



# North Dallas Gazette

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## Black federal employees targeted in public blacklist as Trump and Musk continue assault on diversity

By Stacy M. Brown  
NNPA Senior National Correspondent

A right-wing nonprofit backing Donald Trump has published the names and photos of more than 50 federal employees, many of them Black, in a move that civil rights advocates warn could endanger lives and deepen systemic discrimination in government agencies. The "D.E.I. bureaucrat watch list," compiled by the American Accountability Foundation, identifies workers based on their support for diversity, equity, and inclusion (D.E.I.) initiatives, past social media activity, or donations to Democratic candidates.

The employees—many of them serving at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and other federal health agencies—have been labeled by the organization as "woke D.E.I. devotees"



The publication of the list raises concerns that government employees will face increased threats, harassment, and job insecurity. (Photo via NNPA)

and targets for termination under Trump's administration. The group claims these individuals are "anti-American bad actors." The organization has circulated dossiers detailing their purported offenses, which include reposting content about ra-

cial disparities in healthcare or making critical remarks about Trump's policies.

Supporters of the targeted workers have expressed alarm, warning

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#### People In The News ...



Sen. Chuck Schumer



Isaac Julien

*NDG Quote of the Week:* "We become not a melting pot but a beautiful mosaic. Different people, different beliefs, different yearnings, different hopes, different dreams."  
- Jimmy Carter

## Sen. Chuck Schumer

Just three weeks into his second term, President Donald Trump's grand promises of a "golden age for America" are already crumbling, Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer charged in a blistering letter to colleagues. Schumer accused the administration of prioritizing wealth and power for the elite while systematically dismantling government services and endangering national security.

Schumer warned that Trump has handed control of his administration to "cronies, sycophants, and radicals" committed to implementing Project 2025—a far-right blueprint designed to gut federal agencies and consolidate power among



the wealthy. The Senate minority leader outlined a sweeping Republican assault on the civil service, including the firing of independent watchdogs, illegal attempts to purge public servants, and efforts to strip away consumer protections and law enforcement oversight. He also accused Trump's allies of hijacking government

databases and recklessly compromising Americans' private information, including Social Security numbers and tax records, which he warned could leave millions vulnerable and expose sensitive data to foreign adversaries.

Schumer described the Republican agenda as a direct attack on working families, accusing Trump and his allies of seeking to enrich the wealthy at the expense of the middle class. He pointed to the GOP's top legislative priority: tax cuts for the wealthy, warning that their plan would "explode the deficit" while slashing funding for healthcare, education, housing, and manufacturing jobs.

Despite the Republican majority, Schumer declared

that Senate Democrats would not stand by idly. He announced that Senate Democrats had launched a Whistleblower Portal for public servants to report corruption and abuses of power. He vowed that Democrats would hold Trump accountable through congressional investigations, demand letters, and legal action to preserve public records and block illegal policies. He also emphasized that Democratic attorneys general and advocacy groups have already secured court victories against Trump's policies, including injunctions blocking funding freezes and efforts to purge civil servants. He pledged continued legal

support to counter "lawless actions."

With a government funding deadline looming on March 14, Schumer criticized Republicans for prioritizing judicial confirmations and tax cuts over bipartisan budget negotiations. He warned of a potential "Trump Shutdown" and vowed that Senate Democrats would use their votes to "steady the ship" and prevent devastating funding cuts. Schumer also praised Democratic Senators Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota and Cory Booker of New Jersey for leading efforts to expose the real-world consequences of Trump's policies, citing grassroots

protests and public outcry as key factors in forcing the administration to reverse an Office of Management and Budget freeze. He called for continued pressure to block further rollbacks, arguing that the stakes could not be higher.

Schumer warned that the early weeks of Trump's second term have confirmed fears that his administration would serve only the wealthiest Americans. "Trump's promise of a 'golden age' is merely glitter," Schumer wrote, urging Democrats to remain vigilant in protecting American families from what he called the administration's "coordinated assault on democracy."

## Isaac Julien

(Black PR Wire) SAN FRANCISCO – The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco (the "Fine Arts Museums") are pleased to announce Isaac Julien: I Dream a World. Over the past 25 years, artist Isaac Julien has developed a singular, choreographic style of moving image exhibition in the form of immersive multichannel film and video installations. Distinguished by their compelling fusion of fact and fiction, social critique, and aesthetic immersion, Julien's works offer poetic reflections on political and cultural events that have shaped the lives of individuals and societies around the world—especially for those on the margins of power.

Featuring 10 major video installations made across Europe, Africa, the Caribbean, Asia, and the Americas between 1999 and 2022 plus



Jere Keys / Wikipedia (CC BY 2.0)

early films, I Dream a World is the first comprehensive survey of Julien's work in a US museum setting and the largest exhibition focusing on Julien's film and video installation works to date.

Whether centering historical moments such as the first American-led expedition to reach the North Pole in 1908-09, or the often fateful but ongoing migration of North African refugees across the Mediterranean Sea, Julien's subjects are never locked in one time or place. The same is true for his portraits of individuals

like abolitionist Frederick Douglass and architect Lina Bo Bardi, or his subversive address of cultural institutions like Hollywood and the Museum as arbiters and archives of social ideals, constructs, and hierarchies of the West.

The first major exhibition at the Fine Arts Museums dedicated entirely to an artist working with the moving image in the form of multiscreen video installations, I Dream a World will start with Julien's groundbreaking films Looking for Langston (1989), which gave definition to the genre of New Queer Cinema, Lost Boundaries (1981-87) and This Is Not An Aids Advertisement (1987). Unfolding through the de Young's Herbst Special Exhibition galleries, the installations will be grouped according to their thematic resonance and connected through a central

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# NNPA calls for boycott as companies ditch DEI

WASHINGTON, DC - The National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA), representing the Black Press of America, has announced the planning and implementation of a national public education and selective buying campaign across the nation in direct response to those corporate entities that have dismantled their respective Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) commitments, programs and staffing.

"We are the trusted voice of Black America, and we will not be silent or nonresponsive to the rapid rise of renewed Jim Crow racist policies in corporate America," stated NNPA Chairman Bobby R. Henry Sr. "The Black Press of America continues to remain on the frontline keeping our families and communities informed and engaged on all the issues that impact our quality of life."

At a recent convening of NNPA member publishers and editors, a united resolve was reached that each member publication of the NNPA will begin a

licies, divisive leadership, and economic apartheid in America.

"We note forthrightly that Black Americans spend \$2 trillion dollars

and realign to question why we continue to spend our money with companies that do not respect us," Chavis continued. "This now must come to an end. These contradictions will not go unchallenged by 50 million Black Americans who have struggled for centuries to ensure equality, fairness and inclusion in our nation's democracy."

A selective buying campaign involves exercising the right to select what we spend our money on and who we spend our money with.

