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## As Harris and Trump vie for presidency, civil rights issues reach a boiling point

By Stacy M. Brown  
NNPA Senior National  
Correspondent

The 2024 presidential race between Vice President Kamala Harris and former President Donald Trump has underscored a profound clash on race and justice. Trump, the twice impeached Republican nominee who next month faces sentencing in New York for 34 felony convictions, has called for greater police authority and protections, stirring deep fears within African American and minority communities already grappling with systemic racism and violence. His recent statements, supporting qualified immunity and endorsing lethal force against perceived enemies, reveal a hardline stance that threatens the very fabric of civil rights gains in America.

Trump's divisive rhetoric is



Trump's divisive rhetoric is nothing new. His enduring call for the death penalty for five Black and Latino men—exonerated in the infamous Central Park jogger case—casts a long shadow over his candidacy. (Photo via NNPA)

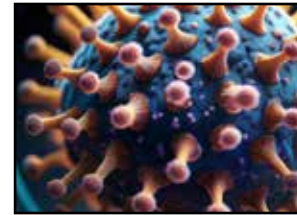
In stark contrast, Vice President Harris, the Democratic nominee, and a former prosecutor—casts a long shadow over his

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#### People In The News ...



Rev. Dr. Howard-John Wesley



Martin Luther King III

*NDG Quote of the Week: "Human salvation lies in the hands of the creatively maladjusted."*

- Martin Luther King Jr.



## Rev. Dr. Howard-John Wesley

(Black PR Wire) UNCF is proud to announce that Rev. Dr. Howard-John Wesley has been presented with the organization's highest honor for partnerships, The Keeper of the Flame Award.

"Rev. Dr. Howard-John Wesley is one of our nation's foremost faith leaders and is a staunch supporter of UNCF and its mission to help underrepresented students to fulfill their dreams of attending college," said Maurice E. Jenkins, Jr., executive vice president and chief development officer, UNCF.



"We are thrilled to present Rev. Wesley with UNCF's highest honor for partnerships—The Keeper of the Flame Award—because of his leadership, commitment and vision as a champion for UNCF's continued success to sup-

port our nation's historically Black colleges and universities and the students they serve."

For more than 30 years, Alfred Street Baptist Church in Alexandria, VA, where Wesley is the senior pastor, has supported UNCF and raised more than \$1 million to assist HBCUs and their students including gifts of \$250,000 each of the last two years.

"It is the enduring legacy of scholastic excellence, open access to education for all students, and fostering community leadership that makes the partnership between UNCF and Alfred Street

Baptist Church a natural fit. Our organizations are inextricably connected by the shared commitment to spiritual enrichment, financial support, and ongoing mentoring of students. As a father, a pastor, and a champion for higher education, I am grateful to be recognized for something for which I care deeply," said Wesley.

Wesley serves as chairman of UNCF's National Faith and Education Initiative Advisory Council, which consists of a broad spectrum of religious leaders who have committed to work in support of educational opportunities for

UNCF students.

Since 1944, UNCF and the faith community have invested in each other. Churches and other places of worship around the country have helped HBCUs keep their doors open and their dedication to education strong. And UNCF has reached out around the country to raise the funds their students need to become the next generation of ministers and church-supporting congregants.

Throughout the year, UNCF works with churches and faith groups across the country to implement UNCF Sundays, a day of national support to HB-

CUs from congregations, culminating on a specific Sunday in February.

The UNCF National Faith and Education Initiative is an effort to broaden awareness of our core vision and mission across denominations, secure unrestricted financial support to help strengthen our member colleges and universities, strengthen student support and development, and through our advocacy platform help ensure the visibility and viability of UNCF-member schools and other HBCUs.

Visit [UNCF.org/Faith-Campaign](http://UNCF.org/Faith-Campaign) for more information.

## Martin Luther King III

By Adam Shapiro  
CEO/President ASPR

Martin Luther King III, the son of revered civil rights icons Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Coretta Scott King, directly tied his parents' dreams for America to the multi-faith initiative to rescue the historic Scotland African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Zion Church. King passionately spoke about the Potomac, Maryland church that formerly enslaved congregants built by hand. Yet it's a modern challenge that caught his attention; flash flood waters in 2019 and additional weather damage, exasperated by the rerouting of a nearby road, threatened Scotland.

King said, "How does it align with 'I Have a Dream?'" Talk about salvaging and rebuilding... this symbol, this religious institution that provides an opportunity for spiritual learning, is similar to what my dad and mom were do-



ing when they were building the beloved community and Scotland is about building the community." King made his remarks at the National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC), which is only about a mile from the Lincoln Memorial where his father delivered his inspiring "I Have a Dream" speech over 61 years ago.

The event at the Smithsonian Museum celebrated the 100th anniversary of Scotland's founding and its "2nd Century Project," which is a rescue and rejuvenation initiative under the leadership of Reverend Dr. Evalina Huggins.

Bishop Brian R. Thompson Sr. said, "It's a wonder of Montgomery Country because they wonder how we're still here! It's an oasis where people will be able to see a symbol of freedom... even though water tried to wipe it away, God is lifting it up higher and higher."

The plans call for rebuilding the historic original structure; re-grading the surrounding landscape to mitigate more flooding; and constructing a new state-of-the-art house of worship to meet future needs. Supporters, including Glenstone museum founder Mitch Rales, announced they'd raised nearly \$9 million toward the \$11 million goal. The NMAAHC event, moderated by WUSA9 news anchor Lesli Foster, served as a powerful reminder of Scotland's importance, even for those who don't worship there. Longtime Bethesda resident Joyce Siegel was recognized for her work to revitalize the Scotland community, including the church, in the 1960s.

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# Black retirees growing older and poorer

## 2025 Social Security COLA lowest in 10 years

By Charlene Crowell

As Americans live longer, the ability to remain financially independent is an ongoing struggle. Especially for Black and other people of color whose lifetime incomes are often lower than that of other contemporaries, finding money to save for 'old age' is particularly daunting.

According to the National Council on Aging, racial and ethnic minorities accounted for one in 4 adults aged 65 and older in 2022. In that same year, the average 65-year-old could expect to live another 18 years or longer, on a median income of \$29,740.

