



North Dallas Gazette

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Chicago becomes a fortress as Democratic National Convention begins amid heightened security

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Senior National Correspondent

CHICAGO – Chicago has transformed into one of the most fortified locations in the world this summer as the Windy City plays host to the Democratic National Convention (DNC). With the influx of thousands of delegates, media personnel, and political dignitaries, the city has seen unprecedented security measures involving the Secret Service and state and local police, turning downtown Chicago into a near-impenetrable fortress.

Security preparations have been visible across the city, particularly in the downtown area. To stop any attempts to vandalize the courthouse, towering security gates with concrete pillars appeared overnight at the Dirksen Federal Building in the Loop. Similarly, residents and visitors along the Magnificent Mile and Gold Coast were met with unexpected road closures and additional security barriers, even miles away from the primary DNC venues. Roads near Chicago Avenue have been blocked, with police



Security is normally tight around national political conventions, but this year there are more potential disruptions than normal, causing organizers and law enforcement to prepare for any contingency. (Photo via NNPA)

officers stationed on standby and large security gates restricting sidewalk access.

In the South Loop, manhole covers have been sealed with tamper-evident markers, a precautionary measure to detect any unauthorized access. The DNC Public Safety Joint Information Center, which includes local and federal law enforcement agencies, has warned of additional road closures throughout the convention. Some closures will last the entire duration of the

DNC, while others will be more temporary.

The security measures extend to the city's hotels, where 15,000 media members, thousands of delegates, and volunteers are staying. These hotels have become largely inaccessible by vehicle due to barriers that include city trucks and steel walls, forcing guests to walk several blocks with their luggage. In response to security concerns,

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Remembering the Springfield Riot of 1908

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Gun permits may be more effective

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People In The News ...



Michelle Obama



Magda A. Hernandez

NDG Quote of the Week: "Surround yourself with people who take their work seriously, but not themselves, those who work hard and play hard."
- Colin Powell

Michelle Obama

On the second day of the Democratic National Convention, the Obamas took center stage and delivered electrifying speeches that reverberated through the United Center in Chicago. The convention, already energized by a capacity crowd in Milwaukee where Vice President Kamala Harris spoke during a rally, reached new heights as the former First Lady and former President rallied Democrats with their powerful words.

Harris, who spoke to a packed arena in Milwaukee, had her speech live streamed



Image via NNPA

into the United Center, effectively connecting the two cities in a show of Democratic unity and strength. Her presence set the tone for the evening, with her words filling both venues.

Michelle Obama took the stage before her husband in Chicago, immediately captivating the audience. “Something wonderfully magical is in the air, isn’t it? I’m talking about the contagious power of hope,” she declared as the United Center enthusiastically rocked. “America, hope is making a comeback. Kamala Harris is one of the most qualified people to ever seek the office of president. And she is dignified.”

Obama didn’t shy away from addressing the twice-impeached and 34-times convicted felon and former

President Donald Trump directly. “For years, Donald Trump did everything in his power to try to make people fear us,” she remarked. “His limited, narrow view of the world made him feel threatened by the existence of two hardworking and highly educated, successful people who happen to be Black. Who wants to tell him that job he’s seeking just might be one of those Black jobs?” she asked, eliciting raucous applause from the crowd.

She continued to dismantle Trump’s rhetoric, particularly his attempts to question the blackness of Harris and other Democrats. “No

one has a monopoly on what it means to be an American, no one,” Obama declared, her words striking a chord with the audience.

Barack Obama then took the stage and immediately lifted the energy in the arena to a fever pitch. “I don’t know about you, but I’m feeling fired up,” he began, his voice booming across the United Center. “Even if I’m the only person stupid enough to speak right after Michelle Obama.”

Obama then turned his focus to Harris, praising her as a leader who embodies the best of what America stands for. “This country

has a chance to elect someone who’s spent her whole life trying to give people the same chances America gave her,” Obama said. “Someone who sees you and hears you and will get up every single day and fight for you: the next president of the United States of America, Kamala Harris.”

He also drew a sharp contrast between Harris’s vision for the country and the policies of Trump and his allies. “For them, one group’s gain is another group’s loss. For them, freedom means that the powerful can do what

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Magda A. Hernandez

Congratulations to Irving ISD Superintendent of Schools Magda A. Hernández for being named the first recipient of the Power of Inspiration Award. The honor was bestowed on Superintendent Hernández at the 5th Annual Leadership Summit for Women District Leaders, held earlier this month.



Superintendent Hernández was invited to showcase the vision of the Magda A. Hernández Institute of Wellness and Professional Learning at the leadership summit through her presentation, From Inspiration to Action: Building a Well-

ness Culture. A ribbon cutting ceremony was held for the one-of-a-kind facility on July 24. Learn more about the new facility here.

At the event, Board Vice President A.D. Jenkins presented Superintendent Hernández with the award.

“We know our Superintendent is a trendsetter, a big dreamer,” he says. “Out of everyone in attendance at the conference, our very own Superintendent was given this award.”

When the inaugural Leadership Summit for Women District Leaders launched in 2019, it was a visionary creation sculpted from in-depth research and intimate dialogues with district administrators from all over the United States. Organizers found that women district leaders benefitted from the wisdom of conference panelists and one-on-one conversations at industry gatherings. A compelling narrative emerged — a tale

of women encountering unique trials on their ascent to district leadership and their struggles to balance work and life.

In recent years, concepts like mindful leadership and emotional intelligence have mounted a resurgence in our educational and national vernacular. Yet, as the pandemic unfolded,

wellness charged onto the national stage with unparalleled force. In this time of change, Big Deal Media, the organizers of the leadership summit, was a pioneer, recognizing the profound impact of well-being on effective leadership. They not only recognized its importance but offered a platform for leaders to explore it.

The 2024 summit continued to champion the dynamic interplay between well-being and effective leadership, recognizing Superintendent Hernández and the Magda A. Hernández Institute of Wellness and Professional Learning as an award-winning example of building a culture of wellness in action.

Kathryn Wang

(EINPresswire.com) -- Hi Power Cycles (HPC), an industry leader in electric bikes, and manufacturer of the world’s fastest factory made e-bike, is bolstering its Defense division (www.hpcdefense.com) expertise with a new strategic hire.



Kathryn Wang will be leading HPC Defense partners and customers through robust go-to-market partnerships and business development efforts.

The introduction of four additional models are a result of the feedback from current HPC Defense customers in law enforcement, municipalities, federal agencies, military and defense entities, and fire

and first responders that are seeking cost-effective, lightweight, superior quality, dependable, high load capacity all terrain tactical e-bikes, and an extremely energy efficient mode of transportation that achieves long-term mission needs and requirements.

Wang is a seasoned ex-

ecutive leader with over two decades of experience serving in key business development and partnership roles for a Goldman Sachs portfolio company and for Google. Kathryn excels at go-to-market strategies, working with partners and prospective and existing customers, determining their requirements and challenges, implementing solutions that elevate results, performance, and builds long-term customer loyalty. Wang is positioned to make a significant impact on HPC Defense’s mission and provide customers with an incredible next-level breakthrough e-bikes / light tactical vehicles, accessories, and service.



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Cyber risk can't be eliminated, but can be managed (in 7 Steps)

By Lawrence A. Gordon

Newswise — Cyber risk is the uncertainty associated with potentially harmful events to an organization's information systems. This risk is a critical concern to corporate executives, government agencies and politicians in today's digital world of interconnected information systems.

Indeed, studies indicate that cyber risk is the, or one of, the top risk factors confronting contemporary organizations. The recent CrowdStrike software glitch is a good example of how cyber risk can impact the world's interconnected information systems.

The above notwithstanding, it is well known that 100% cybersecurity is neither technically possible nor economically desirable. Since cyber risk can't be eliminated, the question that must be answered is: Can cyber risk at least be managed in a cost-effective manner? The answer is an emphatic yes! Managing an organization's cyber risk is best thought of as a process that involves the following set of iterative steps.

Step 1: Identify the sources of cyber risk. These sources can be broken down into various categories. More specifically, there are internal and external threats, as well as potential vulnerabilities that are the basis for cyber risk. Identifying these threats and vulnerabilities is not only a logical place to start the process of managing an organization's cyber risk, it also will help to frame an approach for addressing an organization's cyber risk.

Step 2: Estimate the likelihood (i.e., probability) that your organization will experience a cyber breach. Of course, any single point estimate of the probability of a cyber breach is just

that—an estimate of one possibility from a probability distribution. Thus, rather than estimating a single probability, a range of probabilities could be considered.

Step 3: Estimate the maximum cost to an organization if a cyber breach occurs. Here again, a point estimate of the maximum cost resulting from a cyber-attack is just that—an estimate of one possible cost. Thus, rather than estimating a single cost, a range of costs could be considered.