The following are some of the major American companies that have publicly retreated from Diversity, Equity and Inclusion:

- Target
- Lowe's
- John Deere
- Walmart
- Meta
- Tractor Supply
- Amazon
- McDonald's
- Ford

*"We note forthrightly that Black Americans spend \$2 trillion dollars annually as consumers of products and services throughout the United States."*

**- Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis Jr.  
NNPA President/CEO**

national public education campaign coupled with the release of research data on those America companies that are engaging in efforts to sanction racial injustice, inequitable po-

annually as consumers of products and services throughout the United States," NNPA President and CEO Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis Jr. emphasized. "We now must evaluate

# Reform the Presidential Records Act — or risk losing DOGE records

(Freedom of the Press Foundation) - President Donald Trump and Elon Musk are trying to use the Presidential Records Act's giant loopholes to hide records for the Department of Government Efficiency. 404 Media's Jason Koebler reports that staff at the U.S. Digital Service, which is being rebranded as the U.S. DOGE Service, will transition from being a Federal Records Act entity into a Presidential Records Act

entity. This means the public will have to wait until 2034 to file Freedom of Information Act requests for DOGE records, and hope they aren't destroyed before then.

"DOGE's activities are rapidly reshaping the federal government and the public needs to understand what it's doing," said Lauren Harper, the first Daniel Ellsberg Chair on Government Secrecy at Freedom

of the Press Foundation. "That won't be possible unless Congress immediately fixes the Presidential Records Act.

"If DOGE is subject to the Presidential Records Act instead of the Federal Records Act, this means that President Donald Trump, who famously tried to flush his records down a toilet, ultimately gets to decide which DOGE records will be destroyed and which will be preserved. This also

means that the public won't be able to file Freedom of Information Act requests with DOGE until five years after the end of the current Trump administration — which won't be until 2034. By then, how many DOGE records will be intact?

"This should serve as a wake-up call for Congress to fix the Presidential Records Act so the public doesn't have to worry that more records may end up being flushed."

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# Cancer vaccine shows promise for patients with late stage kidney cancer

(Newswise) — BOSTON — Dana-Farber Cancer Institute researchers report that all nine patients in a clinical trial being treated for stage III or IV clear cell renal cell carcinoma (a form of kidney cancer), generated a successful anti-cancer immune response after initiation of a personalized cancer vaccine. The vaccines were administered after surgery to remove the tumor and are designed to train the body's immune system to recognize and eliminate any remaining tumor cells. At the time of data cut-off (median of 34.7 months), all patients remained cancer-free.

The results of this phase 1 trial were reported today in *Nature*.

"We're very excited about these results, which show such a positive response in all nine patients with kidney cancer," says co-senior author and co-principal investigator Toni Choueiri, MD, Director of the Lank Center for Genitourinary Cancer at Dana-Farber.

"This study was the result of a close partnership between our NeoVax team, our colleagues at the Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard, and our colleagues at the Lank Center for Genitourinary Cancer at Dana-Farber," says co-senior author Catherine Wu, MD, chief of the Division of Stem Cell Transplantation



*All nine patients treated at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in a phase 1 trial of a personalized cancer vaccine for patients with stage III or IV kidney cancer with a high risk of recurrence, generated a successful anti-cancer immune response. (Dana-Farber Cancer Institute)*

and Cellular Therapies at Dana-Farber and an institute member at Broad, who developed the NeoVax vaccine technology used to create the personalized cancer vaccines for this trial. "We are thrilled to report these results."

Patrick Ott, MD, PhD, director of the Center for Cancer Vaccines at Dana-Farber, and Derin Keskin, PhD, immunologist at the Center for Cancer Vaccines at Dana-Farber, are also co-senior authors. David A. Braun, MD, PhD, formerly of Dana-Farber and Harvard Medical School, and now a medical oncologist and physician-scientist

at Yale Cancer Center and Yale School of Medicine is first author.

Standard treatment for patients with stage III or IV clear cell renal cell carcinoma is surgery to remove the tumor. Surgery can be followed by immunotherapy with pembrolizumab, an immune checkpoint inhibitor. Pembrolizumab induces an immune response that reduces the risk of the cancer coming back. However, about two-thirds of patients can still recur and have limited treatment options.

"Patients with stage III or IV kidney cancer are at high risk of recurrence," says Choueiri. "The tools

we have to lower that risk are not perfect and we are relentlessly looking for more."

In this investigator-initiated trial, Choueiri and Braun treated nine patients with stage III or IV clear cell renal cell carcinoma with a personalized cancer vaccine after surgery. Five patients also received ipilimumab with the vaccine.

The vaccines are personalized to recognize the patient's individual cancer using the tumor tissue removed during surgery as a guide. The team extracts molecular features from the tumor cells that differentiate them from normal cells. These features, called neoantigens, are tiny fragments of mutant proteins that exist in the cancer but not in any other cells in the body.

The team uses predictive algorithms to determine which of these neoantigens to include in the vaccine based on their likelihood to induce an immune response. The vaccine is then manufactured and administered to the patient in a series of initial doses followed by two boosters.

"This approach is truly distinct from vaccine attempts in kidney cancer" says Braun. "We pick targets that are unique to the cancer and different from any normal part of the body, so the immune system can be effectively "steered" to-

wards the cancer in a very specific way. We learned which specific targets in the cancer are most susceptible to immune attack and demonstrated that this approach can generate long-lasting immune responses, directing the immune system to recognize cancer. We believe this work can form a foundation for the development of neoantigen vaccines in kidney cancer." While some patients experienced local reactions at the vaccine injection site, and some experienced flu-like symptoms, no higher-grade side effects were reported.

"The neoantigens targeted by this vaccine help steer immune responses towards cancer cells, with the goal to improve on-target efficacy and reduce off-target immune toxicity," says Choueiri.

When the team initiated this study eight years ago, it wasn't clear whether this approach could work in kidney cancer. It had been shown to have the potential to be effective in melanoma, which has many more mutations and therefore many possible neoantigens.

But kidney cancer is a disease with fewer mutations, and therefore fewer targets to manufacture the vaccine. It was important for the investigators to learn as much as possible from this early phase study about how the vaccine

influences an immune response to the tumor.

Through a series of analyses, the team found that the vaccine induced an immune response within three weeks, the number of vaccine-induced T cells increased by a mean of 166-fold, and these T cells remained in the body at high levels for up to three years. In vitro studies also showed that the vaccine-induced T cells were active against the patient's own tumor cells.

"We observed a rapid, substantial, and durable expansion of new T cell clones related to the vaccine," says Ott. "These results support the feasibility of creating a highly immunogenic personalized neoantigen vaccine in a lower mutation burden tumor and are encouraging, though larger scale studies will be required to fully understand the clinical efficacy of this approach."

Clinical trials with larger number of patients are needed to confirm the vaccine's effectiveness and explore its full potential. An ongoing multicenter international randomized study uses a similar neoantigen-targeting personalized cancer vaccine will be administered in combination with immunotherapy pembrolizumab (NCT06307431). Choueiri serves as the co-chair of its Scientific Advisory Committee.

## JULIEN, from Page 2

nave featuring archival materials.