In 2022, the average yearly Social Security benefit for Black men ages 65 and older was \$15,345, and for Black women was only \$13,755. However, the average annual Social Security income for all 65 or older men was \$18,910, and for all older women was \$14,824.

In past generations retiring workers often received a gold watch, pension, and company-sponsored health insurance. But today's retirees face far different circumstances. With few remaining pensions available, most workers must look to themselves for financial security in their old age. And Social Security has become a financial lifeline.

When enacted in 1935 during the throes of the Great Depression, Social Security was a groundbreaking federal social safety net for retirees. Financed by payroll taxes that began in 1937, both em-

ployees and their employers paid into the program. A 1939 amendment to the law expanded the program to include survivor benefits for retirees' widows and children, commonly known today as SSI. In 1956 disability benefits were added in a second expansion.

To compensate beneficiaries for rises in cost of living, an annual Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) began in 1975. Prior to 1972, only special acts of Congress could increase benefits.

Today, more than 80 years later, 68 million retirees and 4.5 million other program participants recently learned that a 2.5 percent COLA increase will be added to their monthly checks – even lower than the 2.6 percent decade-long average computed by Social Security. For retirees, the increase will begin in January. SSI beneficiaries will receive their increase with their December 31 payment.

Next year's increase means the average retiree's monthly \$1,927 Social Security check will rise by \$49. The monthly average for an elderly couple with both receiving benefits will be \$3,089, from 2024's \$3,014 – a \$75 increase. It is important to note that individual benefit levels are determined by a formula that uses a worker's highest earnings over a 34-year career. Should Medicare's 2025 rates increase as expected, the net increase to retiree checks will be even less.

As the nation still struggles to cope with rising prices,

the agency's statement and those of elder advocates were polar opposites.

"Social Security benefits and SSI payments will increase in 2025, helping tens of millions of people keep up with expenses even as inflation has started to cool," said Martin O'Malley, Commissioner of Social Security.

But according to AARP, when the projected Medicare increase is announced, most retirees will receive a net gain of only \$10.20 in 2025.

"[E]ven with the COLA, we know many older Americans who rely on Social Security may find it hard to pay their bills," Jo Ann Jenkins, AARP's chief executive officer, said in a statement. "Social Security is the primary source of income for 40 percent of older Americans."

AARP's concerns are validated by findings in an April 2024 report from the Society of Actuaries Research Institute, entitled, Retirement Wealth by Race and Ethnicity: Differences, Trends and Contributing Factors.

"Social Security provides a near-universal basic benefit, but many older adults, especially Black and Hispanic/Latino people and many people of other and multiple races and ethnicities, still struggle to meet the expenses they incur that are above those basic benefits because they have substantially fewer retirement savings, even after accounting for aspects such as education and income, than is the case for white households," states the report.

Key findings from the report include:

- White households with a college degree had a median retirement wealth of \$273,500, compared to \$160,323 for Hispanic/Latino households, and \$119,000 for Black households with a college degree; and

- Over the past three decades, Black and Hispanic/Latino households, as well as households of other or multiple races or ethnicities, owned on average between one-third and 60% of the retirement wealth of white households. There is no robust indication of those gaps becoming smaller.

These retiree racial wealth gaps are framed as elder poverty in another report, "Who Counts as 'Poor' in America?", from the New York-based Schwartz Center for Economic Policy Analysis.

"[I]magine being over 65 years old and trying to survive on \$15,060 a year," states the report. "According to official U.S. government poverty levels in 2024, one is considered 'poor' in America – and thus qualifying for certain assistance – if their annual income is \$15,060 or less for a single person, \$31,200 for a family of four."

The next Congress would be well-advised to get serious about the future solvency of Social Security. No one wants or should expect to become older and poorer.

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).

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# Lower Black and Latino vax rates affected by trust and access issues

By Lori Lee  
NDG Contributing Writer

The Food and Drug Administration approved the updated Pfizer and Moderna mRNA vaccines on August 22 and the Novavax update August 30.

Vaccines are needed to help human immunity keep pace with the rapidly evolving COVID virus, Chief Virologist at the Global Health Research Complex at Texas A&M University Dr. Ben Neuman explained at a September briefing of Ethnic media Services.

Unlike a polio vaccine, where a childhood is hot in the arm lasts a lifetime, Covid vaccines must keep up with a quickly evolving virus, that spreads so much they begin to mutate. These changes occur within mere weeks or months, said Dr. Neuman, which is faster than human immunity can adapt without vaccines.

The length of time the T-cell immunity will lasts is uncertain, explains Dr. Neuman, though scientists



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have found the vaccines have given protection in many cases for two to three years. Therefore, those who have waited as long as three years to update their vaccine might be due for an update, Newman advises. He recommends getting boosted prior to Spring before the dominant variant grows substantially different from currently circulating strains.

The lower vaccination rates among Black and Latino communities, really comes down to trust, access, and equity, said Neuman. These communities aren't just hesitant. They've been overlooked.

Historically mistreated by the healthcare system, they tend to lack trust, trust that is further eroded by misinformation. Lobbying groups, like the one fronted by Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., are currently targeting Black and Asian populations, explained Neuman, though this is not necessarily being done with ill intentions, he added.

Where language is a barrier, crucial information can be lost in what may seem like hieroglyphics if unavailable in your language, said Neuman. Then, fear may come into play as people make difficult choices about their health,

especially if the information they see is not reliable.

In cases where transportation or a limited number of clinics is an issue, the barrier is centered on access. And where the median income hovers around the poverty level, cost will create an additional barrier, especially considering the vaccines are no longer provided free of charge.

Fear of side effects is a problem for some. But vaccinations naturally produce side effects as the build up an army of antibodies to protect you, said Newman. The vaccine makes anti-

bodies, and those antibodies work against the current variants, building up fever and body aches as the human body fights the virus. And the more the body is fueled to deal with the virus, through supplements that increase the immune response, the stronger the fever and body aches may become as the added strength helps teach the body to fight the disease more effectively.

Over the past four years, Covid symptoms have grown more diverse, as new variants have expanded and adapted from initial strains,

University of California School of Medicine Professor Peter Chin-Hong, M.D. added in the discussion.

