherland?" she asked later.

"When a child in a ghetto calls himself African American, immediately he's international. You've taken him from the ghetto and put him on the globe."

The HistoryMakers bio noted that Edelin's academic pursuits led her to found and chair the Department of African American Studies at Northeastern University, where she established herself as a leading voice.

Transitioning from academia to advocacy, Edelin joined the National Urban Coalition in 1977, eventually ascending to president and CEO. During her tenure, she spearheaded initia-

tives such as the "Say Yes to a Youngster's Future" program, which provided crucial support in math, science, and technology to youth and teachers of color in urban areas. Her biography noted that Edelin's efforts extended nationwide through partnerships with organizations like the National Science Foundation and the United States Department of Education.

President Bill Clinton recognized Edelin's expertise by appointing her to the Presidential Board on Historically Black Colleges

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## Fred Moses

Plano Businessman Fred Moses, President/CEO of Telecom Electric Supply LLC, is the recipient of two distinguished awards.

On Saturday, March 16, 2024, he received the Inspired to Unite: Community Leader Award at the Meals on Wheels Collin County Illuminating Hope Gala. Moses received this stellar honor for his dedication to philanthropy and service, along with his financial commitment to giving back to his community.

"This individual is amazing," said Zella Tyson,



CEO/Executive Director of Meal on Wheels Collin County. "His contributions showcase the power of unity and leadership in building inclusive communities."

Also that night, Texas 4th District Congressman

Pat Fallon awarded Moses the Congressional Patriot Award.

The award is a unique, meaningful recognition of the men and women in our district who give of their time and talent to make their community a better place.

Fallon called Moses a personal mentor, one who is very deserving of the honor that recognizes high achievement or something heroic.

"It's like a lifetime achievement award for being a great American," Fallon said. "Fred absolutely fits the bill. This award is rarer than a Super Bowl ring.

"Of the million plus people who live in Collin County, Fred Moses is the first recipient of this award."

Moses has served Collin County in several capacities, including being an elected official.

He consistently demonstrates his dedication to

faith, family, education, and financial wellness through involvement as Associate Minister and Sunday School Teacher at Shiloh Baptist Church of Plano, a Trustee of the University of Bridgeport, and Treasurer of the Plano Childcare Learning Academy.

He is an active leader in

the political arena and has established Educational Endowments with his late wife, Mazzie Moses, at esteemed institutions leaving a legacy of empowerment. Fred's multifaceted contributions highlight the power of unity and leadership in building inclusive communities.

## Sean 'Diddy' Combs

By Stacy M. Brown  
NNPA Senior National  
Correspondent

At least two of his children, King and Justin, were filmed in handcuffs, another man was carefully backed out of a driveway with a federal agent holding a weapon in his back, and an unidentified woman also detained, Rap mogul Sean "Diddy" Combs appeared nowhere to be found.

It wasn't until after multiple media outlets tracked his private jet from southern to northern California and then finally across the Caribbean, that agents appeared to have caught up



with Combs in Miami.

At press time, authorities hadn't formally charged Diddy or anyone, but confirmed that Combs is the subject of a federal investigation, with allegations ranging from sex trafficking to drug and firearm-related offenses.

Since November, several

lawsuits against Combs have fueled the investigation's growth. Federal officials in Manhattan have already interviewed three women and a man, with more interviews scheduled. The interviews involve accusations including sex trafficking, sexual assault, and involvement in illegal narcotics and firearms distribution.

Federal agents, identified as Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), wasted no time in executing search warrants on Monday, March 25. The raids targeted Combs' properties in Los Angeles and Miami, with the warrants issued out of the Southern District

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Have a wonderful day!  
Thurman R. Jones, Publisher  
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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 offence was death.

One can only imagine what laws and consequences those Christian colonizers 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 complex conundrum. The Court determined that human life begins—not in the Garden of Eden nor in a woman's womb, nor with the physi-

cal 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/moral 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

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# Biden and Harris fight back against House Republicans' budget threatening health care

By Stacy M. Brown  
NNPA Senior National  
Correspondent

Resolute in their stand against the recent budget proposal by House Republicans, President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris are intensifying their efforts to lower healthcare costs and safeguard crucial provisions of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), Medicaid, and Medicare. In a Fact Sheet, the White House noted that Biden and Harris underscored the administration's commitment during a visit to North Carolina, where they outlined a comprehensive strategy to make health care more affordable for all Americans.

"The draconian measures in the Republican budget, which the Republican Study Committee created and which the House Republican leadership supported, have alarmed people because they could destroy crucial health care programs," administration officials said. Among its provisions, the budget seeks to slash a staggering \$4.5 trillion from the ACA, Medicaid, and the Chil-



In a Fact Sheet, the White House noted that Biden and Harris underscored the administration's commitment during a visit to North Carolina, where they outlined a comprehensive strategy to make health care more affordable for all Americans. (Photo via NNPA)

dren's Health Insurance Program, potentially leaving millions of Americans without access to essential health coverage.

Key aspects of the Republican budget include eliminating funding for the ACA's Marketplace and Medicaid expansion, jeopardizing coverage for over 45 million individuals. Furthermore, the proposed transformation of Medicaid into block grants "could imperil the health care of an additional 60 million Americans, lead-

ing to increased difficulty in qualifying for coverage and potential cuts to critical benefits," officials argued.

The budget threatens the well-being of seniors and individuals with disabilities by proposing cuts to Medicaid home care services and nursing home payments, which could result in diminished care quality and longer waitlists for essential services.

In addition to dismantling crucial consumer protections established by the ACA, such as coverage for

pre-existing conditions and prohibitions against insurance company abuses, officials said the Republican budget would also convert Medicare into a "premium support" program, potentially raising premiums for millions of seniors and exacerbating prescription drug costs.

"Contrary to this regressive agenda, President Biden and Vice President Harris are staunch advocates for expanding access to affordable health care," officials asserted. "Under

their leadership, a record-breaking 21 million Americans have enrolled in ACA coverage this year, marking a significant milestone in the ongoing effort to extend health care to more citizens."

The White House argued that the administration's initiatives have yielded tangible benefits, including average annual savings of \$800 per individual on health insurance premiums. They claimed that the passage of the Inflation Reduction Act, which Biden championed, has given Medicare the authority to negotiate lower prescription drug costs, ensuring that seniors and people with disabilities can access affordable medications.

Biden and Harris insisted they are committed to further lowering healthcare costs and enhancing coverage for all Americans. Their proposed measures include:

- Making premium tax credits permanent.
- Expanding Medicaid coverage in states that have not adopted expansion.
- Investing in home care services to address waitlists

for older adults and individuals with disabilities.

White House officials said the president and vice president's agenda prioritizes mental health care access, consumer protection against surprise medical bills, and crackdowns on unwarranted fees in health care services. By advocating for Medicare to negotiate drug prices for at least 50 drugs annually and capping out-of-pocket prescription drug costs, the administration aims to alleviate financial burdens on individuals while safeguarding the integrity of health care programs.

In contrast to the Republican budget's assault on health care, officials asserted that Biden and Harris remain steadfast in their commitment to protecting and strengthening vital health care programs for generations to come. "By ensuring that the wealthy contribute their fair share and dedicating savings from Medicare reforms to the program's sustainability, they seek to uphold the fundamental right to accessible and affordable health care for all Americans," officials said.

## Higher genetic risk of obesity means working out harder for same results

By Craig Boerner

(Newsweek) — Persons with a higher genetic risk of obesity need to work out harder than those of moderate or low genetic risk to avoid becoming obese, according to a Vanderbilt University Medical Center (VUMC) paper published in JAMA Network Open.