The installations on view include Baltimore (2003), A

Marvellous Entanglement (2019), Western Union: Small Boats (2007), Lessons of the Hour (2019) - a

recent FAMSF acquisition, The Long Road to Mazatlán (1999), Paradise Omeros (2002), True North (2004), Fantôme Afrique (2005), concluding with Julien's

most recent work Once Again . . . (Statues Never Die) (2022). Ten Thousand Waves (2010) will be on view in Wilsey Court, one of the de Young's free pub-

lic spaces.

Isaac Julien: I Dream a World is organized by the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco and curated by Claudia Schmuckli, Chief

Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art. Opening April 12, 2025 at the de Young museum, the exhibition will run through July 13, 2025.

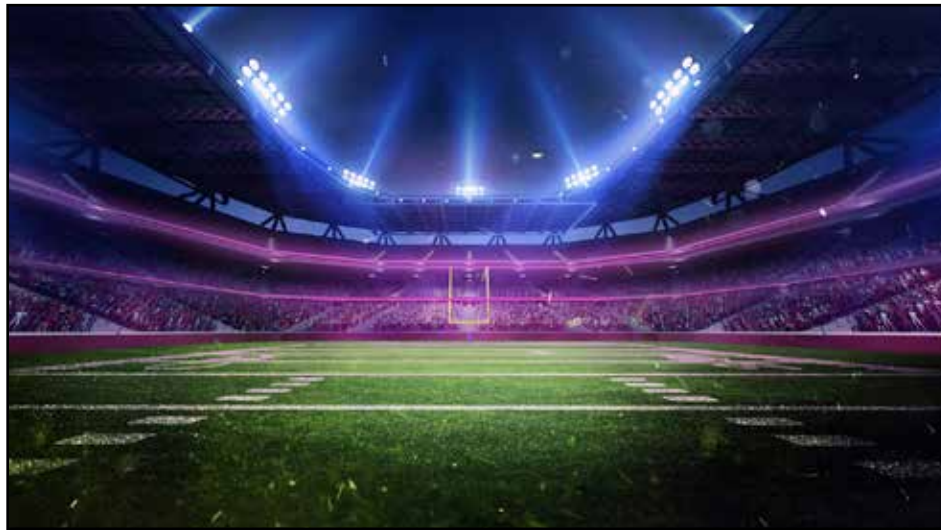
# NFL drops 'End Racism' from Super Bowl field, bows to Trump's anti-DEI agenda

By Stacy M. Brown  
NNPA Senior National  
Correspondent

The NFL has confirmed that it will remove the phrase "End Racism" from the end zones at Caesars Superdome ahead of Sunday's Super Bowl, replacing it with the neutral "Choose Love." The move comes as Donald Trump and his allies escalate attacks on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives, and major corporations—including the NFL—bend to right-wing

pressure. NFL spokesman Brian McCarthy defended the decision, claiming the change was tied to recent national tragedies, including wildfires in California, the terrorist attack in New Orleans, and fatal plane crashes in Washington, D.C., and Philadelphia. "Choose Love" is appropriate to use as our country has endured in recent weeks wildfires in Southern California, the terrorist attack here in New Orleans, the plane and helicopter crash near our nation's capital, and the plane crash in Philadelphia," McCarthy said.

The shift comes as Trump prepares to attend the Super Bowl. Since returning to power in January, Trump has aggressively targeted DEI programs, signing an executive order on his first day in office to dismantle diversity initiatives in federal agencies. Last week, following



The NFL has confirmed that it will remove the phrase "End Racism" from the end zones at Caesars Superdome ahead of Sunday's Super Bowl, replacing it with the neutral "Choose Love." (Photo via NNPA)

the midair collision of an American Airlines plane and an Army Black Hawk helicopter in Washington, D.C., Trump baselessly blamed DEI policies, continuing a pattern of using national tragedies to fuel racist propaganda.

### The NFL's History of Profiting from Social Justice

In 2024, approximately 53.5 percent of NFL players and 36.6 percent of assistant coaches were African American. Yet, when racial justice was at the forefront in 2019, the league was at odds with the Movement for Black Lives. To smooth things over, the NFL turned to Jay-Z. That year, after blackballing former San Francisco 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick for kneeling in protest of police brutality, the NFL announced a partnership with Jay-Z's Roc Nation. The deal gave Roc Nation control over the Super

Bowl halftime show, leading to high-profile performances and a star-studded entertainment spectacle each year.

However, the social justice component of Jay-Z's partnership has often been forgotten. Critics accused the rapper-turned-mogul of selling out, especially given his history of boycotting corporations he deemed racist. In 1999, Jay-Z refused to attend the Grammys after the award show ignored DMX's record-breaking success. In 2006, he called out luxury brand Cristal for dismissing hip-hop culture and immediately stopped selling the champagne at his 40/40 Club. "It has come to my attention that the managing director of Cristal, Frédéric Rouzaud, views the 'hip-hop' culture as 'unwelcome attention,'" Jay-Z said at the time, per *Decanter* magazine. "I view his comments as racist and

will no longer support any of his products through any of my various brands, including the 40/40 Club, nor in my personal life."

Despite Jay-Z's past activism, many argue his NFL deal did little to ad-

vance social justice within the league. In 2022, USA Today's Mike Freeman wrote, "There isn't a single, tangible thing you can point to that shows Jay-Z helping with the league's social justice efforts."

### The NFL's Pivot and the Response

NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell defended the league's DEI efforts at a press conference Monday, dismissing concerns that the removal of "End Racism" signaled a shift away from diversity. "Our policies have been designed to be well within the law, well within the practice," Goodell said. "There are no quotas in our system. This is about opening that funnel and bringing the best talent into the NFL." But critics argue

that the NFL is retreating in the face of Trump's influence. "Guess what @nfl? If you're against 'Stop Racism,' that means you're FOR... Racism. F-k you and every one of your advertisers," former ESPN host Keith Olbermann wrote on X.

Tennis legend Martina Navratilova called the NFL "F...n cowards."

Cleveland sports radio host Daryl Ruter criticized the league's performative activism, saying, "Sad to see NFL's performance art, literally on the field, go. Painting slogans on fields was good for business for a bit to show people you at least pretend to care." NFL reporter Mike Freeman summed up the reaction: "Well, I guess racism is over."

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# Welcoming in the new semester with hope and positivity



**Joyce Foreman**  
Dallas ISD  
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Hello, District 6!

Just like that, we're back and ready to kick off the second semester of the 2024-2025 school year!

I hope your break was filled with fun, family, and plenty of rest. Now it's

time to dive back in with fresh determination and a positive mindset. Remember, you've already come so far, and you've got what it takes to cross that finish line!

As we start this semester, I'm reminded of the saying, "A good education can change anyone. A good teacher can change everything." With that in mind, I want to take a moment to thank our amazing teach-

ers, staff, and administrators for the incredible work you do every day.

You are truly changing lives, and your dedication doesn't go unnoticed. I'm so grateful for each and every one of you. Let's make this semester one to remember.

January is Board Recognition Month, and I just want to say how grateful I am to all my fellow board members for everything

they do for our district and students every day. Serving in this role is truly a calling, and I'm proud to be part of such an esteemed group.