Step 4: Compute the expected loss to the organization if a cyber breach occurs. This step involves multiplying the probability of a cyber breach (derived from Step 2) by the estimate of the maximum cost to the organization resulting from a cyber breach (derived from Step 3). Where a range of probabilities of potential cyber breaches is considered, and a range of potential costs associated with a cyber incident are estimated, a simulation around these numbers could be conducted to derive a more accurate estimate of the expected loss.

Step 5: Ask the following question. How much should our organization invest in additional cybersecurity-related activities to reduce the probability (or range of probabilities) of a cyber breach within our organization? This step entails comparing the additional benefits derived from reducing the expected loss from a cyber incident to the additional costs incurred due to an increased investment in cybersecurity. In other words, a cost-benefit analysis of the appropriate amount to invest in cybersecurity-related activities needs to be conducted.

This step results in reducing an organization's cyber risk at a cost. Alternatively,

organizations can transfer some of their cyber risk at a cost (e.g., via cybersecurity insurance). Either way, the appropriate amount to spend on reducing and/or transferring cyber risk needs to be viewed from a cost-benefit perspective. A cost-benefit framework for accomplishing steps two through five is provided by the Gordon-Loeb (GL) Model for cybersecurity investments. Grounded in mathematics, but easy to apply, the GL Model provides a rational economic framework for deriving the optimal amount an organization should invest in cybersecurity. The model also lends itself to deriving the optimal amount to spend on transferring cyber risk.

Step 6: Have a recovery plan in place prior to experiencing a cyber incident. Since 100% cybersecurity is neither technically possible nor economically desirable, organizations need to be prepared to respond to a cyber breach before experiencing such a breach. Two key ingredients to a successful recovery plan are flexibility and speed of response time.

Step 7: Conduct a review of how well your organization's process of managing cyber risk is working. If your organization experienced a cyber incident, it is important to fully understand how the cyber incident occurred, the damage caused, and the pros and cons of the response to the incident. Whether a cyber incident occurred or not, it is important to assess alternative ways the organization could improve its process of managing cyber risk. Most importantly, the review needs to be used as a learning tool for the next cycle of managing cyber risk.

The above steps are best thought of as a feed-

back process whereby past events are used to inform future estimates of the probability of potential cyber-attacks, the costs of such attacks, and the appropriate level of investment in cybersecurity. Senior management and boards of directors (where appropriate) need to be integral to this feedback process, especially from an oversight perspective. Furthermore, those responsible for implementing the process need to know that such oversight is clearly taking place.

In sum, there is no way to achieve 100% cybersecurity in an interconnected digital environment, and that means cyber risk can never be fully eliminated. Even if 100% cybersecurity were achievable, from a cost-benefit perspective it would rarely, if ever, be justified. This will be true even 100 years from now, regardless of the advances in such technologies as AI. However, not being able to eliminate cyber risk doesn't mean an organization can't manage its cyber risk in a cost-effective manner.

Although not a panacea, the process of managing cyber risk discussed above, combined with effective oversight of the entire process, provides a cost-benefit framework for managing cyber risk. Of course, the specifics associated with each step in the process will vary depending on a variety of organizational-specific factors.

Lawrence A. Gordon is the EY Alumni Professor of Managerial Accounting and Information Assurance at the University of Maryland (College Park) and co-author of the Gordon-Loeb Model for cybersecurity investments, which provides an economic framework for deriving the optimal amount to invest in cybersecurity.

Keep up with the news

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Jessie Trice Community Health Systems recognizes National Breastfeeding Awareness Month

(Black PR Wire) Miami, FL – August is National Breastfeeding Awareness Month!

This observance aims to advocate, protect and promote breastfeeding. Jessie Trice Community Health Systems (JTCHS) joins the hundreds of organizations across the country raising awareness about the importance and benefits of breastfeeding and supporting mothers in their breast-



feeding journeys.

This year's theme is "Nourish, Sustain, Thrive."

Breastfeeding is the best source of nutrition for most babies and can also help protect babies and mothers against some short- and long-term illnesses and diseases.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), breastfeeding is recommended for at least the first six months of a baby's life to ensure optimal health and development.

"Breastfeeding is a natural and beautiful experience, but it can also be challenging," said Dr. Joycelyn Lawrence, Chief Medical Officer of JTCHS.

"By raising awareness, we can create an environment that facilitates open discussions, collaborative learning, and access to resources for breastfeeding mothers."

JTCHS remains committed to improving commu-

nity access and continuity of care for breastfeeding mothers through various resources, including training, coaching, and support services.

These valuable resources can be accessed by visiting @JTBreastfeeding Linktree.

JTCHS knows and specializes in comprehensive health, offering a myriad of services to improve the health of the community.

This includes: dentistry, family medicine, nutrition, HIV/AIDS, behavioral health, transportation, pharmacy, healthy start, obstetric & gynecological care, school-based health, community health promotions, health & wellness center, pediatrics, and ancillary services.

For more information on the Jessie Trice Community Health System, call 305-637-6400 or visit jtchs.org.

Illicit Fentanyl use linked to increased risk of Hepatitis C among people who use drugs

(Newswise) — An international team of researchers from University of California San Diego and el Colegio de la Frontera Norte in Mexico have revealed a significant association between the use of illicit fentanyl and the transmission of hepatitis C virus (HCV) among people who inject drugs in San Diego, California and Tijuana, Mexico. The findings, published in *Clinical Infectious Diseases*, suggest that illicit fentanyl use could be driving recent increases in

HCV incidence.

"Our study provides the first evidence that illicit fentanyl use is linked to an increased risk of acquiring hepatitis C infection, which disproportionately affects people who inject drugs," said Steffanie Strathdee, Ph.D., senior author and professor of medicine at UC San Diego School of Medicine. "This underscores the importance of making point-of-care HCV viral load testing more widely available in the U.S., so those needing

treatment can access it immediately."

HCV is one of several types of hepatitis, inflammation of the liver most often caused by a viral infection. HCV is most often transmitted through blood, which means that people who inject drugs are at particularly high risk of acquiring the disease.

Once acquired, the virus is easy to transmit unknowingly, because symptoms of HCV often don't emerge until months or years after the initial infection. Ac-

ording to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), about half of people with HCV do not know they have it.

HCV prevalence is also on the rise in recent years; according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the number of reported cases of acute hepatitis C has doubled since 2014 and, during 2021, increased by 5 percent from 2020.

The new study, which followed a cohort of 398 people who inject drugs

over two years, found that illicit fentanyl use was associated with a 64 percent increased risk of acquiring HCV.

"The broad shift from heroin to illicit fentanyl may be playing an important role in sharply rising HCV incidence among young people in recent years," said Joseph Friedman, M.D., Ph.D., a resident physician in the Department of Psychiatry at UC San Diego School of Medicine and the study's first author. "HCV elimina-

tion has been prioritized as a goal of the White House, and these findings suggest that accomplishing that goal may require taking a closer look at the role of fentanyl and other synthetic drugs in driving infectious disease risks."

The researchers suggest that fentanyl's short half-life – the time it takes for half the dosage of a drug to metabolize – may lead to more frequent dosing and sharing of syringes

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Wildfires in the U.S. and Canada remind us that health impacts defy borders

(Newswise) — NEW YORK, NY (Aug. 14, 2024) –Wildfire season is upon us and again communities in some parts of the U.S. and Canada are battling devastating fires that threaten the health of everyone, especially individuals with lung disease.

According to the National Interagency Fire Center, as of this morning, 75 large wildfires are being managed nationwide.

While people who live in areas prone to wildfires must be especially vigilant, last summer's haze and smoke in places like NYC showed us that the



ATS via Newswise

risk from wildfire smoke is not limited to those within a state or country's borders.

In 2023, the ATS and the Marron Institute of Urban Management at New

York University the Health of the Air Report, which provided the first-ever local and national estimates of the health impacts specifically attributable to air pollution from wildland

fires. Funding from NASA, through the Health and Air Quality Applied Science Team (HAQAST), allowed for the inclusion of this critical source of pollution into the health analysis.

The health impacts from wildland fires are not only a problem in the western and southern parts of the United States, where most of the wildland fires impacts are expected, but impact people living across the country.

"Although the megafires are more newsworthy, air quality and health burdens from wildland fires are also driven by the cumulative

impacts from the many smaller fires that are burning on any given day across North America," said Daniel Tong, PhD, associate professor at George Mason University and a member of NASA HAQAST.

The American Thoracic Society has long advocated for revisions to national air quality standards to address air pollution.

Without more health protective standards such as those recommended by the ATS, we will continue to see increased illness and mortality.

However, wildfires are considered exceptional

events and therefore air pollution resulting from wildfires is not regulated by the Clean Air Act.

"Evidence suggests that air pollution from wildfires has reduced, and in some states particularly in the western United States, reversed many of the air quality improvements achieved by the Clean Air Act," said Alison Lee, MD, chair, ATS Environmental Health Policy Committee.