Study authors used activity, clinical and genetic data from the National Institutes of Health's All of Us Research Program to explore the association of genetic risk of higher body mass index and the level of

physical activity needed to reduce incident obesity.

"Physical activity guidelines do not account for individual differences," said senior author Douglas Ruderfer, PhD, associate professor of Medicine, Division of Genetic Medicine, and director of the Center for Digital Genomic Medicine at VUMC. "Genetic background contributes to the amount of physical activity needed to mitigate obesity. The higher the genetic risk, the more steps needed per day.

"I think an important component to this result is

that individuals can be active enough to account for their genetic background, or their genetic risk for obesity, regardless of how high that risk might be," he added. "And there are many other contributors that play a role including diet and environmental factors."

Included in the study were 3,124 middle-aged participants without obesity who owned a Fitbit device and walked an average of 8,326 steps per day for a median of more than 5 years. The incidence of obesity over the study period increased from 13% to 43%

in the lowest and highest polygenic risk score groups.

Individuals with a polygenic risk score in the 75th percentile would need to walk an average of 2,280 more steps per day (a total of 11,020 steps per day) than those in the 50th percentile to have a comparable risk of obesity, according to the study.

Persons with a baseline BMI of 22, 24, 26 and 28 who were in the 75th percentile of polygenic risk score would need to walk an additional 3,460, 4,430,

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# Black families beg cops to take action when loved ones go missing

By Trina Reynolds-Tyler  
Invisible Institute  
and Sarah Conway  
City Bureau | Word In Black  
The Sacramento Observer

This story is part three of Chicago Missing Persons, a two-year investigation by City Bureau and Invisible Institute, two Chicago-based nonprofit journalism organizations, into how Chicago police handle missing person cases reveals the disproportionate impact on Black women and girls, how police have mistreated family members or delayed cases, and how poor police data is making the problem harder to solve.

(WIB) – Some say it’s simply a mother’s intuition: a lump in the throat or a throb to the heart that warns their child is in danger, even when police suggest otherwise.

It guided Latonya Moore when her 26-year-old daughter Shantieya Smith still wasn’t home as night fell on May 28, 2018. It was out of character for her to not reach out, especially on a school night. Moore worried officers would be dismissive if she called in, so her cousin suggested they head to a nearby 10th District police station. “I wanted them to see my face so that they could understand my concern was real,” remembers Moore.

It guided her even as the officer at the front desk told her not to worry, she remembers. Maybe she is with a boyfriend, the officer suggested. It wasn’t uncommon for young women like Smith to run off with a man. “Give it 48 hours” be-



At least three complaints alleged that officers at stations where they tried to file a report in-person told them to instead call 911, even though Illinois law clearly states police cannot refuse in-person reports. One father, who asked to remain anonymous, told City Bureau and the Invisible Institute that police would not allow him to report his 17-year-old daughter missing in 2020 because police told him she was an adult and could move freely in the world. (Photo via NNPA)

fore filing the report, Moore remembers the officer saying.

But Moore didn’t want to give it 48 hours. She thought about 15-year-old Sadaria Davis, another girl who had gone missing in the neighborhood that spring, who later was found decomposed in a trash-strewn abandoned building. It was the latest in a spate of missing women and girls; in fact, the whole neighborhood was on edge.

Moore’s cousin, part of their tight-knit family group, was adamant the officer accept the report and said they would not leave the station without one. They mentioned Smith’s bipolar disorder, which — unknown to the family at the time — meant police could have immediately characterized her case as “at-risk” and started an investigation.

Finally, officers told Moore her request was accepted.

“If she shows up, give us a call,” officers told Moo-

re. She wouldn’t hear from them for the next four days.

In Illinois, it’s against state law for any law enforcement official to refuse an in-person missing person report on any grounds, regardless of the missing person’s age, affiliation, lifestyle, or amount of time missing. Nowadays, the first 24 to 48 hours after someone goes missing are widely understood as the most vital part of a police investigation — critical to finding leads, collecting evidence and, in some cases, saving lives. The Chicago Police Department even collaborated with the network A&E on a show called “The First 48: Missing Persons,” showing (as research confirms) those crucial early hours can make or break a missing person case.

And yet, Moore clearly remembers an officer telling her to wait before filing a missing person report. City Bureau and the Invisible Institute spoke with multiple people who had similar experiences.

## EDELIN, from Page 2

and Universities in 1998. She also co-founded and served as treasurer of the Black Leadership Forum, solidifying her standing as a respected leader in African American communities.

Beyond her professional achievements, Edelin dedi-

cated herself to numerous boards and committees, including chairing the District of Columbia Educational Goals 2000 Panel and contributing to the Federal Advisory Committee for the Black Community Crusade for Children.

Throughout her life, Ede-

lin received widespread recognition for her contributions. Ebony magazine honored her as one of the 100 Most Influential Black Americans, and she received prestigious awards such as the Southern Christian Leadership Award for Progressive Leadership and the IBM Community Executive Program Award.

who asked to remain anonymous, told City Bureau and the Invisible Institute that police would not allow him to report his 17-year-old daughter missing in 2020 because police told him she was an adult and could move freely in the world.

“They were saying you have to wait 48 hours before you can actually report the person missing,” says the Rev. Robin Hood, who remembers hearing this from police officers starting in the 1990s. The West Side activist preacher has raised awareness and led community searches for missing Black girls and women on the West Side for decades.

In response to this accusation, police spokesperson Thomas Ahern wrote in an email statement: “The Chicago Police Department takes each missing person report seriously and investigates every one consistently. Under state law, CPD is required to take every missing person report regardless of how long the person has been absent or who is submitting the report.”

In some cases, families believe if police had acted more urgently, their loved ones might still be alive. While it’s impossible to prove a hypothetical, these heartbreaking stories de-

monstrate how important urgent police response can be.

On July 24, 2016, Shante Bohanan called her sister and said she was being held against her will. Bohanan’s boyfriend had recently died in a shooting, and the 20-year-old had gone to her boyfriend’s family’s house in order to grieve, family members told City Bureau and the Invisible Institute. A police document stated that during the phone call, Bohanan told her sister that she had a “gun held to her head.”

Bohanan’s mother, Tammy Pittman, says she went to the boyfriend’s house herself the same evening, but residents of the home said Bohanan had already left. Worried for her daughter’s safety, she attempted to report her missing.

Instead, officers suggested Bohanan had run away, and urged Pittman to wait another 24 hours before reporting her daughter missing, against state law and their own policy. Police did not search the boyfriend’s home until the next evening, and they found nothing.

Three days after her mother first tried to file a missing person report, Bo-

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## 2024 Dallas ISD State of the District & Teachers and Principals of the Year



**Joyce Foreman**  
Dallas ISD  
District 6

It's springtime in Texas, which means our students and team members are immersed in the season of growth and learning. Here's what you can expect from District 6 in the upcoming weeks.

Dallas ISD held the

second "Winner's Circle Celebration" to recognize outstanding teachers and campus leaders districtwide through the Teacher of the Year (TOY) and Principal of the Year (POY) awards.

The districtwide elementary, secondary, and choice/magnet Teachers and Principals of the Year will be announced on April 4 at the 2023-2024 State of the District event. The finalists and winners will receive monetary awards ranging from

\$1,500 to \$5,000.

Congratulations to our District 6 finalists!