David W. Carter High School student making headlines: I'd like to give a big shoutout to Aiden A., a talented student from Carter. He began boxing at just 13, and recently earned the title of Texas State Silver Gloves Champion in the 143-pound weight

class. Ranked as the No. 1 boxer in Texas, Aiden represented both our state and Dallas ISD at a competition in Arkansas over Christmas break, where placed second in his class. He will also be competing in Dallas in February. Best of luck, Aiden — we're all cheering you on!

Application deadline for specialty schools: Students who want to attend specialty and neighborhood

schools, or want to request a school transfer, have until Jan. 31 to apply. These schools include P-TECH, magnet, STEAM/STEM, Montessori, personalized learning, project-based learning, transformation, visual and performing arts, dual language schools and neighborhood school transfers.

For more information, visit the Dallas ISD website.

## From the Classroom to the Living Room: Three ways families can help children build early literacy skills

By Nicol Russell, Ed.D.

As a young child, I'd help my dad comb through coupons in the Sunday newspaper each week. With his guidance, I'd find familiar pictures and letters and pieces together to recognize words, connecting the text with meaningful ideas and objects from my life before I could even read. I didn't know it then, but this weekly activity not only created fond memories with my father, but it helped build a foundation of important pre-reading skills that would support my journey to literacy. Today, just one in three fourth graders are reading on grade level, signaling an urgent need to ensure all children can build reading and writing skills even before they enter kindergarten.

State lawmakers have responded to the nation's call for action. Most states have adopted policies to



*In a recent survey, 91% of early childhood educators underscored the importance of parent/caregiver engagement for developing early literacy skills in young students. This echoes a wide body of research that shows the positive links between involved families and student achievement. (Photo via NNPA)*

transform classroom instruction to teach young children to become competent, confident emerging readers through evidence-based pedagogy aligned with the science of reading. Now, it's time to turn those policies into strong practice — from the classroom to the living room. As an early childhood curriculum leader who started her career in the classroom, I've seen first-hand the importance of ensuring educators — including those who

teach children in the critical year before kindergarten — have access to high-quality curriculum, assessments to measure learning progress over time, and meaningful training on how to best use those tools with their unique students.

I've also seen, in my work and as the parent of a young reader, the importance of building a strong home-school connection. In a recent survey, 91% of early childhood educators underscored the importance

of parent/caregiver engagement for developing early literacy skills in young students. This echoes a wide body of research that shows the positive links between involved families and student achievement. So, how can families help young children build a strong foundation for reading and writing? Here are some suggestions that are both fun and free.

### Read.

It seems like an obvious suggestion, but the power of reading — as families and independently — cannot be overstated. Research shows the number of different types of literacy materials in the home, the amount of home reading, and the opportunity to discuss reading are all related to reading proficiency. Families can start their literacy journey together by taking a trip to the public library together. At the library, children can engage in storytime events

and explore the stacks for books and magazines that catch their attention. Adults, too, should pick titles they are interested in reading independently, as modeling good reading habits is also beneficial. Back at home, families are encouraged to set aside time each day to read together. Families can make storytime more engaging for children by pausing throughout the story to ask questions about the plot or about how certain themes in the story make their child feel; using different voices for the different characters; or even acting out the story with toys.

### Incorporate literacy skills into everyday activities.

Families don't have to spend a lot of money on activities or programs to help their children on their journey to literacy. There are many ways to incorporate reading and writing skills into everyday life that are

both free and fun.

Try, for example, simply making a list. Lists are an easy way to get your child to write. Consider:

- Making a grocery list. Ask your child about their favorite meal or treat and work together to write down all of the ingredients you'll need to make it. For younger children, you can read your grocery list aloud, playfully emphasizing the letter sounds and showing them the ingredients at the market to keep them engaged.

- Writing the steps of an everyday chore. Invite your child to write and illustrate the steps in an everyday chore, like doing laundry. Then use that list for your child's future reference.

- Taking an order. Role play you are dining in a restaurant, and encourage your child to write down your order.

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## Check us out on Facebook!

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# HillmanTok University: The digital HBCU revolutionizing online education

By Stacy M. Brown  
NNPA Senior National  
Correspondent

A snow day in Georgia and a viral TikTok video unexpectedly set the foundation for what is now HillmanTok University, a virtual learning institution that has captured the attention of millions. It all started when Dr. Leah Barlow, a professor at North Carolina A&T, posted a welcome video for her African American Studies class. What she intended for just 36 students reached



nearly 4 million viewers, sparking a movement that sixth-grade teacher Cierra Hinton helped shape into something much bigger. “I was scrolling, and I saw ‘Ms. Shannon’s

Screenwriting 101 class,’ then Dr. Christie’s video, and I thought, ‘Is this an HBCU? Or did we just happen to have all Black professors?’” Hinton said during an interview on

Let It Be Known. “If I’m going to be in these fabulous courses with all these highly qualified professors, what school am I in? What are our colors? What’s our mascot? Because I want to represent my school.”

That curiosity led Hinton, who was joined on Let It Be Known News by Coach WestB, an official staff member and community leader at HillmanTok.

But Hinton coined the name HillmanTok University, inspired by Hillman College, the fictional HBCU from *The Cosby*

Show spinoff, *A Different World*. What began as a TikTok trend has since evolved into a structured educational platform that now includes a website with an extensive course catalog for Spring 2025.

HillmanTok offers over 400 courses spanning a wide range of topics. Traditional classes like Spanish 101 and law sit alongside culturally relevant subjects such as Black beauty culture, ethical issues in the criminal justice system, and even Spades 101—where students break

down the hierarchy of suits on a “molecular level.”

“We have courses that you would traditionally find in a university, but also courses that are unique to us,” Hinton explained. “We have parenting courses for those raising kids with autism, health care courses, and even ones on how to lock hair or cook. The goal is to make education accessible and relevant.”

Unlike traditional universities, HillmanTok does not charge tuition. Some

**See HBCU, Page 12**



**Black  
History  
Month**

Celebrating excellence  
in every community.

During Black History Month, we honor leaders who consistently dedicate themselves to uplifting and supporting their communities. Through their tireless efforts, they preserve the legacy of those who came before and pave the way for future generations to thrive.

Join us in celebrating fashion entrepreneur Ngozi Okaro, STEM leader Dr. Calvin Mackie, Jamie Aranda, a resilient Air Force veteran, and astronaut Ed Dwight as part of our Everyday Excellence campaign. Their drive and achievements inspire us all, serving as powerful reminders that success is within reach for those who strive for it.



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# Omega Psi Phi hosts 34th annual Talent Hunt at Frisco Performance Arts Center



*Keary Woodard-Chapter Basileus, Wayne Powe- Talent Hunt Committee Co-chair, Jada Wilson-3rd place, Zora McCall-2nd place, Vir Gandhi-1st place, Horace Satisfield-Talent Hunt Committee Co-Chair, Rod Delph-9th District Talent Hunt Chair. (Courtesy photo)*



*Brothers of Alpha Iota Iota Graduate Chapter with visiting Omega Brother. (Courtesy photo)*

FRISCO – The Alpha Iota Iota Graduate Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. hosted its 34th annual Performing Arts Talent Hunt on February 1, 2025, at the Frisco Performance Arts Center.