"The changing climate means that wildfires will continue to be more frequent and more intense, increasing risk for morbidity and mortality."

Springfield 1908 Race Riot National Monument designated to commemorate civil rights history

By Stacy M. Brown
 NNPA Senior National
 Correspondent

On the 116th anniversary of the Springfield Race Riot, President Joe Biden signed a proclamation establishing the Springfield 1908 Race Riot National Monument in Springfield, Illinois. The new monument will preserve 1.57 acres of federal land and highlight a significant but painful moment in American history, when a white mob attacked the Black community in Springfield, leading to the lynching of two Black men and widespread destruction of homes and businesses.

“Our history is not just about the past; it’s about our present and our future,” Biden said during the announcement. “The Springfield 1908 Race Riot National Monument will help us remember an unspeakable attack on the Black community and honor the Americans who came together in its aftermath to help deliver on the promise of civil rights.”

The Springfield 1908 Race Riot was a violent response by a white mob to



Image via NNPA

the allegations against two Black men, Joe James and George Richardson, held in the Sangamon County Jail. The mob’s demands for their release escalated into widespread violence after the men were moved to another location for their safety. Throughout the weekend of August 14–16, 1908, two Black men, Scott Burton and William Donnegan, were lynched, and dozens of Black-owned and Jewish-owned businesses were looted and destroyed.

The riot, which occurred just blocks away from President Abraham Lincoln’s

home, shocked the nation and led to the founding of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Civil rights leaders such as Ida B. Wells-Barnett, W.E.B. Du Bois, and Mary Church Terrell played pivotal roles in establishing the NAACP, an organization that has been instrumental in the fight for civil rights in the United States.

NAACP President and CEO Derrick Johnson attended the event at the White House on Friday, August 16, where President Biden signed the procla-

mation. The President also hosted guests in the Oval Office, including the National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA), the trade association of the Black Press of America.

The designation marks Biden’s eleventh use of the Antiquities Act, following the establishment of the Emmett Till and Mamie Till-Mobley National Monument in 2023, created on the 82nd anniversary of Emmett Till’s birth. The White House announced that the National Park Service (NPS) will manage the Springfield 1908 Race Riot

National Monument and include the charred foundations of five homes never rebuilt after the riot.

“Establishing the Springfield 1908 Race Riot National Monument is an important step in recognizing and remembering this painful but important moment in America’s history,” said Interior Secretary Deb Haaland. “The Springfield 1908 Race Riot was a horrific and significant part of our nation’s march toward equality and civil rights. As we work to tell America’s story—even when difficult—may this monument help us learn from the past in order to build a more just and equitable future.”

NPS Director Chuck Sams also applauded the new monument. “This national monument will provide current and future generations an opportunity to reflect on the tragic events but also to be inspired by the resilience of the Black community and national leaders that went on to fight for social change and civil rights in America,” Sams insisted.

The Springfield 1908 Race Riot National Monu-

ment joins an extensive network of sites dedicated to commemorating civil rights history across the United States, including the Birmingham Civil Rights National Monument and the Brown v. Board National Historic Park. The NPS plans to collaborate with local communities to prepare for interpretation, commemoration, and visitor experiences at the new site, which will eventually be part of the NPS’s African American Civil Rights Network.

White House officials said the new monument underscores the Biden-Harris Administration’s commitment to advancing civil rights and racial justice. Officials said it also builds on previous actions such as signing the Emmett Till Antilynching Act, establishing the Emmett Till and Mamie Till-Mobley National Monument, and making Juneteenth a federal holiday.

With the president’s actions, the Springfield 1908 Race Riot National Monument became part of the National Park System, which now includes 431 national park sites.

Leading Democratic women excoriate Trump during fiery DNC speeches

By Stacy M. Brown
 NNPA Senior National
 Correspondent

CHICAGO — At the Democratic National Convention, a cadre of leading Democratic women took the stage, unleashing a barrage of critiques against Donald Trump and J.D. Vance, framed by the Republicans’ notorious record on women’s issues. The stark differences in vision and values of the twice-impeached and 34-times convicted former president, his vice presidential nominee, and Vice President Kamala Harris and her surrogates



Atlanta Voice photo via NNPA

were on full display in Chicago.

Former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton opened with a searing take on Trump’s legal woes. “Donald Trump fell asleep at his own trial,”

Clinton recounted to an amused crowd. “When he woke up, he’d made his own kind of history — the first person to run for presi-

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Student health, attendance on radar for Dallas ISD in new school year

As part of Immunization Awareness Month, Dallas ISD is dedicated to safeguarding our students and community. Every Wednesday, beginning Aug. 21, a Parkland Health bus will be stationed at the Linus D. Wright Dallas ISD Administration Building from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. to provide free immunizations for students. New students must submit proof of immuniza-

tions to meet state guidelines. For more details or resources, parents should contact their student's school nurse.

More schools will receive book vending machines

Dallas ISD is expanding its book vending machine initiative for the 2024-2025 school year. This program boosts student literacy and fosters a love of reading. Students earn tokens for

achievements in academics or good behavior to use in the vending machines. What began in 2022 with three campuses now includes nearly 60 across the district, with 27 new machines expected in schools by the end of September.

Dallas ISD begins the year with a focus on attendance

The district's Graduation, Recovery, Attendance/

Advocacy, and Dropout Intervention Department is launching an attendance challenge to start the new school year. Students with perfect attendance through Aug. 30 will be automatically entered, with one winner selected per Trustee district. Prizes will include gift cards to Main Event and tickets to the Celebration Station Amusement Park.



Irving ISD releases statement on pending state accountability results

Irving ISD is committed to transparency and continuous improvement when it comes to the educational outcomes of our students. While the Texas Education Agency is currently prevented from releasing official A-F accountability ratings due to ongoing litigation, we believe it is important to share our insights on student performance with our community.

Since the 2021-2022 school year, which was simultaneously impacted by the learning losses experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic, the redesign of STAAR and how an A-F rating is calculated, our district has been working diligently to adapt and improve. The STAAR test

was redesigned and implemented during the 2022-2023 school year, making it impossible to directly compare performance ratings from previous years. While we will not be releasing our predicted letter grades for our campuses as these are still in dispute, we will share that during this period of 2022-2023 and 2023-2024, our District has consistently been predicted to receive a C rating from the state under the redesigned A-F during each of those years.

As for individual campuses, our predicted ratings show a slight upward trend compared to predictions over the last two years. These incremental improvements are encouraging signs of our ongoing

efforts to enhance educational outcomes. Regardless of these predictions, what truly matters is the high-quality learning taking place in our classrooms every day.

We are proud to see that Irving ISD students are making measurable progress across all three key domains - Student Achievement, School Progress and Closing the Gaps - in both our elementary and secondary campuses. Our elementary schools are leading the way, particularly in increasing the number of students performing at grade level (achieving "Meets" or "Masters" proficiency levels in Math and Reading). Meanwhile, our secondary schools have demonstrated similar

growth in the School Progress and Closing the Gaps domains. Our high schools are predicted to far exceed the district goal of 65% by increasing the percentage of high school graduates meeting College, Career and Military Readiness (CCMR) standards. Our teachers, campus leaders and staff have dedicated themselves tirelessly to ensuring the success of our students, and we are proud of the impact they make on students every day.

"These successes are a testament of the commitment to excellence of our students, teachers and staff. I am proud to see the results of higher quality of instruction, additional support for our students and staff, and a high-achievement culture

in action," says Irving ISD Superintendent of Schools Magda A. Hernández.

In Irving ISD, we empower today to excel tomorrow by creating an ambitious teaching and learning environment for every student. We are dedicated to fostering an environment where every student can thrive and reach their full potential. Our recent Climate Survey results reinforce this commitment, with an overwhelming majority of students and parents recognizing the high expectations set by our teachers.

Our goal is not just to prepare students for tests but to equip them with the skills, knowledge and confidence they need to excel in all aspects of life. Wheth-

er it's mastering academic subjects, developing artistic talents, building strong relationships or contributing to their community, we are committed to helping each student in Irving ISD reach their unique potential and achieve success.

As we move forward, we remain dedicated to continuous improvement, always seeking new ways to enhance our educational programs and support systems. We are grateful for the ongoing support of our community as we work together to empower today's students to excel tomorrow.

For more information on how our district defines what "Success Is" and looking beyond test scores, please visit our website at IrvingISD.net/SuccessIs.

Dallas College and Tarrant County College ink historic pact to fill region's high-demand careers

The two largest community colleges in North Texas cemented an agreement Wednesday to address the region's record-breaking job creation and boost economic vitality.

Dallas College and Tarrant County College (TCC) will consider economic development centers for emerging technologies and a consortium to fill health care vacancies. Think biotechnology, cybersecurity

and semiconductor hubs as well as shared opportunities to meet the clinical training needs of medical professionals regionwide.