Most strains present sore throat, congestion, headache, and muscle aches, while a few are marked with more unusual symptoms like pink eye, diarrhea, or nausea. In the absence of congestion, these novel symptoms can lead doctors down a rabbit hole to misdiagnoses.

KP.2 and KP.3 variants are the newest dominant strains, explained Dr.

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# As DEI programs face rollback, study highlights Black women are still facing barriers in predominantly white workplaces

By Stacy M. Brown  
NNPA Senior National  
Correspondent

As diversity, equity, and inclusion (DE&I) programs face increasing dismantling across corporate America, the challenges Black women face in predominantly White workplaces are more critical than ever. Dr. Elizabeth Linos, Emma Bloomberg Associate Professor of Public Policy and Management at Harvard University, appeared on the Black Press' Let It Be Known to



*Dr. Linos' findings are alarming, mainly as DE&I initiatives—designed to counter such disparities—are increasingly under scrutiny and at risk of being rolled back. (Photo via NNPA)*

discuss her groundbreaking study, "Intersectional Peer Effects at Work: The Effects

of White Co-Workers on Black Women's Careers." The research explores how

the racial composition of teams affects the career trajectories of Black women.

Dr. Linos' findings are seen as especially relevant considering ongoing debates about the effectiveness and future of DE&I initiatives. Her study, which tracked 9,037 new hires in a professional services firm, revealed that Black women are disproportionately impacted by being placed on Whiter teams. Black women were 51% more likely to leave the firm within two years

and faced a significant decrease in their chances of promotion when working with predominantly White colleagues.

"One of the main metrics used to define employee success is billable hours, and so, regardless of your race and gender, employees who report lower billable hours are also likely to re-

ceive lower performance scores," Dr. Linos told Let It Be Known News. She added, "The 'penalty'—how much your performance evaluation drops based on a reduction in billables—is larger for Black women than other groups."

The research empha-

**See DEI, Page 7**

## FDA, from Page 4

Hong. These strains are within the Omicron family, which followed Alpha and Beta variants in lineage.

There have been a number of changes within the Omicron family, as strains have continued to mutate and form new variants. A combination of two recent strains, the new dominant KP.3.1.1, which broke off of KP.3, has mutations that make it more infectious and more skilled at avoiding antibodies from both previous infections and the vaccines, said Dr. Hong.

Currently found in about 15% of cases and rising up in the charts across Europe, the KP.3 variant grew a little more transmissible than some previous strains, Hong said.

The good news, such recombinant variants can grow more mild as people are infected with two variants at the same time, allowing a mixing or combining of the variants. If the new strains are parented by two Omicron variants that are milder by nature than the Delta family, the

recombinant genes are balanced in these milder traits and are less likely to cause more serious disease than predecessors.

From a strictly scientific point of view and without considering cost and other factors, the FDA should probably update the vaccine twice rather than once a year, added Neuman. This is because the average half life for the vaccine--the amount of time the vaccines protect against new infection--is less than six months and usually more like four months.

The short time span is not due to a weakness with the vaccines but because the virus adapts and mutates very quickly. And while the mRNA vaccines--the Pfizer and Moderna--are both based on the KP variant, the Novavax, a protein vaccine, is farmed out from moth cells, and takes much longer to create. The extra time required to develop the Novavax means it is less able to keep up with natural mutations of the COVID virus. Therefore, Based on

JN.1, which peaked last March, the Nova vaccine is generally less durable, based, after all, on a now extinct variant.

In a future scenario where the virus makes a left turn, going back to something closer to JN.1, the Novavax could potentially be superior. And though some doctors may recommend a protein vaccine for certain patients, the mRNA vaccines generally provide more bang for your buck, Neuman advised. This, because mRNA technology allows vaccines to be based on strains that are more similar to current circulating viruses, said Newman.

New studies show that when monkeys are infected with COVID, some of the virus remains in the cells a year later, producing lingering negative effects. It is not necessarily a virus that you want to allow to take root at your home, said Neuman.

"It's like the old vampire movies. The best thing to do is don't invite them into the house. Don't let them in in the first place. Then you don't have to deal with the

clean up afterward."

Drug companies have presented their data on the new vaccines to the FDA. The data is available on their website for public view, found under the Vaccine Advisory Board meeting schedule under the June meeting materials (at bottom) under non-FDA parties.

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# Five ways parents can support children's social and emotional development

By Julia Levy  
Executive Director  
Sparkler Learning

There are many ways parents can support their children's social and emotional learning and wellness. Recent studies have highlighted that social and emotional skills — such as sustaining effort, getting along with others, maintaining composure, keeping an open mind, and social connection — were shown to have a consistent and positive association with students' academic and career success.

## 1. Know your child's social and emotional needs.

As a parent, you know your child better than anybody else on the planet.



Photo via NNPA

This knowledge of your child gives you a unique power to inspire and support them. Ask yourself a few questions: “How have recent events, including the pandemic, affected my child and family?” “What are some positive effects?” “What are some negative effects?” If your children

are old enough, ask them these questions and really listen to what you hear.

A social and emotional learning initiative called Big Heart World is a good resource. It includes the podcast Little Kids, Big Hearts, which can help parents and educators introduce big topics in social

and emotional learning to their children. The podcast, which is hosted by Todd Loyd, an early childhood educator, and social-emotional learning coordinator, explores what it means to have a big heart and how to grow one with episodes focused on identity, friendship, and standing up for others.

In the newest episode, “Imagination Time,” three kids, Shaelan, Sameia, and Hunter, join Todd to help the Mayor of the Qook-a-lackas to design a new playground for the Qook-a-leekies.

## 2. Once you know, you can grow!

Once you've thought through your children's social strengths and needs, it's

time to get on their level, figuratively and literally! Through Big Heart World, we worked with the Housman Institute to develop a 10-question quiz that identifies children's social and emotional learning needs and then creates a custom digital packet of playful activities you can do together to address those needs.

In my family, we are big fans of the “friendship cookie”— making a giant cookie to share with friends. This helps us to practice social skills and math while sneaking chocolate chips! We love it because it works for us. What works for you? Use the quiz to get your personalized activity suggestions.