*Teacher of the Year Elementary Finalists:*  
Antonio Barnes, Martin Weiss Elementary

Chantrelle Lovett-Andrews, Umphrey Lee Elementary School

*Principal of the Year Elementary Finalists:*  
Lakisha Merritt, Martin Weiss Elementary School

**Eclipse activities**  
Remember that on April

8, our area will be on the path of a total solar eclipse. For many of our students, this will be the first, and maybe only, opportunity to witness and learn from this natural event.

Thanks to the Perot Museum's generosity, all Dallas ISD students will receive eclipse glasses, and each school will organize its own observation activities. Reach out to your student's teacher or main office for more details.



Courtesy photo

## City Year announces historic partnership with Paul Quinn College, its first-ever partnership with a Historically Black College and University

City Year, Inc., a national educational organization with a mission to advance student and school success, has joined forces with Paul Quinn College, the nation's first Urban Work College. The partnership with Paul Quinn College represents a first-of-its-kind collaboration with an HBCU, making higher education more accessible and affordable and opening direct access to corporate internships for City Year AmeriCorps members, alums, and staff.

"To be in best service to our AmeriCorps members and alumni, it is critical to have HBCU partnerships, like this new partnership with Paul Quinn College,

partnerships that create strategic pathways to opportunity for our Black and brown AmeriCorps members. This shows our BI-POC community our deep investment in them," said Stephen Spaloss (Boston, '91), City Year executive vice president and chief equity officer.

As part of the partnership, City Year AmeriCorps members completing a year of service as student success coaches working with teachers in under-resourced public schools nationwide to provide social, emotional and academic support to students, will have the opportunity to attend Paul Quinn College and receive



a direct pathway to its Corporate Work Program. In this program, students can receive up to four years of corporate work experience and up to \$18,000 per year in scholarships.

"We are proud to be City Year's first HBCU partner as we share a dedication to creating opportunities for diverse groups of individuals to thrive in America's workforce," said Dr. Michael J. Sorrell, President of Paul Quinn College. "City Year alums stand out as

some of the most prepared and driven individuals, and we eagerly welcome them to our campus, classrooms, and culture as integral contributors to our vibrant academic community."

Established in 2015, Paul Quinn's Corporate Work Program provides students the opportunity to gain real-world work experience through corporate internships while limiting their reliance on student loans. Students can receive up to \$18,000 per year in annual

scholarships based on their internship placement and additional federal and City Year funds received.

Typically, a Paul Quinn student would spend the first year in an on-campus internship before starting in the Corporate Work Program in their second year. City Year members, alums and staff will have access to the Corporate Work Program during year one, giving them enhanced financial support from corporate partners and the chance to begin exploring career pathways and strengthen their leadership skills in their first semester.

City Year has a longstanding program that includes

partnerships with more than 100 colleges and universities across the country. University partners offer a combination of benefits that can include exclusive scholarship funds, application fee waivers, and enrollment deferral should a City Year member choose to continue their service with City Year beyond one year.

This partnership brings together two organizations with a shared vision — to remove systemic barriers to education and help those students furthest from opportunity realize their potential, prepare for leadership roles in their communities and make a difference in the world.

## UT Tyler Fisch College of Pharmacy awarded NIH research grant

The University of Texas at Tyler received a \$447,195 grant from the National Institutes of Health to support the research of Dr. May Abdelaziz, Ben and Maytee Fisch College of Pharmacy assistant professor, in HER2, a protein that promotes the growth of breast cancer.

The grant is to support research and expose students to research. Only 15% of applicants receive

this type of grant.

"The receipt of this NIH grant underscores the impactful research being conducted at the Fisch College of Pharmacy," said Dr. Amy Schwartz, Fisch College of Pharmacy dean. "Dr. Abdelaziz's innovative work in developing targeted therapy for breast cancer highlights our college's contribution to cutting-edge solutions in health care and pharmaceu-

tical sciences."

Abdelaziz is working to create a new targeted therapy for breast cancer. Unlike chemotherapy, targeted therapy attacks specific areas, such as HER2, instead of affecting the entire body. While there are targeted treatment options available for breast cancer, some patients don't respond well to these options or later relapse. This new targeted therapy will help 30% of

patients who don't respond to other therapy options.

"The support from the NIH will greatly facilitate our efforts to develop a novel targeted therapy for breast cancer," said Abdelaziz. "I am grateful for the opportunity to make a meaningful impact in cancer research and potentially improve outcomes for patients."

Abdelaziz received her Bachelor of Pharmacy

degree and her master's in pharmaceutical chemistry at Cairo University in Egypt and her PhD in pharmaceutical sciences at Virginia Commonwealth University.

With a mission to improve educational and health care outcomes for East Texas and beyond, UT Tyler offers more than 90 undergraduate and graduate programs to nearly 10,000 students. Through

its alignment with UT Tyler Health Science Center and UT Health East Texas, UT Tyler has unified these entities to serve Texas with quality education, cutting-edge research and excellent patient care. Classified by Carnegie as a doctoral research institution and by U.S. News & World Report as a national university, UT Tyler has campuses in Tyler, Longview, Palestine and Houston.



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# 'Shadow Lines' sculpture dedicated to remember the past at Martyrs Park

By David Wilfong  
NDG Contributing Writer

The City of Dallas took another step in the direction of acknowledging its past with the addition of a new public art piece officially dedicated this week.

A sculpture entitled "Shadow Lines" was recently installed in Martyrs Park, a special use park maintained by the Parks and Recreation department just west of Dealey Plaza in Dallas' West End district. A collection of civic leaders and elected officials gathered in the Sixth Floor Museum on Tuesday morning for a dedication ceremony.

The dedication was planned to finish at the park but was kept indoors due to inclement weather.

The clearing where the park now stands was the site of a lynching of three Black men in 1860 who had been accused of starting a fire that burned down a significant portion of the city's early downtown area. Though most today point to early phosphorus matches as the likely cause of the blaze, residents at the time saw it as evidence



(Above) A new sculpture stands in Martyrs Park to commemorate the lynching of three Black men on the site in 1860, as well as other victims of racial killings in Dallas' past. (At left) Artist Norman Lee addresses a gathering on Tuesday to dedicate the new public art installation. (Photos: David Wilfong / NDG)

of a "Black uprising" and looked for culprits among the slave population.

Patrick Jennings, Cato and Rev. Samuel Smith were lynched on the site. The memorial installed and dedicated this week also names other Black residents who were similarly killed in the streets and parks in Dallas between

1853 and 1920.

The ceremony was led by Ed Gray of the Dallas County Justice Initiative, who had been instrumental in the push to have an art piece installed which was appropriate for the park's historical past. Beverly Davis of Remembering Black Dallas – another key organization pushing

to preserve the memory of African-American history in the city – also spoke at the dedication.

Representing local government were Dallas Councilmembers Tennell Atkins, Carolyn King Arnold and

Jesse Moreno. Texas Senator Royce West and Dallas County Commissioner John Wiley Price also made remarks. They were joined by Parks and Recreation Director John Jenkins and Office of Equity and Inclusion Director Dr. Lindsey Wilson.

Part of the artwork is a poem written by Tim Siebles and inscribed into the metal wall which was read by Assistant City Manager, M. Elizabeth (Liz) Cedillo-Pereira. She noted that Siebles had been a teacher at her Alma Mater, North Dallas High School.

"To heal as a community, we must do the difficult work of confronting the city's histories of racial injustice, while exploring how that history continues to shape the present," Cedillo-Pereira said. "Leading projects that focus on racial healing as a part of the City's Racial Equity Plan helps us move forward

as a city, cultivating a more equitable future. We are grateful to our community partners for collaborating with us on Shadow Lines."