"There is no question that when community colleges work together, our students and workforce win big," said Dr. Justin Lonon, Dallas College chancellor. "By strengthening our partnership with TCC, we are creating new opportunities for our students to gain the rel-

evant skills and credentials to succeed now and in the future."

"We're proud to fortify our long-standing collaboration with Dallas College," said TCC Chancellor Elva LeBlanc. "Together, we're creating a powerful support system with far more capacity than would be possible for any single organization."

On average, the colleges serve a combined 115,000

credit students each semester and offer 500-plus degrees and certificates.

As part of the pact, the colleges will consider reciprocal tuition for degree and certificate programs available at only one location, and they will explore joint collaborations with Texas A&M University System institutions. Seamless pathways will enable TCC students to transfer to Dallas College for a bachelor's

degree in early childhood education.

"One vision, two communities, countless possibilities," said Teresa Ayala, president of TCC's board of trustees. "Organizations that combine perspectives and expertise create a remarkable synergy. We and Dallas College will build stronger communities and create more opportunities to better serve our students."

In concert with House

Bill 8, which ties state funding for community colleges to student outcomes, the Legislature recognizes that the degrees and credentials offered at two-year institutions are instrumental in meeting current and future workforce needs and growing the economy. Community colleges in Texas serve approximately half of all students pursuing postsec-

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Gun permits may be more effective than background checks alone at reducing firearm homicides

(Newswise) — Despite widespread support, laws enforcing universal background checks at the time of firearm purchase may not be enough to move the needle on reducing shooting deaths in the United States. A Tufts University School of Medicine study, published August 1 in the journal *JAMA Network Open*, reports that states that require gun permits rather than relying solely on universal background checks see firearm homicide rates, on average, 18% lower than states with background check policies alone.

The analysis compared firearm homicide data from the 12 states with universal background check laws but no permit requirements (e.g., New York, Nevada, Vermont) and the 7 states with gun permit laws (e.g., Massachusetts, California, Rhode Island) from 1976



Perrels

to 2022. States in the former group showed slight variations in firearm homicide rates while those with permit laws saw reductions in shooting deaths ranging from 2% to 32%.

“These findings cast doubt on the main strategy currently being used by gun violence prevention advocates and policymakers to reduce firearm fatalities,” says study author Michael Siegel, a professor of public health and community medicine at the School of Medicine. “If state law-

makers really want to reduce gun violence, the most effective policy they can enact is one that requires permits in order to purchase or possess a gun.”

While research on universal background check laws shows that they are associated with decreases in firearm homicides, most of this work has not differentiated between policies requiring permits and those that do not. By separating them, two studies from 2018 and 2020 found early evidence that the success

of universal background checks can be attributed to the permit laws. These findings are further supported by Siegel’s investigation, which compared firearm death rates recorded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to the State Firearm Law Database, a database he oversees at Tufts that aggregates and updates all state firearm legislation.

Siegel is not surprised that gun permits are associated with lower firearm fatalities. While requirements vary by state, permit laws typically require someone who wants to own a gun to go through a series of checks before granting authorization, valid for several years, to purchase firearms from various dealers. The advantage of state permits is that their criminal databases are more consistently kept up to date and are more likely to record

lower-level crimes, such as domestic battery or a DUI, compared to the federal databases used for universal background checks, which rely on states to track this data.

Universal background checks can fail when a request for a background check takes so long to come back that it has passed the window of time—72 hours—that a person can legally be kept waiting for a gun. This loophole allows individuals with criminal records to make a firearm purchase by default. Background checks are also less effective when someone has recently committed a crime that disqualifies them from owning a gun, while permits can be immediately suspended.

“Some gun owners might hear this and say that permits are much more intrusive, but I want to emphasize it’s actually a win-win,

both for gun owners and public health,” says Siegel. He argues that gun owners on average have four or more firearms, so having a permit system makes it easier for them to make multiple purchases over time because their permit wouldn’t require them to get a background check for each exchange.

Siegel plans to continue exploring the emerging association between gun permit laws and firearm homicide rates, while also examining their impact on firearm suicides.

“One of the major implications of this research is that it supports changing the way we do things, such as encouraging all states to adopt reciprocal permitting systems, meaning a person with a gun permit in one state would be allowed to bring their license and gun legally into another state,” says Siegel.

FENTANYL, from Page 4

and smoking materials, which may increase the risk of HCV transmission. Notably, the relationship between illicit fentanyl use and HCV was not confined to those who inject the drug, but was noted among those who smoke as well.

“There are a variety of complex lifestyle factors that could be contributing to the increase in HCV in-

fections among those who don’t inject, especially given how long HCV can go undetected,” said Strathdee. “We don’t have all the answers just yet, but what we are seeing is that this is a major unmet public health need.”

The study’s findings have significant implications for public health policy and practice across

both the United States and Mexico.

According to the researchers, immediate steps that could be taken include making fentanyl testing kits more accessible to people who use drugs, many of whom don’t even realize they’re using fentanyl due to widespread contamination of the illicit drug supply.

Also critical to reducing the burden of HCV is

increasing access to accurate point-of-care HCV tests, which are used in other countries but are only just now starting to be approved for use in the United States.

“Since hepatitis C can be cured with a short course of antiviral treatment, efforts are needed in both the U.S. and Mexico to make these treatments more widely available,” said study co-author Gudelia

Rangel, Ph.D., a professor at el Colegio de la Frontera Norte. “Both countries have dedicated government programs focused on eliminating hepatitis C, but our results show that there is so much more that needs to be done to meet the goals of these programs.”

Additional co-authors of the study include Daniela Abramovitz, Britt Skaathun, Alicia Harvey-Vera, Carlos F. Vera, Irina

Artamonova, Natasha K. Martin, William H. Eger and Katie Bailey at UC San Diego; Sheryl Muñoz at Comisión de Salud Fronteriza México-Estados Unidos; Bo-Shan Go at the University of Amsterdam and Philippe Bourgois at the University of California Los Angeles. Rangel and Harvey-Vera also hold affiliations at the Comisión de Salud Fronteriza México-Estados Unidos.

FORTRESS, from Page 1

congressional officials have advised House Democrats to exercise extra caution when planning their travel, including booking lodging under different names to avoid detection. Officials have also cautioned against visiting certain areas where violent encounters may be more likely to occur.

“The protesters aren’t staying in a designated protest site... and there are people who are going to

go and really try to cause trouble,” one lawmaker warned, echoing concerns about potential disruptions.

While demonstrations from Trump supporters are anticipated, the primary concern for law enforcement is the potential for violence from tens of thousands of pro-Palestinian demonstrators expected to protest U.S. funding for Israel’s war in Gaza.

In a welcome packet sent to Democratic attendees, convention officials emphasized that the Secret Service has been working closely with various law enforcement agencies, including the Capitol Police and the Chicago Police Department, to ensure the safety of the event.

High-profile speakers like Vice President Kamala Harris and Minnesota Governor Tim Walz are set to deliver speeches at the convention, and numerous

dignitaries, including President Joe Biden, former Presidents Barack Obama and Bill Clinton, and former First Ladies Michelle Obama and Hillary Clinton, are expected to attend. The rumor mill is abuzz with speculation that celebrities like Beyoncé and Taylor Swift might make surprise appearances.

Monday marked the first of a week-long briefing at the Office of Emergency Management and Communications, where the Secret

Service coordinates the efforts of federal, state, and local agencies. The office is also responsible for disseminating information if any unplanned situations arise.

As the first wave of protests swept through downtown, Chicago Police responded with a robust presence, including shoulder-to-shoulder patrol officers and bike units along the protest routes. Federal dog teams screened vehicles at the United Cen-

ter, and U.S. Coast Guard teams patrolled the lakefront. Chicago Police Superintendent Larry Snelling assured the public that the city is prepared to handle any situation.

“We want people to exercise their First Amendment rights,” Snelling stated. “We will protect them while they’re doing it, but we will not guarantee that we’re not going to make arrests if they start to act violently or commit crimes.”

Dallas CASA will honor the Dallas Mavericks as Champions of Children

Dallas CASA will honor the Dallas Mavericks with the Jan and Judge Barefoot Sanders Champion of Children Award at its annual Champion of Children Award Dinner Friday, October 18. The event raises funds to benefit the child victims of neglect and abuse served by Dallas CASA.

Since the Mavericks' first season in 1980-81, players have been involved in their local community, giving back to people in need and modeling for their fellow citizens what involvement could look like. In addition to vital grants from the Mavs Foundation to agencies that support vulnerable populations and the construction of safe learn and play spaces across North Texas, the team has set the standard for leading the charge on change through its Mavs Take ACTION! campaign.