## 3. Parents can remember the basics.

Today, I often wonder if the disruptions of recent years will interfere with children's long-term ability to practice preschool basics. I think a lot about the key skills that are enforced and reinforced during the preschool years:

- Identity(Who am I? How do I fit into my family, community, and world?)
- Feelings(What am I feeling? Is that okay?)
- Self-regulation(How do I pause and manage my big feelings?)
- Problem-solving(How do I work with others to share or work out differences?)

Kids don't necessarily

See PARENTS, Page 7

## BOILING, from Page 1

tor, has spoken out against Trump's inflammatory language and is advocating for a justice system that is fair and equitable for all. Harris has argued that Trump's words have exacerbated racial tensions and could lead to further violence against communities of color.

Recent high-profile cases highlighting racial discrimination and power abuse within law enforcement have heightened these concerns. In Las Vegas, a grand jury recently indicted Sgt. Kevin Menon on multiple counts, including nine charges of oppression under color of office. The charges reveal a disturbing pattern of false arrests primarily targeting Black men. Menon, now suspended, allegedly orchestrated

unlawful arrests by provoking situations without probable cause, aiming to manipulate crime statistics. One report detailed how he initiated an altercation on a pedestrian bridge, leading to an unjust arrest. Menon's actions, now under scrutiny, have drawn attention to the broader issue of racial profiling and abuse within police forces nationwide.

The DOJ's involvement in these cases underscored the urgent need to address systemic racial violence. In Kansas, Austin Schoemann was sentenced to over six years in prison for a series of racially motivated threats against Black individuals, including two juveniles and a woman he believed was associating with Black people. Schoe-

mann's campaign of terror, which spanned several months, involved threats of violence and the brandishing of firearms, all aimed at instilling fear within the Black community. “Racially motivated threats of violence cannot be tolerated in our society,” Assistant Attorney General Kristen Clarke stated.

In another recent case of racial violence, former Louisiana sheriff's deputy Javarrea Pouncy was sentenced for using excessive force against a detainee, severely injuring the man in a brutal assault that left him with a broken eye socket and nose. Pouncy's conviction, resulting from a 2019 incident, highlights the DOJ's ongoing efforts to hold law enforcement officers accountable for abuses of power.

Beyond violent acts, systemic discrimination persists within the financial sector. Fairway Independent Mortgage Corporation recently agreed to an \$8 million settlement following allegations of redlining in Black neighborhoods in Birmingham, Alabama. This settlement is part of the DOJ's broader Combating Redlining Initiative, which has provided over \$150 million in relief to affected communities. The Fairway case marks another chapter in the DOJ's fight to dismantle discriminatory lending practices that have denied Black Americans equal access to housing.

As Election Day approaches, voting rights continue to be a flashpoint. The DOJ has filed lawsuits against Virginia and

Alabama for voter purges targeting minority communities, raising concerns of disenfranchisement. In Virginia, the DOJ alleges that the state violated the National Voter Registration Act's “quiet period” by removing voters too close to the election, risking widespread confusion. Alabama's similar actions led a federal court to order the reinstatement of purged voters, ensuring that eligible individuals can participate in the electoral process.

Federal observers have been deployed to monitor critical areas' compliance with civil rights laws. The Justice Department has committed to protecting the right to vote, and officials have stated that they recognize the high stakes for communities of color in

an election where race has become a central issue.

Meanwhile, Harris has called for unity and an end to divisive rhetoric, warning that a Trump presidency could further erode the nation's commitment to civil rights. “We don't want a leader who is constantly trying to have Americans point their fingers at each other,” Harris said. “I meet with people all the time who tell me, ‘Can we please just have discourse about how we're going to invest in the aspirations, ambitions, and dreams of the American people?’ Knowing that regardless of people's color or the language their grandmother speaks, we all have the same dreams and aspirations and want a president who invests in those, not in hate and division.”



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# Children's Advocacy Center of Collin County revs up for 32nd annual Teddy Bear Ride this Sunday

Grab a teddy bear and join hundreds of North Texas motorcycle riders for a charity ride benefiting abused and neglected children in Collin County. Pre-registration is now available for the 32nd Annual Teddy Bear Ride which supports the work of Children's Advocacy Center of Collin County, an organization that collaborates with law enforcement and Child Protective Services to facilitate the investigation, prosecution, and treat-



DWG Studio

ment of child abuse.

The event will be held on Sunday, Oct. 27. Registration opens at 8 a.m. with kickstands up at 9:45 a.m. The ride begins at the IKEA

Frisco (7171 Ikea Dr.) and will end at the Harley-Davidson Financial Services Headquarters.

Presented by Harley-Davidson Financial Services,

this year's 60-mile ride begins at IKEA in Frisco and will end at Harley-Davidson Financial Services in Plano. Event highlights include family-friendly activities, vendors, live music by rock-n-roll band Ashmore, lunch provided by Credit Union of Texas Community Grill food truck, Smoken SB BBQ and Catering Co., and dessert by Local Creamery. This year's honorary grand marshals are 106.1 KISS-FM's Kellie Rasberry and

her husband, Allen Evans.

Participants adorn their bikes with plush new teddy bears and stuffed animals which eventually make their way into the arms of children who come to the CACCC for help following a disclosure of abuse.

"The Teddy Bear Ride provides one of the most crucial parts of the formula, the teddy bear. The key towards Hope, Healing and Justice for the children," said longtime Teddy Bear Ride committee member,

David Kellaway.

"Partnering with Children's Advocacy Center of Collin County, allows us the opportunity to have a positive impact on abused and neglected children and families, right here in our own community," said Jim Price, Director of Collections with Harley-Davidson Financial Services.

More information on this event and the the Children's Advocacy Center of Collin County can be found at [www.caccollincounty.org](http://www.caccollincounty.org)

## PARENTS, from Page 6

pick up basic social and emotional skills on their own. They learn them over time, through practice, and through interactions with others. Take time to get back to basics. Practice breathing and calm-down exercises. Work on sharing. Talk about identity and belonging. If you're looking for beautiful, culturally diverse picture books to help reinforce basic social and emotional skills, explore First Book and School Library Journal's booklists.