The evening began with an energetic performance by the youth dance group “G3,” who captivated the audience and received enthusiastic applause.

Eight talented contestants showcased their skills in instrumental music, vocal performance, dance, and oration, competing for top honors. Serving as the Mistress of Ceremonies was Lady Tasha Stafford of Fellowship Christian Center Church, who kept the event engaging and

lively. A panel of esteemed judges—Naguanda Nobles, Eric McNair, and Yvette Gardner—had the difficult task of selecting winners from an impressive pool of participants.

After intense competition, the winners were announced as follows:

- 1st Place: Vir Gandhi, a sophomore at Liberty High School (Instrumental)
- 2nd Place: Zora Mc-

Call, a sophomore at Sachse High School (Instrumental)

- 3rd Place: Jada Wilson, a student at Booker T. Washington High School

**See OMEGA, Page 15**



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# Film Review: 'Sly Lives!' is a bit long, but never misses a beat

By Dwight Brown  
NNPA Film Critic

(\*\*\*) “In the beginning it was all about the music. Then it became all about other things,” says a former band member.

That’s the path of many bright, famous musicians. Struggle. It’s all about the art. Breakthrough. Success. Excess. Downward spiral. Comeback. Fizzle under the weight of drugs, drink and celebrity. That’s the tale this informative Sly & The Family Stone tribute doc tells. That’s the notion created by Oscar®-winning filmmaker Ahmir “Questlove” Thompson whose Summer of Soul (or...When the Revolution Could Not Be Televised), a drummer/musician turned documentarian who redefined the soul music doc genre. With him at the helm, you know at least the music will be a thrill. And it is.

Sylvester Stewart was born in Denton Texas and raised in the San Francisco Bay Area city of Vallejo, 31 miles from S.F. His love of music and development as an instrumentalist and vocalist can be traced back to his church roots and school. Which is typical of so many musicians, from Little Richard and Billy Preston to Luther Vandross and John Legend. The twist Stewart had in his life and location was an affinity for black gospel and R&B, which paralleled his love for rock and pop music. Socially he also fluctuated between the Black and white communities where he lived. His blurred musical tastes and relationships stayed with him the rest of his life.

Pulling his band together, in various forms until it became the legendary Sly & The Family Stone, meant



Sundance Institute / Courtesy

keeping one foot in the evolution of Black life and the other in the general community, too. No wonder his band was an amalgamation of Black and white members, males and females. If that mixture wasn’t a first for an American band, they certainly were one of the OGs. Sly on lead vocals and guitar; sister Rose on vocals/keyboards; brother Freddie vocals/guitar; high school friend Cynthia Robinson vocals/horn; Italian/American Greg Errico on drums; Italian/American Jerry Martini on sax; a trio of backup singers and the very famous Larry Graham on his thumping bass guitar.

Judiciously edited live concert footage, TV interviews with Dick Cavett, anecdotes from band members and commentary from musicians with lots of street cred fill in all the details of Stone’s emergence. From a childhood prodigy who played various instruments to his musical prowess as a songwriter and engineer to his ascension into a world-class band leader and style setter. When Chaka Khan, Jimmy Jam, Vernon Reid, Nile Rogers, George Clinton and D’Angelo sing praises, you got to listen.

When you see that Stone burned a path for future disciples, like Prince and Parliament Funkadelic, you have to know his influence will be felt for generations to come. And the man was flying high without a GPS! “If you’re Sly Stone there’s no blueprint for what comes next,” one insider comments.

Watching, hearing and feeling Sly Stone’s music as he creates, records and performs it is like getting a front row seat at the Fillmore East or West. Digging into raucous, groundbreaking tunes, rhythms and beats that became a commentary of the times. From the turbulent ‘60s, to civil unrest and the Black Panthers to the beginning of the disco era. The times were transformative and Sly & The Family Stone rode each crest. Their music was defining a generation of folks who broke down racial barriers and partied together. A freeing approach to fun and socialization influenced by a band that produced butt shaking, foot moving, head twirling and exceedingly vibrant music.

“Dance to the Music” (1968) got everyone out on the floor. “Hot Fun in

the Summertime” (1969) describes how everyone wanted to feel in the sum-

mer heat. “Everyday People” (1969) brought folks together. “Thank You (Fall-ettinme Be Mice Elf Again)” (1970) spoke to the virtue of being true to instincts. “Family Affair” (1971) exalted extended families like the band itself. Some songs eventually became #1 hits on the R&B and pop charts. Then money, fame, worldwide acclaim and debauchery rolled in.

The music being heard for 1h 52m (editor Joshua L. Pearson) is par excellence, especially if you like your groove with a bit of funk. The parallels to history and social movements

of the times seem overwrought and a stretch at certain moments. Though it’s interesting to know the pressure the Black Panthers put on Sly to be a political activist and how that effected his musical journey, less of that would have been more. Sticking predominately to his musical accomplishments (first one to use a drum machine on a hit record!) would have served the footage, audience and Sly better.

The theme “The Burden on Black Genius,” seems

**See FILM, Page 10**

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# NDG Book Review: 'Fearless and Free' is stellar for the biography crowd

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

You march to the tun of your own drummer because you like the beat.

It's the same cadence you carry in your heart and soul, and it sets your pace and your path. No one else's pulse matches yours, no one else's rhythm will do. You march to your own drummer and as in the new memoir, "Fearless and Free" by Josephine Baker, translated from the French by Anam Zafar and Sophie Lewis, you dance to it, too.

When he first met Josephine Baker in 1926, journalist Marcel Sauvage suggested that she might want



to write her memoirs and the twenty-year-old Baker laughed at his idea. Later that year, when he sat down to hear her story, he learned that Baker was prone to laughter.

She was born into poverty in 1906 in St. Louis, and she told Sauvage that she began dancing to keep warm. She grew to love being a performer, but earning money was more important so Baker left school at age eight to work. For the rest of her life, she carried a painful lesson and a love of animals from her first job.

She made her official debut in Philadelphia at age 16, and worked her way to a better-paying job in New York before leaving for Paris, where she was a national sensation. Audiences couldn't get enough of her humor or her then-scandal-

ous "banana dance." Oooh, la la!

Baker was welcomed, not just in France but around Europe, where her performances were celebrated. She shared with Sauvage all the places she'd been, and which were here favorites. She reminded him that she'd once known poverty, which is why she tried to help poor children and widows in the cities in which she performed. She told him about the people she knew and those she loved, though she promised that she wouldn't give details.

She had little good to say about her return to Ameri-

ca...

As biographies go, "Fearless and Free" is very good, but only to a point.

Though journalist Marcel Sauvage briefly touches on Josephine Baker's later life and he hints at her work during World War II, that work is not addressed, nor is Baker's famous "Rainbow Tribe." Missing, also, is her later life. In short, the book is too short.