The Champion of Children Award is given annually to recognize community leaders who significantly improve the lives of youth



Janice and Richard Davis
(Courtesy photo)



Nicki and Paul Stafford
(Andy Williams / Courtesy)

in our community. Past recipients include organizations like The Meadows Foundation, the Junior League of Dallas and North Park Center and individuals like La La Land Kind Café founder Francois Reihani, Jessica and Dirk Nowitzki, Jan and Trevor Rees-Jones and Nancy A. Nasher. The award is named for Judge Harold Barefoot Sanders, a revered United States District Court judge for the

Northern District of Texas, past award recipient and a steadfast supporter of Dallas CASA and his wife Jan Sanders, a former Dallas CASA volunteer child advocate.

The event will take place on Friday, Oct. 18 at The Fairmont Dallas (1717 North Akard Street). Event Co-Chairs are Janice and Richard Davis and Nicki and Paul Stafford. Janice Davis and Nicki Stafford

are Dallas CASA board members, and Janice Davis and both Staffords are sworn child advocates.

Honorary Chair is Bob Mong, a Dallas luminary who recently retired after nine years as the president of the University of North Texas at Dallas. Mong serves on the Dallas Mavericks Advisory Council. He was previously a journalist, primarily at The Dallas Morning News where he was managing editor and editor-in-chief.

Dallas CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates)

seeks to protect children, restore childhood and help child victims of abuse or neglect achieve their full potential. The agency's trained and supervised community volunteers are assigned by judges to advocate for the best interests of children who have experienced abuse or neglect and are living in the protective care of the state. For many Dallas CASA volunteer is the only consistent, caring adult in their lives during a frightening, uncertain time. Dallas CASA envisions a

day when all children experience safe childhoods and grow into resourceful, healthy adults. Now in its 44th year, Dallas CASA serves more children than any of the more than 900 CASA programs nationwide. In 2023, 1,088 Dallas CASA volunteers were assigned to advocate for 2,151 children in protective care. For the past five years, the agency has been able to provide an advocate for every Dallas child in need, but each year more advocates are needed. To learn more, visit dallascasa.org.



"Alien: Romulus" is the latest in a long, successful sci-fi horror franchise. (Image via NNPA)

Film Review: 'Alien: Romulus' is a generic new chapter

By Dwight Brown
NNPA Film Critic

(**1/2) "This place gives me the creeps!"

When a band of twenty-something scavengers sets their sights on an abandoned space station, little do they know that their search for treasure would lead to the reawakening of alien beings. A creepy feeling is an understatement. They're gonna be ravaged and destroyed!

In the 22nd century, life on the dark, sunless Jackson Star Mining Colony is hard. Miners are worked to death and promised freedom. But instead, they're bound. Like indentured slaves. Rain (Cailee Spaeeny, *Civil War*) worked her extra hours and was ready to escape with her friend Andy (David Jonsson, *Rye Lane*), an android whose technical name is ND-255. Travel permit denied. Trip gone. So, when her ex-lover Tyler (Archie Renaux, *Morbius*) reaches out to her with some crazy scheme involving blasting off in a hijacked spaceship, searching for resources and possibly a getaway, she's game.

Rain, Tyler and his crew are ready for action. There's the menacing ram-bunctious sidekick Bjorn (Spike Fearn, *Aftersun*), loving sister Kay (Isabella Merced, *Father of the Bride*) and the feisty pilot Navarro (Aileen Wu). They

board a vessel, head to outer space and hook up with a ghosted space station. What could go wrong? Facehuggers, chestbursters and xenomorphs—aka aliens—are nesting, reviving and looking for prey. "There's something in the f—ing water!"

The first *Alien* movie back in '79, directed by Ridley Scott and starring Sigourney Weaver, became an iconic horror/sci-fi movie that spawned sequels helmed by heavyweight directors like James Cameron (*Avatar*), David Fincher (*Se7en*) and Jean-Pierre Jeunet (*Delicatessen*). Handing the reins to the b-movie horror genre loving Fede Alvarez is a gamble. His 2013 remake of *Evil Dead* made \$97M+ at the international box office—but to mixed reviews. His 2016 feature *Don't Breathe* fared better (\$157M and more positive reviews). You reap what you sow from who you hire.

The visual excellence of Ridley Scott's first *Alien* is missing from this saga. An unsurpassed sense of timing and adventure, similar to Cameron's *Aliens*, is also absent. Lots of the footage and its lighting is darker than need be (cinematographer Galo Olivares). As are the color palette (art director Monica Alberte) and interiors (production designer Naaman Marshall,

The *Dark Knight*). The clothes don't necessarily fit the period, except for Andy's puke green uniform (costume designer Carlos Rosario, *Shogun*). Even the alien creatures are generic as they flash sharp teeth, drip spit, bite bodies and invade their new hosts. We've seen it all before and these special visual effects aren't particularly distinguishable.

So how does Alvarez get fear across to the audience? How does he make hearts jump up into throats? He relies heavily on thunderous sound effects and an intense, loud musical score (Benjamin Wallfisch, *Twisters*). He trusts these devices to make the dread more foreboding, the action more pronounced and the deaths ghoulish. That's the secret formula. The theater vibrates with heavy bass when danger lurks, and bodies are blooded. Hard to measure how high the decibels go, but they're enough to fray nerves. It's a PTSD that lasts after you leave the theater. That's when you feel like you've just been run over by a truck. The violence on view is horrific. But sounds of it are far more affecting.

It's slow going for the first 30 minutes and outside of a space ride and landing, nothing is impressive. Once the aliens attack the

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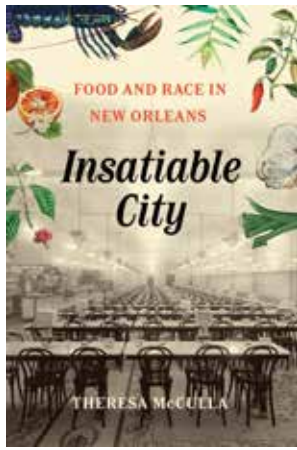
NDG Book Review: 'The Insatiable City' will satisfy a reader's appetite

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

You've spent a lot of time scouring the internet in search of menus.

Will you try this dish, or that one? Sample two entrees, or three? Can you understand the people in a city without tasting their best dishes? You'll know soon enough because you've chosen the restaurants for your dining experiment but remember: as in the new book "Insatiable City" by Theresa McCulla, the taste of the truth may be bitter.

In the early summer of



1719, the slave ship the Aurora, "the first ship bearing enslaved people to arrive in Louisiana from Africa"

dropped anchor just off the French territory of Basse-Louisiana, near the city of New Orleans. Once the ship was emptied, her human cargo was fed and then immediately taken and sold on a large auction block at a market inside a "luxurious hotel" while white buyers ate and drank their fill at a nearby bar.

This one act forever tied New Orleans' famous cuisine with its racial history

McCulla says that enslaved women who were known to be "good cooks" were in high demand by

white owners who dreamed of the meals to come. What those men probably never thought about was that, because slaves were forbidden to read or write, recipes for those meals were shared verbally, having sprang from a variety of cultures and lands. The ingredients for those meals were planted by Black hands, harvested by Black hands, prepared by Black cooks, served by Black slaves, and the table was cleared by Black servants.

In later years, when the French Market was first

opened, Black marchandes sold their wares – cheese, coffee, fruits and vegetables – both at the market and to white homes that lined the streets – and gained a little upward mobility. Black cooks found their way out of white homes, and onto ships that docked nearby, and into the city's opulent hotel kitchens.

Ultimately, restaurateurs were forced to acknowledge Black and Creole contributions to their menus – but not without a lot of fight, and a lot of Jim Crow, too.

Despite that its subject is such a fascinating one, "Insatiable City" could be a bit of a struggle to read. The topic is narrow – how African Americans left a hidden-in-plain-sight thumbprint on the many famous dishes of New Orleans and, indeed, Louisiana – and so there's a lot of the same inside the narrative here.

Dig in, though, just a little deeper.

Fortunately, author Theresa McCulla includes a wealth of stories that save

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VOTE, from Page 8

so-cocky-you-deserve-to-be-chewed-up crew, and they learn something weird is after them, that's when the pace finds its rhythm (editor Jake Roberts). Credit Alvarez for ultimately whipping the audience into a frenzy, even if it's with basic horror/sci-fi tricks. But imagine what this experience would have

been like if his visual game was as strong as his audio one. That would have made this movie more than just an assaulting experience.

Spaeny is good not great. Similar to her efforts in Civil War. A bit petite for the role. Hard to imagine her as an action hero, unlike the towering Sigourney Weaver who played Ripley

in the OG Alien. Renaux is solid as the group's leader. Fearn is a bit nasty as Bjorn, as he should be. Merced is likable. Wu adds a gusty spirit to Navarro, giving that character a futuristic warrior vibe. She would have made the Rain character far more believable. She's more Ripley than Spaeny will ever be.

In the British rom/com film Rye Lane, Jonsson

struck the right chord between neglected lover and fervent boyfriend. Here he seems off balance as he figures out how to play a Black android who looks human, is smart but way too passive. Watching him kowtow to a white female lead, in subservient ways, is a flaw in his interpretation of the character. Also,

a flaw in the script's weak character development. Awkward enough to make Black audiences wince. Especially if they're hoping his character arc includes him becoming the big savior in the end.