### 4. Take time to listen.

A lot of families had A LOT of extra "screen time" in the last couple of years. Don't feel bad about this—you're doing great! If you want to think of ways to diversify your children's media diet, now is a great time

to remember that using our ears is a great way to learn.

As part of Big Heart World, we've produced an album of songs called the Big Heart Beats album. Have a listen. (And don't be surprised if the songs get stuck in your head or cause an impromptu kitchen dance party.) Our Little Kids, Big Hearts podcast also aims to help parents and educators introduce big topics in social and emotional learning to their children. Listen together at bedtime or in the car to help start a meaningful family conversation. My four-year-old and I re-listened to the "upstanding" episode recently and had a good chat about ways he could stand up for his friends.

### 5. Parents can find safe ways to get together.

Mother and psychologist at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia Dr. Kavita Tahilani shared some handy tips to encourage play and peer interactions.

Most importantly, we must remember to be flexible and forgiving to our children and to ourselves. This has been a multi-year disruption to our lives. Parents can support their children. But it will take time and focus, new resources, and new approaches to address the impact moving forward.

*Julia Levy is the executive director of Sparkler Learning, the nonprofit family engagement organization producing Big Heart World with Noggin and the National Head Start Association.*

## DEI, from Page 5

sizes that Black women assigned to whiter teams often logged fewer billable and more training hours, which directly correlated with lower performance

evaluations. This created a cycle of disadvantages that reduced their chances for promotion.

"Ultimately, I interpret these findings as confir-

mation that while, as a society, we may be making progress in diversifying workplaces on some dimensions, Black women may still face additional hurdles for promotion at work," Linos stated.

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# Dallas Mavericks poised to build on special foundation

By Jamal Baker  
NDG Contributing Writer

Greatness is never given to those who seek this type of glory in the sport of basketball—the elusive Larry O’Brien trophy is always earned. Whether it is Michael Jordan losing to the Bad Boy Pistons three straight seasons in the playoffs or LeBron James suffering two losses in The Finals before securing his first championship—both overcame heartbreak before reaching the mountaintop.

Luka Dončić is on the precipice of taking the next step in leading the Dallas Mavericks to their second championship in franchise history. After finishing last season as runner-ups to the Boston Celtics, the Maver-



Dončić photo by Erik Drost (CC BY 2.0)

icks have made key additions to a roster that is complete from top to bottom.

Klay Thompson signed a three-year, \$50 million contract with the Mavericks, ending his legendary tenure with the four-time champion Golden State Warriors. In his age 34 season, Thompson averaged 17.9 points—his lowest since 2012-13. Thompson has a chance to see more

open looks than he is accustomed to as Dončić and Kyrie Irving demand the attention of an entire defensive gameplan.

“It was a no-brainer for us, especially after The Finals, we knew that we were a Klay Thompson away,” general manager Nico Harrison said.

Harrison was busy at work this summer shoring up the Dallas bench unit by

also adding Naji Marshall, Quentin Grimes, and Spencer Dinwiddie. History suggests that moves made by Harrison will pay big dividends as he has helped the Mavericks reach two conference finals and the NBA Finals during his time as the architect of the roster. Fresh off a multi-year contract extension signed this summer, Harrison continues to prove why he is one of the best general managers in the league.

The development of sophomore center Dereck Lively II will be an x-factor for the championship contending Maverick squad. Lively II has expanded his game beyond the paint and will now be a threat to knock down the corner and top of the arc three-point shot. He also displayed

feathery touch around the rim during the preseason while still providing the show stopping dunks and rebounding dominance showcased during his rookie season.

Head coach Jason Kidd deserves credit for building a culture of trust and being a true leader in the locker room. The most successful teams have great team chemistry and Kidd has harbored an environment where players simply enjoy playing with one another. Along with Harrison, Kidd also signed a multi-year contract extension—keeping the core of the organization intact.

“We’re in a great place right now. I think a lot of us are motivated. We’re focused. We’re driven. We have our priorities straight,

and we’re just ready for another long journey. I think the most important thing for us is remaining healthy,” Kyrie Irving stated.

The Dallas Mavericks begin their season Thursday, Oct. 24, welcoming ascending superstar Victor Wembanyama and the San Antonio Spurs to the American Airlines Center. The Spurs serve as an intriguing matchup with Wembanyama being a problem the league has yet to solve. The Mavericks also happen to have an ace up their sleeve in Dončić and Picasso reincarnated as a basketball player in Irving. Dončić will become the face of the league this season winning his first MVP averaging a triple double. Irving

See MAVS, Page 11



# Film Review: 'Conclave' is a likely Oscar contender in multiple categories

By Dwight Brown  
NNPA Film Critic

(\*\*\*\*) If you told this twisted story at a cocktail party, everyone would be entranced.

They'd listen attentively, right up until the end with the big reveal. That's when they'd drop their martini glasses, gasp and laugh at how providence has bigger plans for humanity than conniving men could ever fathom.

British writer Robert Harris started this yarn in 2016 with the release of his novel



Lucian Msamati in *Conclave*. (Photo via NNPA)

*Conclave*. A taut thriller/suspense/mystery set in the Vatican. The pope has died and the cardinals who surround him gather to elect a

new leader of the Catholic faith. It won't be a simple vote. Power, corruption, greed and betrayal are in the mix. God help everyone. Or

at least smack the devious plotters down.

Now, this riveting film adaption raises the stakes, concocting an extraordinary drama/thriller worthy of Academy awards for Best Picture, Adapted Screenplay, Direction and countless acting awards. That's because director Edward Berger (*All Quiet on the Western Front*) and Oscar-nominated screenwriter Peter Straughan (*Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy*) pool their thoughtful, cunning and superb skills and the result is an incisive religious parable

about those who connive. A cautionary tale for scammers and schemers.

The Holy Father (Bruno Novelli) has passed. His body lays in his chambers on pure white bedding. Hands and arms cross his chest. His spirit must be hovering around the room and aghast as what it sees. Over-ambitious cardinals view the pontiff. Out of respect, curiosity and in grief. Also, eager to campaign to be the next pope. At the late father's command, Cardinal Lawrence (Ralph Fiennes, *Schindler's List*) will orga-

nize the voting and election. However, a power struggle has already begun within the conclave.