Numerous dignitaries making remarks at the event recalled the memory of Dr. George Keaton, Jr., founder of Remembering Black Dallas and a staunch advocate for preserving the history of the city, especially in regards to its African American community. Keaton passed away in 2022.

Artist Normal Lee, co-designer of the Shadow Lines sculpture along with Shane Albritton (of RE:site Studio), credited Keaton for both the drive to memorialize the ground where the artwork stands, as well as the direction the artists took in its creation.

"We took our primary inspiration from the words of Dr. Keaton, that this memorial, in his words, would

See ART, Page 13

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# South Dallas Club celebrates its 70th Founders' Day

By Gwendolyn H. Daniels

It was a near perfect weather day as members and guests arrived at the Dallas Marriot Suites Medical/Market Center in anticipation of celebrating the 70th Founders' Day of the historic South Dallas Business and Professional Women's Club, Inc. (South Dallas BPWC).

In the early fall of 1954, Mrs. Sara Holbert, an elementary school teacher saw a need to establish a group of Black business and professional women in the southern section of Dallas as the northern section already had an established club. Now, 70th years later, Dr. Lavern J. Holyfield serves as president of South Dallas BPWC, which heralds as the largest club in the entire National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Club, Inc.

The Founders' Day celebration began at 10 AM on Saturday, February 23rd with a musical prelude by Saxophonist Christopher Mitchell while guests enjoyed a delectable plated brunch. As is tradition, the



(Above) The Founder's Day Committee celebrates the occasion. (Top Right) The South Dallas Youth Club. (Far Right) President Holyfield with the Founders' Day honorees. (At Right) President Holyfield with Governor Gilstrap, National President Ford, and National 2nd VP Montgomery. (Photos courtesy of Simmons Event Photograph)



entire South Dallas BPWC membership formed a procession and presented an exquisite Yellow Rose and Candle Lighting Ceremony in tribute to national and local founders of the organization.

Financial Secretary Charon Simmons, chair of the event, served as Mistress

of Ceremony. Following a gracious welcome and occasion by the president, she called for the National Pres-

See CLUB, Page 13

# GARY CLARK JR.



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Photo via NNPA

# Film Review: 'The American Society of Magical Negroes isn't exactly spellbinding

By Dwight Brown  
NNPA Film Critic

(\*1/2) Those who can, teach. Those who can't, but want their narrative told anyway, try satire.

Somewhere in the basic code of screenwriting is a mantra that says, "Show don't tell." If you have a message, and you dispense it visually, audiences are smart enough to follow it and see the point. And if

they watch and learn a lesson on their own—they become knowledgeable and feel empowered. Bludgeoning viewers with a message is pedantic. Counterproductive. Case in point.

Writer/director Kobi Libii has decided to give credence to a trope about Blacks being subservient by nature, on demand or by bad circumstance. He ups that ill notion by creating a group of Black folks whose

mission is to make white people feel comfortable. Like Mammy, played by actress Hattie McDaniel, did in *Gone With the Wind*. Or like actor Lincoln Perry did when he rode his Stepin Fetchit Uncle Tom persona to fame and fortune. You get the picture? McDaniel's fawning, amiable mammy figure is one white audiences love—even now.

See **MAGIC**, Page 14



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# Critically acclaimed Broadway production of 'Girl from the North Country' is coming to Dallas

Broadway Dallas and Broadway Across America (BAA) are proud to present the Dallas engagement of the Tony Award®-winning Broadway musical *Girl From The North Country* at the Music Hall at Fair Park from April 9-21 as part of the Germania Insurance Broadway Series presented by Broadway Dallas. Tickets are on sale now.

Tickets are available at [BroadwayDallas.org](http://BroadwayDallas.org) or by calling 800-982-2787. Group orders of 10 or more may be placed by calling 214-426-4768 or emailing [Groups@BroadwayDallas.org](mailto:Groups@BroadwayDallas.org).

Written and directed by celebrated playwright Conor McPherson and featuring Tony Award-winning orchestrations by Simon Hale, *GIRL FROM THE NORTH COUNTRY* reimagines 20 legendary



Carla Woods (foreground) in the "Girl from the North Country" North American tour (photo by Evan Zimmerman for MurphyMade)

songs of Bob Dylan as they've never been heard before, including "Forever Young," "All Along The Watchtower," "Hurricane," "Slow Train Coming," and "Like A Rolling Stone." It's 1934 in Duluth, Min-

nesota. We meet a group of wayward travelers whose lives intersect in a guesthouse filled with music, life and hope. Experience this 'profoundly beautiful' production (The New York Times) brought to vivid life

by an extraordinary company of actors and musicians. The *GIRL FROM THE NORTH COUNTRY* acting company includes Alan

Ariano (Dr. Walker), David Benoit (Mr. Burke), Ben Biggers (Gene Laine), Paul Blankenship (Offstage Cover), Jennifer Blood (Elizabeth Laine), Ashley D. Brooks (Ensemble), Justin Michael Duval (Ensemble), Rayla Garske (Swing), Matt Manuel (Joe Scott), Kelly McCormick (Ensemble), Sharaé Moultrie (Marianne Laine), Hosea Mundi (Ensemble), Warren Nolan Jr. (Swing), Ali Regan (Swing), Jay Russell (Mr. Perry), John Schiappa (Nick Laine), Chiara Trentalange (Kate Draper), Danny Vaccaro (Swing), Jill Van Velzer (Mrs. Burke), Jeremy Webb (Reverend Marlowe), Aidan Wharton (Elias Burke) and Carla Woods (Mrs. Neilsen). Casting subject to

change. *Girl From The North Country* features scenic and costume design by Rae Smith; orchestrations, arrangements, and music supervision by Simon Hale, with additional arrangements by Simon Hale and Conor McPherson; lighting design by Mark Henderson; sound design by Simon Baker; movement direction by Lucy Hind; associate direction by Barbara Rubin; and music direction by Timothy Splain. *Girl From The North Country* is produced by Runaway Entertainment.

*Girl From The North Country's* Original Broadway Cast Album was a 2022 GRAMMY Award® nominee for "Best Musical Theater Album."

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Thursday, April 11 6:00 - 7:00 p.m.	Thursday, April 25 6:00 - 7:00 p.m.

For more information or to register for this event, please visit [dallascasa.org](http://dallascasa.org)

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# Black Americans continue to face hurdles to homeownership

CFPB and National Association of Realtors cite drawbacks, White House plan proposes solutions for an estimated 3.5 million first-time buyers

By Charlene Crowell

The approaching spring season signals not only a change in weather; but an annual surge in homebuying. Underscoring this long-standing trend is the annual April observance of Fair Housing Month.

Enacted in 1968, the Fair Housing Act banned discrimination on the basis of race, religion, and national origin in the sale or rental of housing by banks, insurers and real estate agents.

But fair housing for whom? While homeownership has been the primary means for most American families to build and pass on inter-generational wealth, Blacks rank last in their ability to achieve the wealth-building benefits of buying a home.

According to the National Association of Realtors' 2024 Snapshot of Race and Home Buying in America report, disparity between Black homeownership rates and those of other racial and ethnic groups has actually grown larger since 2012. Only 44.1 percent of Blacks owned homes compared to majorities of Asian-Americans (63.3 percent), and Latinos (51.1 percent).

"The connection between homeownership rates and



nutapong mohock / Envato

net worth is a critical one. Net worth, or the total assets minus household liabilities, is an essential indicator of financial stability and economic well-being," states the report.