Alien: Romulus will give the target audience the creeps. It isn't Alien. It isn't Aliens. Not close.

But since the screenplay is so self-contained, there's a generation who just won't care what came before this chapter. They'll take it for what it is. An engaging, generic horror/sci-fi/thriller. That's an observation. Not an accomplishment.

Visit Film Critic Dwight Brown at DwightBrownInk.com.

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Student loan debt drops \$10 billion due to Biden Administration forgiveness

New Education Department Rules hold hope for 30 million more borrowers

By Charlene Crowell

As consumers struggle to cope with mounting debt, a new economic report from the Federal Reserve Bank of New York includes an unprecedented glimmer of hope. Although debt for mortgages, credit cards, auto loans and more increased by billions of dollars in the second quarter of 2024, student loan debt decreased by \$10 billion.

According to the New York Fed, borrowers ages 40-49 and ages 18-29 benefited the most from the reduction in student loan debt.

In a separate and recent independent finding, 57 percent of Black Americans hold more than \$25,000 in student loan debt compared to 47 percent of Americans overall, according to The Motley Fool's analysis of student debt by geography, age and race. Black women have an average of \$41,466 in undergraduate student loan debt one year after graduation, more than any other group and \$10,000 more than men.

This same analysis found that Washington, DC residents carried the highest average federal student loan debt balance, with \$54,146 outstanding per borrower. Americans holding high levels of student debt lived in many of the nation's most populous states – including California, Texas, and Florida.

The Fed's recent finding may be connected to actions taken by the Biden administration to rein in unsustainable debt held by people who sought higher education as a way to secure a better quality of life. This decline is even more noteworthy in light of a series of legal roadblocks to loan forgiveness. In response to these legal challenges, the Education Department on August 1



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began emailing all borrowers of an approaching August 30 deadline to contact their loan servicer to decline future financial relief. Borrowers preferring to be considered for future relief proposed by pending departmental regulations should not respond.

If approved as drafted, the new rules would benefit over 30 million borrowers, including those who have already been approved for debt cancellation over the past three years.

"These latest steps will mark the next milestone in our efforts to help millions of borrowers who've been buried under a mountain of student loan interest, or who took on debt to pay for college programs that left them worse off financially, those who have been paying their loans for twenty or more years, and many others," said U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona. The draft rules would benefit borrowers with either partial or full forgiveness in the following categories:

- Borrowers who owe more now than they did at the start of repayment. This

category is expected to largely benefit nearly 23 million borrowers, the majority of whom are Pell Grant recipients.

- Borrowers who have been in repayment for decades. Borrowers of both undergraduate and graduate loans who began repayment on or before July 1, 2000 would qualify for relief in this category.

- Borrowers who are otherwise eligible for loan forgiveness but have not yet applied. If a borrower hasn't successfully enrolled in an income-driven repayment (IDR) plan but would be eligible for immediate forgiveness, they would be eligible for relief. Borrowers who would be eligible for closed school discharge or other types of forgiveness opportunities but haven't successfully applied would also be eligible for this relief.

- Borrowers who enrolled in low-financial value programs. If a borrower attended an institution that failed to provide sufficient financial value, or that failed one of the Department's accountability standards for institutions, those

borrowers would also be eligible for debt relief.

Most importantly, if the rules become approved as drafted, no related application or actions would be required from eligible borrowers -- so long as they did not opt out of the relief by the August 30 deadline.

"The regulations would deliver on unfulfilled promises made by the federal government to student loan borrowers over decades and offer remedies for a dysfunctional system that has often created a financial burden, rather than economic mobility, for student borrowers pursuing a better future," stated the Center for American Progress in an August 7 web article.

"Meanwhile, the Biden-Harris administration also introduced income limits and caps on relief to ensure the borrowers who can afford to pay the full amount

of their debts do so."

"The Center for American Progress estimates the interest waiver provisions would deliver relief to roughly 6 million Black borrowers, or 23 percent of the estimated number of borrowers receiving relief, as well as 4 million Hispanic or Latino borrowers (16 percent) and 13.5 million white borrowers (53 percent)."

These pending regulations would further expand the \$168.5 billion in financial relief that the Biden Administration has already provided to borrowers:

- \$69.2 billion for 946,000 borrowers through fixes to Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF).

- \$51 billion for more than 1 million borrowers through administrative adjustments to IDR payment counts. These adjustments have brought borrowers

closer to forgiveness and addressed longstanding concerns with the misuse of forbearance by loan servicers.

- \$28.7 billion for more than 1.6 million borrowers who were cheated by their schools, saw their institutions precipitously close, or are covered by related court settlements.

- \$14.1 billion for more than 548,000 borrowers with a total and permanent disability.

- \$5.5 billion for 414,000 borrowers through the SAVE Plan.

More information for borrowers about this debt relief is available at StudentAid.gov/debt-relief.

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



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NAREB applauds Vice President Harris' plan to revive housing industry and make homes more affordable

WASHINGTON, DC - The National Association of Real Estate Brokers (NAREB) applauded Vice President Kamala Harris' plan to lower housing costs by providing incentives to builders to construct three million new units, offering \$25,000 in downpayment support for first-time homebuyers and creating a \$40 billion fund for local governments to build housing.

"NAREB enthusiastically supports the Vice President's housing plan," said Dr. Courtney Johnson Rose, NAREB's President. "NAREB recognizes that the lack of sufficient housing inventory is a major reason for the high prices preventing Black families and other consumers from



Dr. Courtney Johnson Rose
(Courtesy photo)

purchasing a home. This is a tremendous plan that will help families across America."

Harris, the presumed Democratic presidential nominee, announced the plan today. It would provide tax incentives to homebuilders for constructing "starter houses" geared to first-time buyers and afford-

able rental housing. If she is elected, Congress will need to approve many of the provisions. Harris is also calling for legislation to crack down on companies contributing to surging rent prices and to remove tax benefits for major investors who acquire large numbers of single-family homes.

Dr. Rose asserted that Vice President Harris is on target with her plan, noting that housing demand outpaces new home construction by roughly 100,000 units annually, creating the largest housing shortfall in nearly half a century. The inadequate supply of new homes contributes to the growing housing affordability crisis.

"This proposal demon-

strates that Vice President Harris understands the plight of middle-class families in America, and she has innovative answers to their housing challenges," Dr. Rose said, recalling that NAREB researchers previously identified the lack of inventory and investor home purchases as making it more difficult for families to purchase homes.

NAREB's 2023 State of Housing in Black America (SHIBA) report declared an enormous need to increase the affordable housing stock and called on the government to reform the nation's housing finance system by requiring a restructured Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac to form partnerships with large finan-

cial institutions via special purpose credit programs. SHIBA estimated that an efficient housing rehabilitation program financed by the Housing Government Sponsored Enterprises (GSEs) could save 107,000 homes annually.

Dr. Rose also welcomed a crackdown on investor-purchased single-family homes.

The SHIBA report said investor home purchases accelerated during the 2020-2021 pandemic. By the first quarter of 2022, investor purchases of single-family homes peaked at 28% of market share. As of the first quarter of 2023, investors accounted for about 27% of single-family home purchases.

"Investor home purchases negatively impact the affordability and supply of homes for sale, particularly for lower-income households," Dr. Rose said. "Investors outbid typical homebuyers and pay cash for houses and not perform inspections or appraisals. Many investor-owned single-family homes are transformed into rental housing, removing it from the owner-occupied stock."

Dr. Rose said the Harris plan can spur a new era in homeownership for all Americans.

"This plan is the kind of jolt that the housing industry has needed," said Dr. Rose. "This is how we create a more equitable America."

Study shows effects of guaranteed income programs on health and poverty

(Newswise) — According to new research from Sarah Miller, associate professor of business economics and public policy, guaranteed income programs don't appear to improve the health of recipients, but they remain an important tool to consider for reducing poverty.

Three Key Takeaways

1) New research reveals that \$1,000 monthly cash transfers only improve mental health and stress levels temporarily, with no lasting impact on physical health. Participants spent the cash boost primarily on

food, leisure, transportation, and housing, signifying notable gains in financial freedom and flexibility.

2) Despite limited long-term health benefits, cash recipients visited hospitals and dentists more frequently, indicating potential future health improvements.

3) Miller urges policymakers to implement targeted health interventions and supports cash transfers to alleviate poverty, emphasizing the need for informed policy decisions based on the study's findings.

The findings come from research released by Open Research's Unconditional Income Study, which gave 1,000 adults \$1,000 per month for three years. The randomized controlled trial examined the effects of the cash transfers on recipients, including their overall health, employment outcomes and how they spent the money.

Leading the study on health effects, Miller said the cash generated only short-lived (one-year) improvements in stress and mental health and no effect on physical health, as mea-

sured by self-reports.