Lawrence, who is the dean of the group, is pushed by the liberal cardinal Bellini (Stanley Tucci), his friend, to thwart the efforts of the racist, Italian nationalist Cardinal Tedesco (Sergio Castellitto) from Venice, who could set the Vatican back 50 years. The devious Cardinal Tremblay (John Lithgow) of Montreal would set his mother afire

See **CONCLAVE**, Page 11

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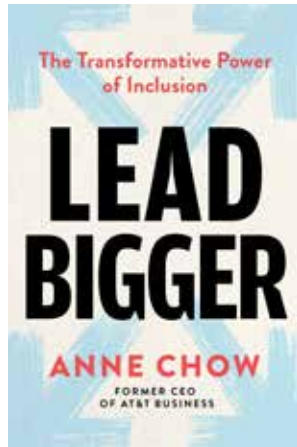


# NDG Book Review: 'Lead Bigger' brings inclusion into management style

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

The last kid picked. If you were ever in that position, you probably remember what it was like. Being out of the loop, the last person tapped, the one left out, none of this feels good – whether you're a kid or an adult and an employee. So how do you ensure that your team belongs? Read the new book "Lead Bigger" by Anne Chow, and choose it.

When Anne Chow started working at AT&T years ago, she was often the only: the only woman in the room, the only woman in the department, the only Asian-American in the



building. Because of that, as she moved up the ladder to a better position, she decided that old ways of leadership in business just didn't work anymore.

She began to expand her outlook into what she calls

"leading bigger," which is "really about inclusive leadership..." DEI leadership, she says, is "more narrow" than leading bigger, and the latter seems to work better for employees and stakeholders (a term Chow prefers). Leading bigger isn't a "task," but "a refreshing and revitalizing way to approach work..."

The first step to leading bigger is to know your company's purpose and identify those who have a stake in its success. Bring your team together and be curious about their viewpoints. Define the values you want your company to reflect. Look hard at the places in which you're sell-

ing, including online and on social media. Be flexible, but intentional.

Knowing that you may lead several generations of workers, be aware of the differences you'll face, including their well-being, physically and mentally. Know that inclusive support is more than just for LGBTQ individuals and those of other races, but also for those needing childcare and eldercare. Connect with your employees often and ask for feedback but don't allow derogatory comments. Remember that we all have unconscious bias. Give employees room

to be authentic. And finally, remember that you're not just leading today's workers. You're setting up employees for the future.

At first glance, you may think "Lead Bigger" is quite wordy. You'd be right on that. There's a considerable bit of repetition, too, and a lot of the common-sensical. And yet, find this book and you're about to be schooled.

Being inclusive may feel like a minefield these days, but author Anne Chow offers useful, usable guidelines that may need some outside buy-in but that can be implemented right now, today. Her ideas are careful-

ly curated and may surprise readers who aren't used to thinking in a bigger circle; they cover a wide variety of concerns and cautions, and present things to think about. This gives the savviest of readers the chance to take the process further by tailoring it to their business and by including cultures and issues that aren't addressed.

If an old-school style of management isn't working, or if you're struggling with inclusion or being included, you may find the solutions you seek here. If you need a book to help, "Lead Bigger" should be the first one picked.

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## CONCLAVE, from Page 9

to win the post, so imagine the machinations he's got in mind for his competitors. Shockingly, as the first voting takes place, Nigerian Cardinal Adeyemi (Lucian Cardinale) becomes a contender. At the last minute the Latino Cardinal Benitez (Carlos Diez) joins the quorum of sneaks, saboteurs, do-gooders and holy men. Sister Agnes (Isabella Rossellini), head of the nuns, bears witness. She knows all the secrets as accusations are made and character assassinations hurled: "You lack the courage to be pope!"

Viewers may think they know where this narrative and its characters are headed, but the story, screenplay, direction and cast will take them on wild goose chases. Down the wrong paths, to dead ends and finally to a moment not even the most seasoned mystery book reader could guess. Berger is the guide on this religious journey that is full of more lies, upheavals, stonewalling and gamesmanship than an afternoon's worth of soap operas. There is no wrinkle in Berger's game. No fault in his intuition. His directing skills are flawless, and he tells this tale better than anyone could imagine.

Berger's efforts are helped tremendously by all

## MAVS, from Page 8

will also embark upon a revenge tour after being disrespected by ESPN's top 100 players list where he was ranked 25. Sit back and enjoy the ride Mavs fans—your Dallas Mavericks are ready to usurp the throne.

those who set the time and majestic place: Chambers and rooms (production designer Suzie Davis, Saltburn), props (set decorator Cynthia Sleiter), lavish robes (costume designer Lisy Christi, All Quiet on the Western Front), deep red colors (art director Roberta Federico), devine music (Volker Bertelmann, All Quiet on the Western Front) and exquisitely captivating lighting and composition (cinematographer Stéphanie Fontaine, Jackie). The atmosphere and artifacts trap viewers' attention pulling them into a sequestered place, the Sistine Chapel,

where a few will decide who will lead a billion people of their faith.

You don't have to be religious to see the genius of this film. Even if you've

viewed other papal movies, you won't be ready for this one. There's no precursor.

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

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### NOTICE OF ELECTION

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the City of Dallas, Texas has called a special election to be held within the City of Dallas, Texas on Tuesday, November 5, 2024.