And yet, what's here is stellar. Baker was funny and wise and single-minded and that all comes out in her words, as Sauvage kept them. You'll be delighted in that, but you may be sur-

prised at the almost-gentle way she talked about the racism she experienced on return visits to America. Readers may get the sense that Baker was absolutely the type to stand up for herself, but she also understood that stardom, in the Jim Crow era, demanded discretion.

This is the kind of book that'll make you search online for videos of its author onstage, and it'll send you in search for other books about Josephine Baker. Though it doesn't include enough years, if you love biographies, "Fearless and Free" can't be beat.

## The 2025 American Black Film Festival announces ambassadors

(Black PR Wire) LOS ANGELES – The 29th annual American Black Film Festival (ABFF) announced recently that Nia Long and Larenz Tate, stars of the 1997 iconic romantic drama Love Jones will serve as Ambassadors to the festival. As Ambassadors, Long and Tate will

help bring awareness to ABFF's mission of showcasing Black content and fostering opportunities for creators of color to succeed in the film and TV industry, while inspiring and empowering the next generation of storytellers. This year's festival will take place live in Miami Beach

June 11-15, followed by an online segment June 16-23 on ABFF PLAY (<https://abffplay.com/>).

Founded by Jeff Friday in 1997, the ABFF has been dedicated to supporting Friday's conviction that Black artists deserve the same opportunities as their mainstream counterparts.

### FILM, from Page 9

like a contrived sales gimmick. Not a thesis that plays out well. Not a reason to tune into Hulu. It's like the filmmakers are asking too much from their audience. Music lovers want to come for the portrait and music. Not for the politics or philosophies, no matter how relevant. Same can be said of the harping on Stone's drug abuse and family issues. That's between him and his family. Him and himself. There's no shame in making this a cautionary tale, too. But celebrity,

fame, sex drugs and rock 'n' roll is cliché. That isn't what makes Sly Stone unique or magnetic.

Fortunately, Questlove had the presence of mind to make this homage to Sylvester Stewart while he's still alive—at the prime age of 81. Years after his hard-partying contemporaries have passed away. Years after his hit records debuted. Sly and his Family Stone are getting their flowers now, when it counts. While they can still feel the glow. While they can see their

fans get happy and today's music lovers learn where Prince got his funky beat.

A fascinating, pulsating documentary that captures a spirit worth following. Ten minutes too long but never misses a beat. Best when it showcases the man and his music and not "other things." But even Sly would forgive that imperfection. His classic song "Everyday People" says so: "Sometimes I'm right and I can be wrong, my own beliefs are in my song."

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

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## ASSAULT, from Page 1

that the public identification of government employees in this manner could lead to harassment, violence, and job loss. One federal employee, whose name appeared on the list, told The New York Times, “My name and picture are out there. In 2025, it’s very simple to Google and look up someone’s home address. What happens next?” Another individual described the move to NBC News as “psychological warfare” against civil servants simply trying to do their jobs.

The list is part of a broader right-wing effort to dismantle diversity programs and purge public institutions of individuals seen as obstacles to Trump’s agenda. The American Accountability Foundation, founded in 2020 to undermine the Biden-Harris administration, has ramped up its efforts since Trump’s return to power along with Elon Musk. The organiza-

tion has been financially backed by groups like the Heritage Foundation, which authored the Project 2025 blueprint that outlines an aggressive strategy to reshape the federal government along far-right ideological lines.

Thomas Jones, president of the American Accountability Foundation, admitted in an interview with The New York Times that his group did not attempt to verify the employment status of those it targeted or reach out for comment before compiling the list. “I’m busy; I’ve got a lot of stuff to do,” Jones stated when asked about the lack of verification efforts.

Civil rights leaders and legal experts say the move reflects a growing trend in which Trump-aligned organizations seek to eliminate diversity-focused policies and intimidate those advocating for equity. “This is a scare tactic to intimidate people from doing their

jobs,” said Dr. Georges Benjamin, executive director of the American Public Health Association, in comments reported by NBC News. “It’s clear racism.”

The federal employees on the list are not high-level policymakers but career professionals in public health, research, and regulatory affairs. Some were singled out for social media posts made years before they entered government service. Others were flagged for professional work aimed at addressing racial disparities in health-care—a field backed by decades of research showing systemic disadvantages for Black, Latino, and low-income communities in medical treatment and health outcomes.

The move is consistent with Trump’s broader crackdown on diversity initiatives, which he has labeled a form of discrimination against white Americans. His allies in Congress have used similar rhetoric, disparaging Vice President

Kamala Harris as a “D.E.I. hire” and insisting that affirmative action and diversity programs unfairly favor minorities. Trump has refused to disavow these remarks and has framed his dismantling of federal D.E.I. offices as “the most important federal civil rights measure in decades.”

Musk, meanwhile, has provided a platform for Trump’s anti-diversity rhetoric through his control of X (formerly Twitter). His rollback of content moderation policies has led to a resurgence of far-right extremism and disinformation, further fueling efforts to discredit D.E.I. and intimidate those who support it.

Legal experts warn that publicly outing government employees for their beliefs and professional work sets a dangerous precedent. “Trump’s attacks on diversity, equity, and inclusion aren’t about policy. They are a sanitized substitute for the racist comments that can no longer be spoken openly,” said Margaret Huang, president and CEO of the Southern Poverty Law Center, in remarks published by The New York Times. “But the message is the same: that Black and brown Americans are inherently less capable, and if they hold positions of power, the standards must have been lowered.”

The publication of the

list raises concerns that government employees will face increased threats, harassment, and job insecurity. As Trump and his allies push forward with their broader agenda of eliminating diversity programs and reshaping the federal workforce, many fear that this is only the beginning of a more extensive purge.

“This is a return to blacklisting,” said Timothy Welbeck, director of Temple University’s Center for Anti-Racism, in comments reported by NBC News. “From McCarthy-era tactics to modern-day doxxing, the goal remains the same: silence opposition and dismantle diversity efforts.”

## HBCU, from Page 7

instructors may ask for optional contributions to cover resources, especially when their classes unexpectedly attract hundreds or even thousands of students.

“No one expected their class to blow up the way it did,” Hinton said. “Some thought they’d have 10 or 15 students, and suddenly, they have 500. That’s when they might need tools like Google Classroom to manage everything, and sometimes that requires a little extra help.”

HillmanTok has rapidly expanded, but not without obstacles. As the movement gained traction, multiple unauthorized accounts claiming to be HillmanTok

surfaced across social media, leading to confusion among followers.

“If it doesn’t say The HillmanTok University, then it’s not us,” Coach West stated. “People have been scammed into paying for things we don’t charge for, like IDs. Our services are free.”

Additionally, the original HillmanTok TikTok account was hacked when Hinton attempted to secure verification, forcing the team to rebuild from scratch. Today, the official account has over 100,000 followers, but concerns remain about the platform’s future.

With TikTok’s uncertain fate in the U.S.—where

the app is currently available only to existing users under an extension granted by former President Donald Trump—HillmanTok is preparing for potential disruptions.