Not seeing a longer-term reduction in stress was a disappointment, Miller said, since that could be one way that more income improves health.

However, Miller notes she and her colleagues found an overall increase in visits to hospitals and dentists. It's possible the uptick in medical care could improve health over a lon-

ger time horizon.

Participants, who were mostly recruited by mail in a diverse set of counties in Texas and Illinois, were asked if they would be interested in a study in which they would receive at least \$50 per month. Of the 14,000 respondents who consented, researchers drew a weighted random sample of 3,000 to ensure racial and income diversity.

All of those in the latter sample group were enrolled in a monthly cash transfer program of \$50, and 1,000 of them were selected randomly to receive \$1,000 a month. Researchers reasoned the control group should continue to receive the smaller amount so they would be more likely to participate in future surveys.

BOOK, from Page 10

this book — stories that came from former slaves, courtesy of the WPA; advertisements, photographs, and menus; and accounts from Black and white journalists and eyewitnesses traveling

in the city. Through these old documents, readers will not only learn about the many dishes of New Orleans, but also about individual people and cooks, and the politics of food in

decades past.

This book will appeal to anyone who reads cookbooks for fun, and for anyone planning a trip to the Crescent City any time soon. Find "Insatiable City." It should be what's on your reading menu.

COLLEGE, from Page 6

ondary education.

"We must continue to forge partnerships — like this one today — that connect accessible, affordable

higher education opportunities with gainful employment," said Dallas College board Chair Paul Mayer. "The social and economic

health of our students and our region depends on it."

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Inflation cools to below 3%, paving the way for potential Fed rate cuts

By Stacy M. Brown
NNPA Senior National
Correspondent

Inflation in the United States showed promising signs of easing in July, with the Consumer Price Index (CPI) falling below 3% for the first time in over three years. The unexpected slowdown in price hikes could lead the Federal Reserve to cut interest rates as early as next month, potentially easing borrowing costs and providing a boost to economic growth.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, consumer prices rose 2.9% over the past year, down from June's 3% annual increase. On a monthly basis, prices ticked up by 0.2%, reversing a slight decline of 0.1% in the previous month. The primary driver of this increase was housing costs, with the shelter index climbing by 0.4%, accounting for nearly 90% of the overall monthly increase.

According to FactSet consensus estimates, economists had anticipated a 0.2% monthly rise and a 3% annual increase. Meanwhile, core CPI, which strips out the volatile categories of food and energy, also rose by 0.2% from June, with its annual rate slowing to 3.2% from 3.3%—the lowest rate since April 2021. Various financial experts said these figures suggest that the inflationary surge seen earlier



Image via NNPA

this year is beginning to wane.

This latest report builds on June's positive data, which saw the overall CPI decline for the first time since April 2020. The steady cooling of inflation has given the Federal Reserve and financial markets increasing confidence that the worst inflationary pressures may be behind us.

However, the Federal Reserve has been cautious, holding off on reducing interest rates until there was more consistent evidence of sustained progress in curbing inflation. However, recent developments in the labor market, including a weaker-than-expected jobs report for July—where only 114,000 jobs were added, and unemployment rose to 4.3%—have shifted the landscape.

Financial experts said those labor market weaknesses have reignited fears of a potential recession, leading to heightened expectations that the Fed could begin cutting rates

as soon as next month. Reducing interest rates would bring much-needed relief to borrowers, particularly those with mortgages, credit cards, and auto loans. Analysts predict the Fed will likely start with a modest rate cut, possibly around 0.5 percentage points.

Even with potential rate cuts on the horizon, experts predicted that high-yield savings accounts, which currently offer some of the best rates at up to 5.35%, are expected to remain attractive. Certificates of de-

posit (CDs), which have been popular amid the high-interest-rate environment, may still offer favorable returns. However, financial experts advise caution in locking long-term high-yield CDs ahead of potential rate reductions.

As the Fed's decision looms, consumers are advised to focus on paying down credit card debt to position themselves favorably for improved borrowing conditions. Mortgage rates, currently averaging 6.55% for a 30-year fixed-rate loan, have already spurred a 16% surge in refinancing demand, according to the Mortgage Bankers Association. A possible rate cut by the Fed could push mortgage rates even lower, making now a suitable time for homeowners and prospective buyers to consider refinancing.

The automotive sector has also seen fluctuations, with the average interest rate for new vehicle loans

in July at 9.72%, down from 10% in June but still higher than a year ago. The average monthly auto loan payment rose slightly to \$727. As dealerships clear out inventory for new models in the coming months, consumers may find opportunities for discounts.

President Joe Biden responded to the July inflation report, highlighting the progress made in controlling inflation. "Today's report shows that we continue to make progress fighting inflation and lowering costs for American households. Inflation has fallen below 3%, and core inflation is at its lowest level since April 2021. While there's still more work to do, we are seeing real progress, with wages rising faster than prices for 17 consecutive

months," Biden stated.

The President also criticized large corporations for maintaining high prices despite record profits and emphasized ongoing efforts to reduce costs for American families. "We are taking on Big Pharma to lower prescription drug prices, cutting red tape to build more homes, and tackling price gouging to reduce everyday costs from groceries to air travel," Biden added. He contrasted these efforts with Republican proposals, which he claimed would raise prices for middle-class families while cutting taxes for the wealthy and large corporations, vowing to continue fighting for economic progress.

"While they try to take us back, we will fight for the future," Biden declared.

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So What If I'm Crazy?

By Dr. James L. Snyder

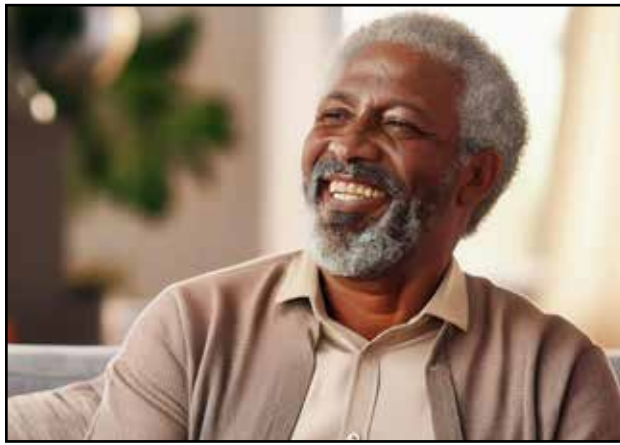
The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage and her wonderful husband celebrate 53 years of marital bliss this year. What an accomplishment.

It doesn't seem possible that we have been married 53 years. After all, we don't look that old! At least she doesn't.

It's amazing how time flies; if you're like me, you don't even pay attention to it. Now that I'm just past the 70-year mark, things seem to be going faster than ever. I can wake up in the morning and it doesn't take long for me to be ready to go back to bed. Where does all this time go? I think I want a refund.

I have come to understand that no matter how things change, they always remain the same. Just because my age has changed doesn't mean anything else about me has changed. I am still the same person The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage married 53 years ago. I have no plans to change.

As far as I know, she hasn't changed either. And



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I am unanimous in that.

Down through the years of our marital Showboat adventure, The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage has often asked me, "What's wrong with you? Are you crazy or what?"

That hasn't changed since the beginning of our journey. I've been crazy from the beginning, and I still am, and I have no expectation of changing. If I'm going to change I would like to know what she means by the phrase "or what?"

The only thing that hasn't changed is my understanding of everything that The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage says. To this day, I do not know what her meaning of the word "cra-

zy" is. When she asks me if I was crazy, I was not sure what she is asking. I just go along with her idea. What else can I do?

Looking back over my life, especially the 53 years of our marriage, I can see a few moments of me being crazy. But I don't see anything wrong with being crazy. In fact, being crazy has been the real fun in my life. Why can't I be crazy once in a while?

I'm sure my definition of crazy and her definition of crazy do not share the same dining room table.

For one, crazy means that I don't take things very seriously. That has been helpful down through the years, and I can verify that. It helps me to release stress.

Of course, I take many things in life seriously, but the ones that I don't take seriously are important to me. That is the area of my crazy-itis. I have a hard time picking which ones are crazy and which ones aren't.

The real difference between The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage and me is that she takes everything seriously. I, on the other side of the room, don't take everything seriously. Of course, there are sometimes, I must admit, I take the wrong thing not too seriously. That's what really gets me into trouble.

I always think of the Abe Lincoln joke, where his wife asks him, "Does this dress make me look fat?"

To be serious about that question is a lifesaver. However, not to be serious about that question can get a person into deep trouble. I know, I've been there.

One time, The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage bought a new dress, brought it home, put it on, and came out to where I was sitting and asked me, "What do you think about

this new dress of mine?"

I wasn't too serious at the moment, so I looked up at her and said, "I don't think I could wear that dress anywhere and get away with it."

Before I even finished that sentence, I knew I was in trouble.