- FOR**                    **PROPOSITION A**  
 **AGAINST**            Shall Chapter 40A of the Dallas City Code, known as the employees' retirement fund of the City of Dallas, be amended in accordance with Ordinance No. 32801 to: add, revise, and delete various definitions; provide amended terms and term limits of the board; modify the retirement fund board's powers and duties; specify the date the board shall adopt the actuarially determined contribution rate, the current total adjusted total obligation rate, the current total obligation rate, and the pension obligation bond credit rate for each fiscal year; provide amended contribution amounts for the city and employees; provide a contribution maximum for Tier A and Tier B employees; provide that the city may contribute additional monies to the retirement fund in its sole discretion; amend the modifications of contribution rates; provide guardrails with respect to the calculation of the actuarially determined contribution and incorporating the guardrails into actuarial assumptions; and amend the procedure to amend Chapter 40A?
- FOR**                    **PROPOSITION B**  
 **AGAINST**            Shall the Dallas City Charter be amended by adding a preamble that declares the city to be an equitable democracy, comprised of representatives that act to make the city fair, equitable, just, and safe for all residents?
- FOR**                    **PROPOSITION C**  
 **AGAINST**            Increasing Salaries for the Mayor and Councilmembers  
 Shall Chapter III, Section 4(a) of the Dallas City Charter be amended to increase the annual salary for the mayor to \$110,000 and the annual salaries for councilmembers to \$90,000 with salaries subject to a yearly adjustment equal to the year-over-year percentage increase in the local consumer price index, effective January 1, 2025?
- FOR**                    **PROPOSITION D**  
 **AGAINST**            Removing Election Date from the Charter  
 Shall Chapter IV, Section 3 of the Dallas City Charter be amended by deleting the requirement that elections for members of the city council be held in May and instead be held according to state law and as designated by city resolution or ordinance?
- FOR**                    **PROPOSITION E**  
 **AGAINST**            Eliminating the Ability for Councilmembers and Mayor to Run Again After Serving the Limit of Terms  
 Shall Chapter III, Section 3A of the Dallas City Charter be amended to eliminate the ability for members of the city council to run for city council again after serving the maximum four two-year terms and to eliminate the ability for the mayor to run for mayor again after serving the maximum two four-year terms?
- FOR**                    **PROPOSITION F**  
 **AGAINST**            Providing the City Secretary and City Auditor with Employees  
 Shall Chapter IIIA, Section 2 and Chapter IX, Section 2 of the Dallas City Charter, which requires the city council to provide assistants to the city secretary and city auditor, be amended to also require the city council to provide employees to the city secretary and city auditor?
- FOR**                    **PROPOSITION G**  
 **AGAINST**            Adding Eligibility Criteria for Serving on the Redistricting Commission  
 Shall Chapter IV, Section 5(b)(2) of the Dallas City Charter, which establishes the redistricting commission, be amended by adding eligibility criteria for serving on the redistricting commission?



- FOR**            **PROPOSITION H**  
 **AGAINST**      Eliminating the Requirement that Members of Boards and Commissions Created by Charter be Registered to Vote, Qualified Voters, or Qualified Taxpaying Citizens  
 Shall Chapter IV, Section 5; Chapter XV, Section 3; Chapter XVI, Section 1; and Chapter XVII, Section 2 of the Dallas City Charter be amended by eliminating the requirement that members of the redistricting commission, city plan commission, civil service board, and park and recreation board be registered to vote, qualified voters, or qualified taxpaying citizens?
- FOR**            **PROPOSITION I**  
 **AGAINST**      Amending Initiative and Referendum Petition Procedure by Extending Deadline for Petition Signature Collection from 60 Days to 120 Days and Reducing Number of Signatures Required on a Petition to Initiate a Referendum  
 Shall Chapter XVIII, Section 11 of the Dallas City Charter, which establishes procedures for initiative and referendum of ordinances, be amended to extend the deadline petitioners must meet to collect required signatures from 60 days to 120 days and reduce the number of signatures required on a petition from 10 percent of the qualified voters of the City of Dallas to five percent?
- FOR**            **PROPOSITION J**  
 **AGAINST**      Allowing City Council to Replace City Board and Commission Members Before Completion of Board and Commission Terms  
 Shall Chapter XXIV, Section 17(b) of the Dallas City Charter be amended to allow city council's appointments to city boards and commissions to be replaced by city council prior to completion of a member's two-year term?
- FOR**            **PROPOSITION L**  
 **AGAINST**      Adding the Office of the Inspector General to the Charter  
 Shall Chapter XI, Section 2 be amended and a new chapter be added to the Dallas City Charter that establishes the Office of the Inspector General with the Inspector General being appointed by city council and lists the duties of the Inspector General?
- FOR**            **PROPOSITION O**  
 **AGAINST**      Amending the Appointment Procedure and Qualifications of Associate Municipal Judges  
 Shall Chapter VIII, Section 6 of the Dallas City Charter be amended to clarify the terms of associate municipal judges and state that associate municipal judges are appointed by city council, receive assignments from the administrative judge or the administrative judge's designee, and must be residents of Dallas within four months of the date of appointment and practicing attorneys in good standing?
- FOR**            **PROPOSITION P**  
 **AGAINST**      Deleting the Requirement to Pay One-Half the Costs of Administrative Law Judge  
 Shall Chapter XVI, Section 12.1 of the Dallas City Charter be amended by deleting the requirement that a city employee who appeals his or her discharge or reduction in grade to an administrative law judge pay one-half of the costs attributed to having the administrative law judge conduct the appeal hearing?
- FOR**            **PROPOSITION Q**  
 **AGAINST**      Technical Amendments to Conform to State Law, City Code, and Actual Practices; to Correct Terms; and to Clarify Language  
 Shall Chapter III, Section 3; Chapter III, Section 4; Chapter III, Chapter 8(b); Chapter III, Section 13(a); Chapter III, Section 19; Chapter IV, Section 6(a); Chapter IV, Section 6(c)(2); Chapter IV, Section 13; Chapter XI, Section 1; Chapter XI, Section 3; Chapter XII, Section 4; Chapter XIII, Section 2(2); Chapter XIII, Section 9; Chapter XIV, Section 8; Chapter XV, Section 3; Chapter XV, Section 4; Chapter XVI, Section 3(b)(1); Chapter XVI, Section 7; Chapter XVI, Section 10(a); Chapter XVI, Section 11(b); Chapter XVIII, Section 7; Chapter XVIII, Section 11(1); Chapter XVIII, Section 15; Chapter XIX, Section 7; Chapter XXII, Section 2; Chapter XXII, Section 3; Chapter XXII, Section 4(1); Chapter XXII, Section 10; and Chapter XXIV of the Dallas City Charter be amended to conform to state law, conform to the city code, match actual practices, correct terms, clarify language, and other technical amendments?