After more than 50 years of federal laws – envisioned and enacted in hopes of helping Black America reduce lingering wealth disparities – NAR lists a litany of familiar reasons for homeownership disparities that read like a set of falling dominoes:

Median household income disparities between whites and Blacks continued to grow over the past decade. In 2012, the income gap between these two groups was \$21,540. In 2022, the income gap grew

to \$27,840.

This gap in income is a determining factor in home affordability. In 45 of the nation's 50 states, according to NAR, Black renters face greater affordability challenges than their white counterparts. The ability to save for a home down payment is seriously diminished when rental costs are already a financial stretch.

Another problem for would-be homeowners is that due to lower incomes and lack of savings, many Black borrowers often have high debt-to-income ratios. Together, these two factors frequently lead to higher rates of mortgage application denials. In 2022, the highest mortgage denial rates occurred in three

Southern states: Mississippi (34 percent), followed by Arkansas and Louisiana (each at 31 percent).

A related and independent perspective from the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) notes yet another hurdle to homeownership: closing costs.

"While home prices and interest rates often command our attention, closing costs also contribute to borrowers' monthly burdens. One measure of closing costs is total loan costs," wrote Julie Margetta Morgan in a March CFPB blog. "Total loan costs include origination fees, appraisal and credit report fees, title insurance, discount points, and other fees increased

by 21.8 percent – nearly \$6,000 – from 2021 to 2022. From 2021 to 2022, median total loan costs rose sharply, increasing by 21.8 percent on home purchase loans."

"Often, closing costs are simply rolled into the total loan amount, racking up interest for the life of the loan," Morgan continued. "Borrowers who can't bring cash to the table often have to pay more, through higher interest rates or mortgage insurance payments."

But a new proposal by the Biden Administration has the potential to lessen the financial heft of these homebuying issues. In a March 12 speech before the Urban Institute, a DC-based progressive think-tank, Lael Brainard, the Biden Administration's Economic Adviser, shared the White House plan.

"In today's market, too many households that want to buy their first home are locked-out by high costs, while many homeowners looking to right-size their housing needs are locked-in because the rate they'd get on a new mortgage is higher than the rate on their current mortgage," said Brainard.

Central to the administration's plan are targeted

tax credits that would enable more than 3.5 million middle-class families to purchase their first home. Eligible consumers would receive up to \$10,000 in mortgage relief credit for two years – the equivalent of reducing mortgage rates by 1.5 percentage points on a median home.

"These tax credits would serve as a bridge," explained Brainard, "as rates are projected to continue to fall with inflation and as our supply investments come online."

Peggy Bailey, vice president for housing and income security with the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities reacted favorably.

"If policies created the inequities that we have, then we have to have policies to reverse them," noted Bailey. "The only way to do that is to actually talk about Black People, Latinx people, Native Americans very specifically because it's going to take very specific and targeted community investments to make those changes."

Charlene Crowell is a senior fellow with the Center for Responsible Lending. She can be reached at [Charlene.crowell@responsiblelending.org](mailto:Charlene.crowell@responsiblelending.org).

## CLUB, from Page 8

ident of the Association, Dr. Terri O'Neal Ford and Governor of the South Central District, Mrs. Ollie Gilstrap, to bring greetings to guests who filled the beautifully decorated ballroom.

The remainder of the program was dedicated to rec-

ognizing dynamic women in the community and the organization for their notable achievements. South Dallas BPWC recognized the Honorable Jasmine Crockett, U.S. Congresswoman of the 30th Texas District with the Associa-

tion's highest honor, the Sojourner Truth Award. It was presented to a representative from the Congresswoman's staff by Dr. Terri O'Neal Ford, national president of the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Incorporated.

Following the Sojourner

Truth Award, President Holyfield presented the 2024 Mabel Meshach White Businesswoman's Award to Barbara Washington, a 30-year co-owner of Paradise Funeral Home and a member of the organization. The 2024 Professional Woman Award was presented to Regina Caldwell, a 25-

year professional specializing in Human Resources, employed with the *Dallas Morning News*, and a successful entrepreneur.

To conclude the 2024 Founders' Day Awards, 102-year-old Club Member, Kathryn Mitchell received her 60-Year Service Award; Past President Mae F. Sault-

er received her 50-Year Service Award and Life Members Cecelia Arnold and Cora Ford received their 20-Year Yellow Rose Awards.

For more information on the South Dallas Business and Professional Women's Club, Inc., visit their website at: [www.southdallasbpwc.org](http://www.southdallasbpwc.org).

## ISSUES, from Page 3

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...



# Title insurance helps homeownership for Black Americans and others

By Benjamin F. Chavis Jr.  
President and CEO, NNPA

During the State of the Union, President Joe Biden spoke eloquently and passionately about one of the Biden-Harris Administration's key priorities: housing affordability. The President's proposals included ideas that would boost housing supply and make homeownership more attainable for those that are currently being priced out of the market.

While the vast majority of President Biden's new proposals would thoughtfully address some of the country's most pressing issues, one idea that flew under the radar was a proposal about title insurance, a lesser known but vital part of the homebuying and refinancing process.

It was concerning to hear about the proposal – a new pilot program that would waive title insurance requirements for certain quali-

fied homeowners – as one of the ideas being considered by the Administration to improve access to affordable housing. Given that the program – which was previously abandoned by Fannie Mae last year – only applies to higher-wealth individuals who are refinancing properties, should it be a top public policy priority now for The White House?

It is no secret that high interest rates and a low supply of affordable homes stand in the way of homeownership for low and middle-income families and people of color. According to the National Association of Realtors, the gap between Black and White homeownership is worse than it was a decade ago, with the Black homeownership rate at 44.1% compared to the White homeownership rate of 72%.

The National Association of Real Estate Brokers (NAREB) in its 2023 State of Housing in Black Amer-

ica reported that “In 2022, the Black homeownership stood at 45%, only modestly higher than the level at the passage of the 1968 Fair Housing Act. This disparity between Blacks and Whites has expanded over the past half-century.”

Additionally, data from Zillow shows that only 7.8% of Black non-homeowning families have enough income to pay a typical mortgage payment in their area without being cost burdened. This is where the focus should be – on building more homes for those who need them. We commend the Biden Administration for its work through the Housing Supply Action Plan to do just that. By increasing the supply of affordable housing of all types in our communities, we can expand access to the housing market to those in our communities that are currently shut out and ensure the dream of homeownership is truly available all to

Americans.

That is why, while well intentioned, the proposed title waiver pilot under consideration will cause unintended negative consequences in particular for African American, Latino American, and other communities of color across the nation. All communities should have access to fair housing opportunities and acquisitions.

Often misunderstood, title insurance is a product that comprehensively protects homeowners' property rights and their lenders' financial interest in a property. It is vastly different than other types of insurance because it is a one-time fee and title professionals do the majority of the work upfront to both examine title issues and rectify any problems found. That is why many homeowners thankfully don't experience the challenge of a claim that threatens their homeownership – but if they do, title insurance is paramount to

protecting their biggest investment.

Some may ask: why do I need to purchase title insurance when refinancing? When refinancing, a homeowner purchases a new loan, and title issues can arise between the old loan and the new loan. For example, if a homeowner does not pay their contractor for repairs to their roof, there could be a lien against the property. Lenders need assurance that if a homeowner defaults on their mortgage, they have first lien priority.

That is why the proposal to waive title insurance on refinancing is extremely risky. If a title issue arose, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac would essentially turn into title insurers and would have to bear the risk of making lenders whole on those loans. These are the same companies that are under conservatorship due to their role in the 2008 financial crisis which cost taxpayers more than \$200 billion and

devastated minority communities by chasing profits for themselves. I don't believe it is prudent to shift more risk to Fannie Mae or Freddie Mac, especially when the proposal at hand would not meaningfully address the nation's housing affordability challenge.