"What?" she said, "You think you can wear one of my dresses?"

Throughout the years of our marital bliss, I have often dug a hole so deep that I could not get out, yet I still kept digging.

I thought I was just joking, but she did not think it was a joke.

Looking at her, I laughed and said, "Oh, my dear, I was just joking."

I thought I had gotten out of that hole, but was wrong.

"So," she said sarcastically, "you think my dresses are jokes."

It was at this level that I realized this wasn't very funny. I may be crazy, but this was not the time to be crazy. If only I could learn how to control being crazy.

I have tried through the years to work on my crazyitis, but I don't think I

have worked hard enough because I have not seen any improvement on my side of the kitchen table.

My problem is that I don't hear very well. Actually, I do hear; I just am not listening. And boy, is there a difference there.

Our 53-year marital journey has been great. I credit that success to one of my favorite verses in the Bible. Amos 3:3, "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?"

Throughout our journey we have agreed on more things than we disagree. In fact, the longer we live together the less we seem to disagree. That's unity.

We are headed in the same direction although, sometimes I'm looking out the right window and she's looking out her left window. The destination is what really matters. And that we totally agree on.

Dr. James L. Snyder lives in Ocala, FL with the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. Telephone 1-352-216-3025, e-mail jamesnyder51@gmail.com, website www.jamesnyderministries.com.

DNC, from Page 5

dent with 34 felony convictions." The statement sparked a wave of laughter and wild applause, leading to chants of "Lock him up!" echoing the irony of Trump's previous attacks on her.

"We have him on the run now," Clinton declared. "But no matter what the polls say, we can't give up."

Rep. Jasmine Crockett of Texas highlighted the divergent paths of Harris and Trump. "One candidate worked at McDonald's while she was in college at an HBCU. The other was born with a silver spoon in his mouth and helped his daddy in the family business: Housing discrimination," Crockett said, sparking boisterous applause from the audience. She

continued, "She became a career prosecutor, while he became a career criminal, with 34 felonies, two impeachments, and one pornstar to prove it."

Reflecting on her early days in Congress, Crockett shared a personal testimony about Harris' influence. "When I first got to Congress, I wasn't sure I made the right decision," she admitted. "That chaos caucus couldn't elect a speaker, and the Oversight Committee was unhinged."

Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York also critically panned Trump's priorities. "We know Trump would sell this country for a dollar if it meant lining his own pockets and greasing palms of his Wall Street friends," Ocasio-Cortez as-

serted. Her speech vividly championed Harris as a beacon for working Americans. "To love this country is to fight for its people — all people, working people, everyday Americans like bartenders and factory workers and fast-food cashiers who punch a clock and are on their feet all day in some of the toughest jobs out there."

Ocasio-Cortez then stirred the thousands of delegates with a forward-looking promise: "America, when we knock on our neighbor's door, organize our communities, and elect Kamala Harris to the presidency on November 5, we will send a loud message that the people of this nation will not go back. We choose a new path and open the door to a new day: one that is for the people and by the people."

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A Friend



Sister Tarpley
NDG
Religion
Editor

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

A Friend Does Most or All of These From A to Z:

- Accepts you as you are.
- Believes in "you."
- Calls you just to say "Hi."
- Doesn't give up on you!
- Envisions the whole of you (even the unfinished parts.)
- Forgives your mistakes.
- Gives unconditionally.
- Helps you.
- Invites you over.
- Just "be" with you.
- Keeps you close at heart.
- Loves you for who you are.
- Makes a difference in your life.
- Never judges you.
- Offer support.



- Picks you up.
 - Quiets your fears.
 - Raises your spirits.
 - Says nice things about you.
 - Tells you the truth when you need to hear it.
 - Understands you.
 - Values you for who you are.
 - Walks beside you.
 - X-plains things you don't understand.
 - Yells when you won't listen; and
 - Zaps you back to reality, when you need to be.
- Something to Ponder**
-- Don't Tell It Like It Is:

"Death and life are in the power of the tongue; . . ." (Proverbs 18:21)

Words are serious business; I have often told my children, be careful what you say; once words are spoken, you can never take them back. As believers, we need to get serious about learning how to use words.

We need to put them to work for us like God does. The Bible tells us that He uses words to, "Call those things which be not as though they were." (Romans 4:17)

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

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

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

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

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

It's speaking from your spirit instead of from your

mind. Apostle Paul said, "We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak;" (2 Corinthians 4:13.)

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

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

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

called things that be not, the way they wished they were.

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

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

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

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National Museum of African American History and Culture to release its first book of sports photography

(Black PR Wire) The Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC) will publish a dynamic new book Sept. 17 tracing the history of sports through photographs from the turn of the 20th century to the present day with *Game Changers: Sports Photographs from the National Museum of African American History and Culture*. This publication is the first in the Double Exposure series to include photographs from the Johnson Publishing Company Archive, co-owned by the museum and the Getty Research Institute. The 84-page softcover book showcases 57 black-and-white and 11 color images.

"The Black athlete has long served as a symbol of excellence, a figure of change, and an image of the otherwise impossible," wrote Kevin Young, Andrew W. Mellon Director



of NMAAHC, in the foreword to the book. "We soar when they do, we root for them even as we doubt; we win even when they lose, as long as the attempt proves as noble as the victory. More than 20 of the photographs in this book, spanning almost 40 years, come from the Johnson Publishing Company Archive, re-

markable for its ability to get inside athletes' homes and experiences, documenting ordinary moments in often extraordinary lives."

Organized around key moments in the history of African American sports, *Game Changers* explores the sometimes-complex world of athletes, their

sports and their impact on American culture on and off the field. While football, basketball, baseball and boxing are prominently featured, the book also includes images of male and female athletes, amateur and professional, competing in gymnastics, track and field, skiing, golf, tennis and other sports.

Images of iconic moments in sports history include Jack Johnson vs. Jim Jeffries during the 1910 "Fight of the Century," Jackie Robinson stealing home in 1952 and Colin Kaepernick taking a knee in 2016. Also presented are the more personal moments—Larry Doby teaching his son how to hold a bat, Wilt Chamberlain in class at the University of Kansas, Wilma Rudolph standing outside her charitable foundation office,

Muhammad Ali in conversation with Fannie Lou Hamer and a young Venus Williams smiling after a practice session.

Among the 40 featured photographers are Ernest C. Withers, Roderick J. Lyons, Walter Iooss Jr., Maurice Sorrell, Ozier Muhammad and Moneta Sleet Jr.

Game Changers features three essays followed by four sections of photographs from various eras.

The editors of *Game Changers* are Michèle Gates Moresi and Laura Coyle, both at NMAAHC. Contributors to the book include Damion L. Thomas, NMAAHC curator of sports, and Kevin Young, Andrew W. Mellon Director at NMAAHC; David K. Wiggins, professor emeritus of sport studies at George Mason University in Fairfax, Virginia;

and Domonique Foxworth, commentator, retired American football cornerback and former president of the National Football League Players Association.

Published by NMAAHC in collaboration with D Giles Limited of London, it retails for \$16.95. The book is supported by the Earl W. and Amanda Stafford Center for African American Media Arts and funded by the NMAAHC's Sport Leadership Council.

Game Changers is the ninth volume in the museum's Double Exposure series, which showcases the museum's growing photography collections. Previous volumes focused on areas ranging from civil rights and military history to fashion and spirituality. For more information, visit nmaahc.si.edu/publications.

OBAMA, from Page 2

they please, whether its firing workers trying to organize a union, poisoning our rivers, or avoiding paying taxes like everyone else has to do," he said, highlighting the fundamental differences in their approaches to leadership.

Throughout the night, other prominent Democrats joined the Obamas in rallying the crowd. Illinois Senator Tammy Duckworth delivered a searing critique of Trump's attacks on reproductive rights. "I take it personally when a five-time draft-dodging coward like Donald Trump tries to take away my rights and freedoms in return—especially when it concerns my daughters," Duckworth said.

Maryland Senate candidate Angela Alsobrooks reflected on her close relationship with Harris, emphasizing the vice president's dedication to justice and public safety. "Kamala Harris knows how to keep

criminals off the streets," Alsobrooks said. "And come November, with our help, she'll keep one out of the Oval Office," a line that drew loud cheers from the Chicago crowd.

New Mexico Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham contrasted Harris's healthcare policies with Trump's, criticizing the former president's attempts to dismantle the Affordable Care Act. "Donald Trump and JD Vance want to dismantle our

healthcare system, repeal the Affordable Care Act, and eliminate protections for preexisting conditions. Either these guys don't get it, or they don't care," Grisham said.

Barack Obama left the crowd with a final, resonant message: "If we work like we've never worked before, we will elect Kamala Harris as the next president and Tim Walz as the next vice president. And together, we too will build a country that is more secure, more just, more equal, and free."



Former President Barack Obama speaks at the DNC. (Image via NNPA)

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