- FOR  
 AGAINST

**PROPOSITION R**Reform Marijuana Enforcement

Shall the Dallas City Charter be amended by adding a new section in Chapter XXIV that reforms marijuana possession enforcement by prohibiting the Dallas Police Department from making arrests or issuing citations for marijuana possession or considering the odor of marijuana as probable cause for search or seizure, except as part of a violent felony or high priority narcotics felony investigation; making enforcement of Class A (currently, two to four ounces) and Class B (currently, up to two ounces) misdemeanor marijuana possession the Dallas Police Department's lowest enforcement priority; and prohibiting city funds or personnel from being used to test cannabis-related substances to determine whether a substance meets the legal definition of marijuana, except in limited circumstances?

- FOR  
 AGAINST

**PROPOSITION S**Granting Standing to Residents and Waiving Governmental Immunity

Shall the Dallas City Charter be amended by adding a new chapter that grants standing to any resident of Dallas to bring a lawsuit against the city to require the city to comply with provisions of the city charter, city ordinances, and state law; entitles claimants to seek declaratory and injunctive relief against the city and recover costs and reasonable attorney's fees; and waives the city's governmental immunity from suit and liability in claims brought under this amendment?

- FOR  
 AGAINST

**PROPOSITION T**Annual Community Survey

Shall Chapter VI of the Dallas City Charter be amended by adding a new section compelling the city to conduct the city-commissioned Community Survey on an annual basis, to be completed by a minimum of 1,400 Dallas residents on their satisfaction on quality of life issues, the results of which will result in the city manager earning additional performance compensation (between 0 percent and 100 percent of the city manager's annual base salary) or the termination of the city manager?

- FOR  
 AGAINST

**PROPOSITION U**Police and Fire Funding Appropriation

Shall Chapter XI of the Dallas City Charter be amended by adding a new section compelling city council to appropriate no less than 50 percent of annual revenue that exceeds the total annual revenue of the previous year to fund the Dallas Police and Fire Pension, with any monies remaining of that 50% to be appropriated to increasing the starting compensation of officers of the Dallas Police Department and to increase the number of police officers to a minimum of 4,000, and to maintain that ratio of officers to the City of Dallas population as of the date of passage of this amendment?

Note: Propositions K, M, and N were removed per Ordinance Number 32849, approved on September 11, 2024, by the Dallas City Council.

Dates	Day of the Week	Hours
October 21-25, 2024	Monday-Friday	8 AM - 5 PM
October 26, 2024	Saturday	7 AM - 7 PM
October 27, 2024	Sunday	12 PM - 6 PM
October 28 - November 1, 2024	Monday-Friday	7 AM - 7 PM

Dallas County Early voting and Election Day locations:

<https://www.dallascountyvotes.org/voters/election/11052024-2/>

Collin County Early voting and Election Day locations and dates/times:

<https://www.collincountytx.gov/Elections/polling-locations>

Denton County Early voting and Election Day locations and dates/times:

[https://www.votedenton.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/1124\\_EV\\_Locations.pdf](https://www.votedenton.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/1124_EV_Locations.pdf)

<https://www.votedenton.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/1124-Unconsolidated-ED-Locations.pdf>

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT THE CITY SECRETARY'S OFFICE:  
 Bilierae Johnson (214) 670-5654 or Miroslava Martinez (214) 670-3809**



# Oaks of Righteousness



**Sister Tarpley**  
NDG  
Religion  
Editor



“They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the LORD for the display of his splendor” (Isaiah 61:3).

It was the worst time in my life. Feeling betrayed by God, I stormed out of the door and walked up the heavily wooded hill behind my house.

Reaching the hilltop, I raged at God. “God!” I shouted, “Is this how you treat someone who is faithful to You?! I’ve waited and waited. I’ve worked and prayed.

And for what? For this?” My lungs hurt and

my throat was raw - but I had one more thing to say to God. “I hate You, God! I hate You!”

I sat down on an old oak tree that had broken at the base and was lying on the ground. For the next three hours, I sobbed uncontrollably, unable to speak, unable to pray.

I wondered how God could abandon me. I wondered if He even existed. Maybe I had wasted my life believing in a myth.

Finally, I got up to leave. When I looked over at the fallen oak that I had sat on, I noticed something interesting.

The fallen tree was pointed toward the base of another oak tree - a tree that stood strong and tall with wide spreading branches.

At that moment, I heard a quiet voice inside me say, “Today, like this broken oak tree, you are a broken man.

But, this brokenness was

needed in order for you to become like the large, strong oak tree that stands before you.

Years later, I would look back and know that God Himself had spoken to me out of my period of darkness and silence.”

Even when I raged at God and told Him I hated Him, God was faithful and forgiving.

Today, He has replaced the ashes of my despair with the oil of gladness. He has planted me firmly like a strong and sturdy oak tree, and I live my life in gratitude for His mercy.

Do you find yourself in a dark place? Share your true feelings with God. You’ll

be surprised how well He is willing to listen.

“It’s the simple things...” The simple things in life are the things that can irritate people and the things that can bring them the most pleasure. Thank God for the small things and the simple things.

Like the widow’s mite,

a small thing to one person can be great thing to someone else. Ask God to help you to stop and think before you react to little things that irritate you.

Ask God to help you to always appreciate the simple things of life, for they are truly what that you can enjoy.

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If you notice a change in your breasts, it's time to visit your doctor.  
[parklandhealth.org/mammograms-save-lives](http://parklandhealth.org/mammograms-save-lives)

**Parkland**

**DOING THE RIGHT THING**

“The time is always right to do what is right.” — Martin Luther King, Jr.

Dallas CASA needs more Black volunteers to serve our community’s abused and neglected children living in foster care.

PLEASE JOIN US FOR AN ONLINE INFORMATION SESSION:

Thursday, Oct 24 6:00 - 7:00 p.m. Thursday, Nov 7 6:00 - 7:00 p.m.  
Friday, Nov 1 12:00 - 1:00 p.m. Friday, Nov 15 12:00 - 1:00 p.m.

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

**DALLAS CASA**  
Court Appointed Special Advocates





**Democrats are  
fighting for our rights,  
and we won't go back.**



**Our future is on  
the ballot.  
Your vote matters.**

**Make a Plan to Vote.**



**Visit [IWillVote.com](https://www.IWillVote.com) to  
make a plan to vote today.**

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