This is not a partisan issue, nor is it a new proposal. This same pilot program was withdrawn last year after members of Congress from both sides of the aisle and industry experts criticized the idea. Ed DeMarco, Acting Director of the Federal Housing Finance Agency (the agency that oversees Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac) under President Obama, stated during a Congressional hearing last May, “It certainly is disturbing to think that Fannie Mae or Freddie Mac might displace title insurance by taking on this insurance itself.”

As the Administration

**See TITLE, Page 13**

## GENETIC, from Page 4

5,380 and 6,350 steps per day, respectively, to have a comparable risk of obesity to persons in the 25th percentile.

“I think it is intuitive that individuals who have a higher genetic risk of obesity might need to have more physical activity to reduce that risk, but what is new

and important from this study is that we were able to put a number on the amount of activity needed to reduce the risk,” said lead author Evan Brittain, MD, associate professor of Medicine in the Division of Cardiovascular Medicine at VUMC and lead investigator in Digital Health for the All of

Us Research Program Data and Research Center.

“It is becoming more commonplace to know you have a genetic risk for obesity in the genomic era when genetic results are being returned directly to patients. And you can imagine a future in which that data could be integrated with someone's electronic health record and could form the

basis of an individual's physical activity recommendation from their doctor.”

Study authors said they now want to see if the findings generalize to more representative and diverse populations in order to determine if providing information for individual activity recommendations results in improved health

and a lower likelihood of obesity.

“We would like to test whether knowledge of one's genetic risk for obesity actually has an impact on their behavior,” Brittain said. “I think these findings could be empowering for patients because the current physical activity guidelines take a one-size-fits-all approach, and what we learned is that

depending on your genetic risk, the guidelines may underestimate the amount of activity needed to reduce your risk of obesity.

“Most importantly, I would like for patients to know that your genetic risk doesn't determine your overall risk of obesity, and you can actually overcome that risk by being more active,” he added.

## COMBS, from Page 2

of New York.

The specter of an investigation looms large over Combs following public scrutiny triggered by allegations from his former romantic partner, Cassie Ventura. In a lawsuit filed under the New York Adult Survivors Act, Ventura accused Combs of physical and sexual abuse spanning

years. The suit was settled on undisclosed terms the day after filing.

Subsequently, three other women have come forward with lawsuits alleging sexual assault by Combs, two of whom claim they were minors at the time of the incidents. Attorney Douglas Wigdor, representing Cassie

and Jane Doe, expressed hope that the investigation would hold Combs accountable for his alleged actions.

Combs vehemently denies all allegations of sexual assault, labeling them as “sickening.” Nevertheless, the legal storm continues, with producer Rodney “Lil Rod” Jones also filing a lawsuit in February, alleging sexual harassment,

drugging, and threats by Combs during his employment.

Despite Combs' legal team dismissing Jones' claims as falsehoods, attorney Tyrone Blackburn, representing Jones and another accuser, said he remains resolute in seeking justice. Blackburn affirmed that the federal investigation would not deter their pursuit of a resolution, and

on the day of the raids on Combs' properties, the attorney amended his lawsuit against Combs and included actor Cuba Gooding Jr. in the complaint. Jones alleges that Gooding groped him while he was aboard Combs' yacht.

Combs, who was forced to step down as chairman of Revolt media after the Ventura lawsuit and who lost a reality series with

Hulu because of the allegations, pleaded guilty in 1999 to assaulting a record executive and received anger management counseling. The same year saw him embroiled in the criminal possession of a weapon case linked to a nightclub shooting attended by him and then-girlfriend Jennifer Lopez. Diddy's protégé, the rapper Shyne, was ultimately convicted.

## TRAFFIC, from Page 1

tion.” They pointed out that the DOT has taken up the mantle by establishing its Equity Action Plan,

centered around wealth creation, power of community, proactive intervention, planning and capacity

building, expanding access, and institutionalizing equity. “While these pillars are broad in concept, nowhere does the action plan specifically reference equity

goals related to police traffic enforcement—or even enforcement more generally,” the report's authors declared.

“This glaring omission

calls into question the level of priority and intentionality being dedicated to addressing this critical issue, which affects the safety of Black drivers and oth-

er drivers of color. DOT should include more explicit equity goals related to reducing racially biased police traffic enforcement of minor violations.”



# The Minority Business Development Agency to announce historic collaboration with divine nine sororities and national women's leadership organizations

(Black PR Wire) WASHINGTON, DC – Recently, the U.S. Department of Commerce Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA) hosted the Divine Nine Sororities, The National Council of Negro Women, The Links Incorporated, The Black Women's Agenda, and The National Coalition of 100

Black Women at the White House. During this event, MBDA memorialized Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) with each organization to collaborate on advancing the growth of women business enterprises. "The Minority Business Development Agency is excited to collaborate with

these women-led organizations to break down barriers and expand opportunities for Black women," said Eric Morissette, performing the delegated duties of the Under Secretary of Commerce for Minority Business Development. "As the fastest growing demographic of entrepreneurs, women of color continue to be a

driving force for the nation's economy. The Biden-Harris Administration, the Department of Commerce, and MBDA are committed to matching their drive with the resources and opportunities they need and deserve." The event featured a roundtable discussion with each organization's leader-

ship that examined the challenges women entrepreneurs face related to access to capital, starting and scaling businesses, and access to contracts and networks. MBDA's alliance with these organizations aims to provide solutions, resources, and opportunities for economic empowerment. The Department of Com-

merce's mission is "to create the conditions for economic growth and opportunity for all communities." Through this historic collaboration with the Divine Nine sororities and other national women's leadership organizations, the MBDA continues to ensure economic prosperity for all American business enterprises.

## TITLE, from Page 12

continues to work towards improving housing affordability, first-time, low-income, and minority homebuyers should continue to be the focus. Waiving

title insurance on a few refinancing transactions will not move the needle, and it could actually increase risk for little gain. Homeownership is larg-

est driver of wealth creation for all Americans. If we truly want to close the racial wealth gap, we must not only ensure that homeownership is available to communities of color, but we must also ensure those

homes are protected for generations to come. I urge the Administration, therefore, to reconsider its focus on removing the critical protections provided by title insurance and continue to work on solutions that

will truly address the availability and affordability of homes in all communities in America, and in particular for underserved communities. Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis Jr. is President and CEO

of the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) and Executive Producer/Host of The Chavis Chronicles on PBS TV stations across the US and can be reached at dr.bchavis@nnpa.org

## MISSING, from Page 5

hanan's naked body was found inside a black plastic garbage bag on 92nd Street in Burnside. As of 2023, Pittman says she hasn't heard from detectives in five years.

cold. Tammy Pittman talks about her experience with police after filing a missing person report for her daughter Shante Bohanan. "The police failed me,"

not respond to a request for comment. Editor's Note: In this article, anonymous sources have their names and credentials checked and double-checked by reporters and editors, though their identities are not revealed to

the public. Sources may be granted anonymity if they provide unique and critical perspective or information and are at risk for personal or professional harm if their identities are revealed. This story is part of the Chicago Missing Persons

project by City Bureau and Invisible Institute, two Chicago-based nonprofit journalism organizations. Read

the full investigation and see resources for families at chicagomissingpersons.com.