“We have contingencies upon contingencies,” Hinton said. “HillmanTok is so important to us that we are worried about all kinds of things.”

Hinton and her team are actively exploring partnerships with historically Black colleges and universities to expand opportunities and solidify HillmanTok’s place in the educational landscape.

“For everybody who ever wanted to be part of an HBCU but couldn’t, we’re fulfilling that dream,” Hinton said.



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# New data shows larger racial gaps in income, wealth, and credit access

By Stacy M. Brown  
NNPA Senior National  
Correspondent

As Black History Month begins, newly updated data from LendingTree has again revealed the persistent racial economic disparities in the United States, covering income, wealth, savings, employment, credit, and retirement. The findings illustrate the ongoing and deep financial inequities between Black and white Americans, despite progress in some areas.

## Income and Employment

The median income for Black households in 2023 was \$56,490, compared with \$84,630 for white households, a 33.3% gap and an increase from the 31.6% gap in 2022. Full-time Black workers earned a median weekly wage of \$962 in the third quarter of 2024, 18.8% less than white workers, who earned \$1,184. The wage gap is more severe in certain industries, particularly agriculture, where full-time Black workers earned an average of 40 cents for every dollar their white colleagues made.

In terms of employment, Black adults experienced greater financial instability due to job losses. Between August and September 2024, 16% of Black adults reported losing employment income in their household over the previous four weeks, compared to 10.3% of white adults.

The “last-hired, first-fired” trend remains a factor in employment patterns, with Black unemployment rates consistently higher than those of white workers.

As of December 2024, the unemployment rate stood at 5.6% for Black men and 5.4% for Black women, compared to 3.3% and 3.4% for white men and women.

## Wealth Disparities

Black Americans hold significantly less wealth than white Americans. As of the third quarter of 2024, Black Americans held \$5.39 trillion, just 3.4% of the country’s total wealth, while white Americans controlled \$134.58 trillion, or 84.2%. The gap in median net worth between Black and white families widened to \$240,210 in 2022. Although Black families saw a 57.8% increase in their median net worth between 2019 and 2022, the overall disparity remains overshadowed by financial gains.

LendingTree’s chief credit analyst, Matt Schulz, noted that while percentage-based growth in Black families’ net worth may appear substantial, it reflects the significant difference in starting points. “It’s a lot easier to have high-percentage growth when starting with a low-income number than when starting with a big income number,” Schulz said.

## Savings and Banking

Financial security remains a challenge for many Black households. In 2023, 14% of Black adults were unbanked, compared with just 4% of white adults. Black Americans were more than twice as likely to incur overdraft fees, with 19% reporting such charges compared to 9% of white Americans. Additionally, 42% of Black

adults reported having at least three months of emergency savings in 2023, compared with 59% of white adults.

## Credit and Loan Disparities

Access to credit also remains uneven. In 2023, 65% of Black adults with


a family income below \$50,000 were denied credit or approved for less than requested, compared with 47% of white applicants in the same income bracket. Even among those earning over \$100,000 annually, Black applicants were denied or approved for less at

29%, compared to 13% for white applicants.

A similar gap exists in credit card ownership, with 86% of white adults holding at least one credit card in 2023, compared with 70% of Black adults. Schulz pointed to income levels as a contributing fac-

tor, noting that banks extend higher credit limits to those with higher incomes, affecting borrowing power and financial flexibility. He recommended using a personal loan to pay off smaller debts.

See GAPS, Page 13



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## McKinney Housing Authority 2025 ANNUAL & FIVE-YEAR PLAN

### PUBLIC MEETINGS NOTICE

The Quality Housing & Work Responsibility Act of 1998 requires the McKinney Housing Authority to submit an Agency Plan each year.

The PHA Plan is a comprehensive guide to public housing agency (PHA) policies, programs, operations, and strategies for meeting local housing needs and goals. There are two parts to the PHA Plan: the 5-Year Plan, which each PHA submits to HUD once every 5th PHA fiscal year, and the Annual Plan, which is submitted to HUD every year. Below is a list of meetings that are scheduled to review and discuss the Agency Plan documents for the 2025 fiscal year. Program participants, the public and staff are encouraged to attend the meetings.

### Autoridad de Vivienda McKinney PLAN ANUAL Y QUINQUENAL 2025

### REUNIONES DARSE CUENTA

La Ley de Vivienda y Responsabilidad Laboral de Calidad de 1998 requiere que la Autoridad de Vivienda de McKinney presente un Plan de la Agencia cada año.

El Plan PHA es una guía completa de las políticas, programas, operaciones y estrategias de las agencias de vivienda pública (PHA) para satisfacer las necesidades y los objetivos de vivienda locales. Hay dos partes en el Plan PHA: el Plan de 5 años, que cada PHA presenta a HUD una vez cada quinto año fiscal de PHA, y el Plan anual, que se envía a HUD cada año.

A continuación hay una lista de reuniones que están programadas para revisar y analizar los documentos del Plan de la Agencia para el año fiscal 2025.

Se anima a los participantes del programa, al público y al personal a asistir a las reuniones

Tuesday January 28, 2025	4:30pm	Board of Commissioners Meeting	Merritt Homes Community Center	1200 N. Tennessee St. McKinney, TX 75069
Thursday February 13, 2025	4:30pm	Public Meeting	Newsome Homes Community Center	1450 Amcott St. McKinney, TX 75069
Tuesday February 25, 2025	4:30pm	Board of Commissioners Meeting	Merritt Homes Community Center	1200 N. Tennessee St. McKinney, TX 75069

A draft of the proposed ANNUAL and Five Year Plan is available for review at the MHA main office located at: 603 N. Tennessee St. McKinney, TX.

Comments can be submitted by hand delivery, mail, or email to McKinney Housing Authority Main Office; 603 North Tennessee Street; Attn: Roslyn Miller; McKinney, TX 75069 or [info@mckinneyha.org](mailto:info@mckinneyha.org). The final public hearing for plan adoption will be held on Tuesday, March 25th at 4:30pm – Merritt Homes community center.

**GAPS, from Page 12**

“As for getting approved for less than requested, there’s no question that income levels play a big role,” he said. “While your income level isn’t factored into your credit score, it’s considered when, for example, banks decide how much credit to extend. People with higher incomes may receive higher limits on credit cards than those with lower incomes, all

other things being equal.”

**Retirement Readiness**

Black families are also less likely to have retirement savings. In 2022, 34.8% of Black families had a retirement account such as a 401(k) or IRA, compared with 61.8% of white families. The median retirement account balance for Black families stood at \$39,000, while white families held a median of

\$100,000.

Additionally, as of 2023, 51% of Black nonretired adults reported having tax-preferred retirement savings accounts, compared with 68% of white nonretired adults.

Overall, “Black households have less financial

margin for error than white households in many cases because of income disparities,” Schulz said. “This is a big problem anytime, but it’s particularly troubling in times of inflation. Higher prices mean that people have even less wiggle room financially.”

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## A Needle Named Miss Ouch

Dr. James L. Snyder

My father has been gone for 15 years. It hardly seems that long, but time goes by, and you can't stop it.

One of my father's "jokes" was, "Son, I'm so sick and tired of being sick and tired." Then he would laugh, and I would, of course, join in with his laughter. Although I was laughing, I did not get the punch line.

I may be getting a little closer to understanding that joke, but believe me, I'm not laughing.

In the hospital recently, I thought about my dad's "joke." And believe me, I was sick and tired of being sick and tired of the hospital. I think I was there for four days and four nights, but I can't be too sure.

One thing I learned during my time in the hospital was how important nurses and the nursing staff are. Everything I needed was at their disposal, and all I had to do was ask—and sometimes, I didn't even have to ask.

I had about six nurses in

my room daily, including nursing staff and technical nurses. They were cheerful and encouraging, and I enjoyed getting to know them.

I was, however, very anxious to leave the hospital and go home. I didn't have anything against the hospital staff; I just wanted to go home. I was sick and tired of being sick and tired in the hospital.

Every morning, I would ask one of the staff if I was going home today. It was the first thing on my mind when I woke up. Is today the day?

The staff always replied, "No, I don't believe you'll be going home today. Maybe tomorrow."

Well, everybody knows that tomorrow never comes. And I was sorry to hang around in this atmosphere much longer.

Every day, I had nurses coming in with their favorite instrument, the needle, to give me my shots for the day. I'm not sure I counted right, but I think I had at least 10 shots daily. Even now, my stomach is still

black from all of the needles poked in my stomach. I'm not sure what the needles in the stomach were for, but they were there.

Pain is something that is not one of my friends. I don't like pain. Those needles in the hands of those nurses created pain in this body of mine.

On the first day, when one of the nurses came in to give me my first needle shot, she said, "There's no need to worry. This will not hurt in any way." Then she smiled at me, a smile I'll never forget until I'm in my coffin.

To this day, I do not know what she understood pain to be. But that very first needle shot in my stomach was painful, according to my definition of pain.

After I gasped most hurtful, the nurse said, "See, that didn't hurt, did it?"

Since this nurse with the needle in hand was female, I responded to her as I would to my wife. I smiled and said, "I didn't feel a thing." She smiled back at me most wonderfully.

That was just the begin-

ning. Every time the nurse came into my room, I froze in expectation of pain. I tried to hide behind a pseudo-smile so the nurse would think I wasn't in pain.

ning.

After the third day of being stuck with needle after needle, I leaned back in my bed and thought a lot about those needles. Then, a thought came to my mind. What that nurse held in her hand as she entered my room was "A Needle Named Miss Ouch."

Every time I looked at Miss Ouch, my body froze in expectation of pain. Those needles were causing me a lot of pain, and I wanted to do something to get rid of every needle in the hospital. It was those needles causing me pain.

Every time I got a needle shot in my stomach,

the nurse always looked at me, smiled, and said, "This isn't going to hurt."

Of course, it's not going to hurt her. Doesn't she understand that the hurt is on my side of the needle, not hers?

As I was recovering from the last shot from Miss Ouch, I began to rethink this whole matter. Was it really that needle causing me pain? I thought about that for a while.

Then, my thinking went in the direction of the nurse. Would the needle pierce my stomach if it was not for the nurse? The pain is not a result of the needle but rather a result of the nurse. She is the source of my pain.

That caused me to think a little bit. Because the nurse was in control of the needle, it could be more or less painful, and I tried to make

sure that it was going to be less painful. I tried to smile cheerfully at my nurse and not let her know I was in pain. I did not want to upset her because an upset nurse can cause more pain through the needle.

Resting in my bed a verse of scripture came to mind. James 1:2-3, "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience."

With the needle came pain, but also, the medicine I need. Through pain comes my medical solution.

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## LITERACY, from Page 4

At the end of the day, ask specific questions.

It can be difficult for young children to remember what they did during the day so asking, "What did you do today?" may not generate a lot of conversation. So, ask different, more specific questions to help them recall some events, such as:

- "What story did you hear or book you read today? What was it about?" Retelling stories encourages comprehension, sequencing, and use of nar-

rative language, which are essential for literacy.

- "What was the best song you sang or heard today?" Songs and rhymes strengthen phonological awareness and help children recognize sound patterns in words.

- "What new word did you hear today? Help me learn what it means." Discussing or introducing new vocabulary enhances a child's language skills and comprehension.

The nation is grappling with a literacy crisis that

has only been exacerbated by the pandemic. We have an opportunity to reverse course — but a new law, curriculum, or literacy coach alone won't bring about the real change our children need.

Policymakers, educators, advocates, and families alike must unite to support our young readers. And even simple actions, like combing through the Sunday newspaper for coupons, can have a lasting impact.

*Dr. Nicol Russell is the Chief Academic Officer at Teaching Strategies.*

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# The story of Carter G. Woodson



**Sister Tarpley**  
NDG  
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Editor



In 1915, Dr. Carter G. Woodson and Rev. Jesse E. Moorland co-founded the Association for the study of Negro Life and History (ASNLH).

Their goal was to research and bring awareness to the largely ignored, yet crucial role Black people played in America's and world history.

The following year, Dr. Woodson published and distributed his findings in *The Journal of Negro His-*

*tory* with the hope of that it would dispel popular mistruths; he also hoped to educate Black people about their cultural background and instill them with a sense of pride in their race.

The son of former slaves and the 2nd Black person to receive a degree from Harvard University; he understood the value of edu-

cation and the importance of preserving one's heritage. Dr. Woodson said, "Those who have no record of what their forebears have accomplished lose the inspiration which comes from the teaching of biography and history."

Dr. Woodson, a distinguished Black author, editor, publisher, and his-

torian put his money, life, blood, sweat and tears in establishing Black History Week, (in the 1960s it was established as Black History MONTH) he believed that Blacks should know their past in order to par-

ticipate intelligently in the affairs in our country.

He strongly believed that Black history—which others (even some Black Americans) have tried so diligently to erase—is a firm foundation for young

Black Americans to build on in order to become productive citizens of our society.

*(Editor's Note: This column originally ran in February 2011 and has been edited for space.)*

## ← OMEGA, from Page 8 →

(Oration)

The Talent Hunt program has been a cornerstone of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. since its inception in 1945 in the Sixth District (North and South Carolina). The first district-wide competition took place in Charlotte, NC, on April 19, 1946. Over the past 79 years, the program has provided a platform for gifted young individuals to showcase their talents, gain exposure, and access scholarships and awards that have helped shape their futures.

The fraternity remains committed to fostering and celebrating young talent, ensuring that this tradition continues to thrive for generations to come.

Talent Hunt Committee Members:

Co-Chairs: Wayne Powe & Horace Satisfield

Lady Tasha Stafford, James Matthias, Harry Anderson, Tim Gardner,

Levondre Nelson, Horace Payne, Chris Degrate, Michael Hartman, Reggie Winners, Jonathan Taylor  
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Wayne Powe, Lady Tasha Stafford-Mistress of Ceremony, Horace Satisfield. (Courtesy photo)

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*Roses are red,  
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