Ultimately, whether it's a refused report, confusion about whether or not they can file a report, or a delay in investigation, the process leaves families in limbo as leads are lost and cases go

CPD media affairs did

## ART, from Page 7

be a 'reverent reminder' that lynchings happened on the ground that we walk on every day," Lee said in his remarks to the gathering. "Hence, the memorial evokes a sundial.

and hangings; from the time of slavery to the Jim Crow era in Dallas. Where the longest shadow of these dates falls on the memorial wall is where the names are located, as if the shadow itself cut into the steel, indelibly etching the memory of each victim forever in the heart of the city."

"Instead of marking hours of the day, it marks the date of each victim of racially-motivated violence



A commemorative coin was given to attendees at the dedication of "Shadow Lines" on Tuesday. (Photo: David Wilfong / NDG)

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# Don't knock on the door if you like breathing

Dr. James L. Snyder

I'm unsure if this is a new phenomenon or I'm just starting to catch up on the culture. I know I have a lot to catch up on, and I'm slowly doing it.

Lately, there's been a lot of activity at our front door.

That's not to diminish the activity at the back porch door. That activity has to do with a variety of critters in the neighborhood. The food dish is out there, and the critters come throughout the day at their own discretion. It is an open invitation.

Two cats live on the porch, about three cats visit us to have something to eat, two possums show up

regularly, and, last but not least, three raccoons show up nightly.

These critters come for the food I put out daily. I welcome them to the porch and to the food, unlike The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage, who makes sure they never get inside the house.

But the front door is a different situation altogether. I've noticed lately that the activity and visitors to our front door has increased and that just frustrates me to no end.

When I answer the door, there will be somebody who has something for me that I just can't turn away. If only he knew.

When anybody tells me they can do something for free and that it will lower some bills in the house, I know what they are saying is not true at all. If it was free, how in the world do they get paid?

Several of them talked about the idea of climate control. If we switch over to solar panel power, we will solve the climate control problems.

Once, when they were telling me how much money I could save, I interrupted them and said, "If you're really interested in helping me save money, how about paying my electric bill for the year. That I would be interested in."

He looked at me as though I was an idiot. I think he was seeing his reflection in my eyes.

Another group of people that come to our front door has to do with our security system. They want to come in and examine our security system, and then they have a proposition for a brand-new security system that won't cost me anything.

I may be a country boy, but I have two brain cells that are still working. I know why they want to come in and examine my security system. The purpose is to be able to understand what my security is, and then they can override that security system and rob

me.

They want to go through my house to see all of the treasures I have that they can steal for their profit. I would pay them a finder's fee if they found any money in our house. I've been looking for years and have come up empty.

If I let them in, and that'll never happen, I will only let them see my library, where I have approximately 8,500 books. If they plan to steal some of my books, they are dumber than the dead possum up the street. I have nothing worth anything that a smart-minded person would want to steal.

I was sitting in my office doing work when I heard

somebody at the front door. Before I could get up and go to the door, The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage beat me and opened the door.

"Yes," she asked, "can I help you?"

I didn't hear everything, but I listened to the guy at the door go into his spiel about the solar panel system he wanted to give her.

"I guarantee," he said to her with the biggest smile I've seen in a long time, "that it will cut your electric bill in half or even more."

At times like this, I wish we had a security camera to record this activity at the

See SNYDER, Page 16

## MAGIC, from Page 9

What Perry left behind is an image of clownish submissiveness that is as rueful today as it was yesterday. It's a self-defeating persona that's been banished from public display for a long time, until this ill-conceived production.

The script's poorly thought-out premise and stretched-thin-plotline centers on Aren (Justice Smith), a visual artist and yarn sculptor, whose exhibition in a white woman's gallery is not going well. Some potential white customers think he is a busboy and not an artist. Aren plays into the patronizing and dehumanizing view of himself—ad nauseum. Roger (David Allen Grier) observes the young man's backpedaling, side-stepping, shuffling and cowardly behavior. "Watching you walk through a room full of white people was the most painful thing I've ever seen." For Roger, Aren is a prime candidate for joining his secret society of Black folks who love tending to white people's needs.

If this setup repulses you, that is largely the point. Aren feels like he has been beholden to whites and their whims for so long it's become ingrained. When

he discovers that behavior has been codified—by Black people like him—he is appalled. Then intrigued. Then slowly fights his way out of a hell of his own making. Note that the film adds touches of "magical" time and place travel, but that special effect is about as enthralling as card tricks at a three-year-old's birthday party.

The director has a background in short filmmaking, but decided this parable should be a 1h 44m film (editor Brian Scott Olds). Clearly the writing and direction are out of the long-movie league. Nothing in this storyline, with its shallow characters and weak plot devices, cries out "Make me a feature film." As a protagonist Aren is not relatable. In fact, he's whiny and annoying. Not irritating enough to be funny. More annoying like a Black Woody Allen. Someone who has no friends because people find him abhorrent.

As Wren wrestles with his identity, or lack thereof, none of his trials and tribulations resonate. He's working for the tech startup MeetBox, run by Mick (Rupert Friend), a generic startup leader. His competi-

tion for attention at the office is Jason (Drew Taylor). His competition for Lizzie (An-Li Bogan), a young woman he fancies who works at the same company, is also Jason. Even with his work colleague as a rival, the real antagonist is in Aren's head. It's him. It's hard for audiences to hate an enemy they can't see. That's why they'll sit on their empathy and compassion and not give any to the lead character.

Before filmmakers make a movie, they need to consider who their audience will be. Or if there is an audience for their work. Or if their film has a lane—or can create a new one. Any Black person with an ounce of self-respect will be uncomfortable with the film's title, repulsed by the subject matter and annoyed that images of African Americans with no self-esteem are still being laid on the general public, like it's a thing. If building a backbone is an issue for anyone of African heritage, their time is better spent with a psychologist, a Black Studies professor or listening to hip-hop or rap music. Those artists, and their generation, aren't lacking self-confidence or awed by Caucasians. Those are better "teaching" options than this drivel.

As indie films go, these actors don't stand out from the fray. Friend and Taylor fall in that category. Grier as the guide, Aisha Hinds (TV's *Underground*) as the teacher and Nicole Byer as the leader of TASSOMN waste their talent too. But Bogan shows a gift for modern, rom/com and gives one of the few performances that doesn't seem forced. Her moments

with Smith lift him up. His moments without her are in a dead zone. And if their comic, interracial, multi-cultural romance is the film's only strong suit, what's the point?

Reviving old stereotypes, pinning Black people to inferiority complexes and making all whites insensitive devils seems passé. And certainly, in this case there isn't a suitable payoff

for being assaulted by microaggressions and degradation for over 90 minutes. That's the price anyone will pay for watching feeble, bombastic satire—which isn't funny.

Even if this misguided film was a twenty-minute short, it would still be twenty-minutes too long.

Visit Film Critic Dwight Brown at [DwightBrownInk.com](http://DwightBrownInk.com).

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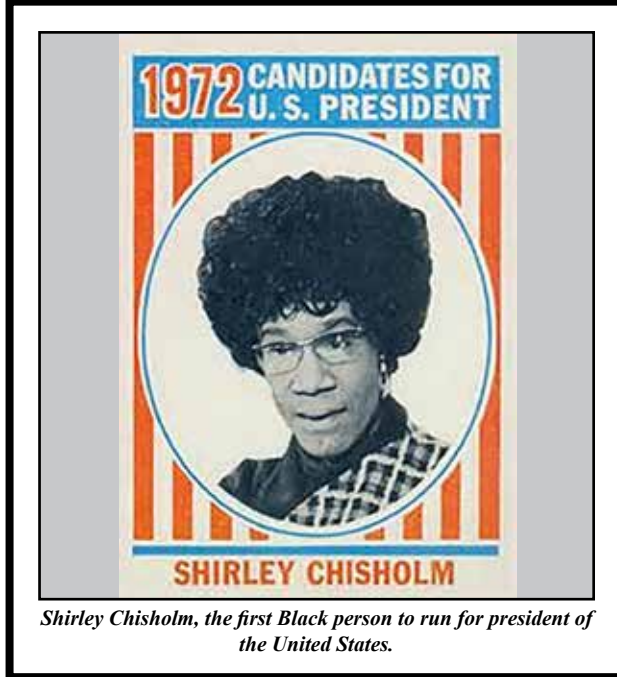
**Sister Tarpley**  
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Editor

**Shirley Chisholm (2014)** - Chisholm was the first Black woman to be elected to Congress in 1968 and served seven terms. She was also the first Black (man or woman) to run for the United States presidency.

Throughout her career, Chisholm championed causes like civil rights, advocating for early childhood education and women's rights.

**Harriet Tubman (1978, 1995)** - If anyone deserves a stamp it's Harriet Tubman. The woman literally risked her life time and time again for not only the freedom of herself but the freedom of others.

She deserves high praise and not tacky, comedy videos that make light of her legacy. The Postal service recognized this and in 1978, she was the first Black woman to appear on a postage stamp; and again



*Shirley Chisholm, the first Black person to run for president of the United States.*

in 1995.

**Mary McLeod Bethune (1985)** - Born to parents who had been slaves, McLeod Bethune was known as an educator and Civil Rights leader.

She started a school for Black girls in Daytona Beach, Florida which eventually became Bethune-Cookman University. She used the school as a way to show the capabilities of educated Black people and it often rivaled or bested the achievements and stan-

dards of white schools.

**Sojourner Truth (1986)** - Black abolitionist and women's rights activist, Sojourner Truth was born into slavery but escaped with her infant daughter to freedom in 1826.

She went to court to retrieve her son and became the first Black woman to win this type of case against a white man. She is best known for her impromptu speech, "Ain't I A Woman?" delivered in 1851 at the Ohio Women's

Rights Convention.

**Ida B Wells (1990)** - Born a slave in 1862, Ida B Wells would go on to become a journalist and newspaper editor by trade. Wells spent her life as a leader in the civil rights movement.

She was best known for documenting the lynchings that were taking place across America.

**Ethel Waters (1994)** - Waters was best known for her career in jazz, big band, gospel and pop music. She also participated in Broadway stage plays and other concerts. Her most popular songs include "Stormy Weather," "Am I Blue?" and her rendition of "His Eye Is on the Sparrow." In 1962, Waters became the first Black person to be nominated for an Emmy.

**Bessie Coleman (1995)** - As the picture may reveal, Coleman was an aviator. But before then she was a manicurist listening to the stories of pilots come from the war.

But when Coleman went to flight school no one would admit her because of her race and gender. Even Black pilots wouldn't train her.

She had to leave the country in order to learn to fly. Her hard work and perseverance made her the first female, Black pilot. From there she became the first American to hold an International pilot's license.

**Madam C.J. Walker (1998)** - Even though Madame C.J. is credited as developing products and technologies to straighten the hair, Madam C.J. Walk-

er (Sarah Breedlove) was adamant that her main goal was to grow hair.

She went from selling her wares door to door to opening her own manufacturing company in Indianapolis. But, while becoming a millionaire, she also made sure to give back and empower both men and women in the Black community.

**Zora Neale Hurston (2003)** - After living the end of her life poor and in obscurity, the United States Postal Service decided to place the Harlem Renaissance author and anthropologist on a stamp.

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# NDG Book Review: 'Pride and Joy' is endearing and funny

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

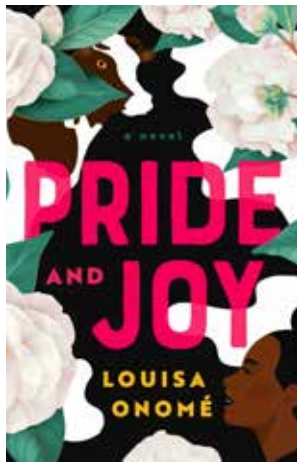
You never have just one. That's how it goes when something bad happens: another undesirable event usually follows it, then another, layer by layer until you think you can't handle it anymore. You offer up a prayer, please stop, and eventually, you find your way. You catch a breath. As in the new book "Pride and Joy" by Louisa Onomé, you live to rise again.

Mama Mary Okafor said she didn't want a fuss on her birthday. It was Good Friday, God's day, and she wasn't competing with Him. Then her daughter, Joy, convinced her that people would also be going to church to celebrate her day, too, and that changed everything.

Mama wanted a party and, good daughter that she was, Joy rented a six-bedroom Toronto mansion for it. She hired caterers, a DJ, florists, there'd be a tent by a swimming pool and cousins and Aunties and Uncles were coming.

The thought that one little thing might go wrong made Joy feel sick.

She was a therapist, for heaven's sake. She should know how to deal with anxiety brought on by being the imperfect daughter



of a Nigerian mother. She should know how to deal with people who'd be asking where her husband – her ex-husband – was.

It would be fine, until it wasn't: Mama went to lie down for a nap and she never woke up. Hours before the party, with caterers on their way and family arriving late, Joy's mother was dead and her brother hadn't yet arrived. Then Joy's Auntie Nancy announced that she'd seen a brown cow on the way to be with Mama at the hospital, and a cow portended a miracle: by midnight the next night, Mary Okafor would wake up and resume her life.

As news spread among Toronto's Nigerian community and the house filled with strangers and family that Joy didn't want to deal with, she wished her twin

sister was still alive. Heaven help her, she wanted her ex-husband to come. She dreaded seeing her brother.

Most of all, Joy simply wanted her Mama...

First things first: are you going to cry?

Maybe, but "Pride and Joy" isn't really a tear-jerker. Much of what you'll read here is hilariously chaotic, as author Louisa Onomé pulls a great big family together in a large house that somehow gets smaller by the page. This constriction leaves readers with a tight story, despite many layers of irritation, total disorder, culture clashes, intergenerational exasperation, and love – heavy on that latter. Even better, we appreciate the slammed doors, eye-rolling, and kissed teeth because Onomé makes the family in this novel complicated but entirely relatable.

You don't have to have a sprawling family to understand that, but you might wish you did after you enjoy this book. Bring tissues, to be sure, because you might need them. Bring a dictionary, too, because Igbo and Italian both feature in here (but only a little). Overall, if you're looking for a sweet, funny book to read, "Pride and Joy" is the one.

## ← SNYDER, from Page 14

front door.

The guy hardly finished his spiel before The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage jumped in.

"Do you have a permit for this?" She said with a great deal of authority in her voice. "You're not allowed to come in our neighborhood and knock on our doors without a permit. Let me see your permit."

He stammered and said, "No, ma'am. I don't need a permit to do this."

Looking at him as he had not been looked at for a long time, she said, "If I

say you need a permit to do this, you better believe you need a permit to do this. Now show me your permit or I'm gonna call the cops."

Can life get any better than this? If only I had the sense to turn a tape recorder on, I could at least get the audio of this interaction.

She talked to him very briefly, and as I looked at his face, I could see the blood draining out of his face; he didn't say a word but turned and walked away as fast as he possibly could.

As he walked away,

The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage said, "And don't you dare come back here ever again if you love breathing."

I couldn't help but think of Psalm 118, "It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man."

Man will fail me, but God will never fail me. I'm going to put my trust in God, not man.

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