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# Black Americans face unequal burden as U.S. inches closer to war

By Stacy M. Brown  
NNPA Senior National  
Correspondent

As the United States crosses the threshold of military action against Iran, history signals a familiar reality for Black Americans: disproportionate risk, unequal support, and a long legacy of being asked to sacrifice more while receiving less.

From World War I through Iraq and Afghanistan, Black service-members have routinely been over-represented in combat roles and underrepresented in decision-making positions.

Today, although Black Americans make up just over 13% of the U.S. population, they account for nearly 19% of active-duty Army personnel.

"When the U.S. goes to war, Black Americans, whether as civilians, enlisted personnel, or military families, often carry a disproportionate share of the burden," Liscach R. Isaboke, Esq., Managing Partner at Isaboke Law Firm, PLLC, told



The U.S. military action against Iran reminds us that history signals a familiar reality for Black Americans when it comes to bearing the cost of war. (DWG Studio)

Black Press USA.

"Historically, Black service members have been overrepresented in frontline and high-risk roles while underrepresented in officer ranks," Isaboke said.

"This exposure results not only in increased physical danger, but also long-term disparities in access to VA

benefits, career advancement, and mental health care upon return."

That overrepresentation is linked to greater economic inequality. Recruitment data shows the military draws heavily from low-income communities, and Black Ameri-

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People In The News ...

Dr. Marva Johnson

Dr. Robert DeHaas

NDG Quote of the Week:

"I have learned over the years that when one's mind is made up, this diminishes fear."

- Rosa Parks



## Dr. Marva Johnson

(Black PR Wire) Florida A&M University is entering a new chapter—one that begins under a cloud of controversy. On June 18, the Florida Board of Governors officially confirmed Marva Johnson, J.D. as the 13th president of FAMU. Her appointment, which takes effect August 1, follows a months-long search process that has sparked both celebration and pushback across the Rattler community.

Johnson was selected by FAMU's Board of Trustees in May following a national search that narrowed down to four finalists. With a unanimous vote from the Board of Governors, the appointment was made official.



But the road to this confirmation has been anything but smooth.

### A Corporate Leader Steps In

Marva Johnson brings with her a high-powered résumé, including executive roles at Charter Communications and a stint as chair of the Florida Board of

Education. Her career has been rooted in telecommunications, tech, and workforce development, earning her recognition in Cablefax Magazine's "Top Women in Technology." Supporters of her appointment point to her experience in corporate strategy and her ability to scale initiatives as valuable assets for FAMU's next phase of growth.

Brian Lamb, chair of the Board of Governors, praised Johnson's "visionary leadership," calling her the right choice to strengthen career pipelines and expand institutional partnerships. But not everyone agrees.

### Student and Alumni Opposition

Despite the official vote, a sizable number of students, alumni, and faculty

members have expressed concern over Johnson's background and the process that led to her appointment. During the public confirmation meeting held in Boca Raton, several attendees silently turned their backs to the board in protest.

Some critics say the selection process lacked transparency. On June 16, just days before the vote, a group of FAMU alumni and students filed a lawsuit alleging that the presidential search violated the state constitution. The suit claims that the outcome was predetermined and seeks to invalidate the board's decision.

There's also concern over Johnson's lack of direct experience in higher education leadership. Her corporate background, while impressive, is seen by some as misaligned with the values and needs of a historically Black college rooted in academic and cultural tradition.

### Salary and Governance Questions

Johnson's contract includes a reported base salary of \$650,000, with additional performance bonuses and retention incentives. Critics have raised questions about the funding for her compensation, especially after the Board of Governors voted to al-

low non-taxpayer funds to be used—an exception that has sparked wider debate about governance and oversight at the state's public HBCUs.

### A Call for Unity

In her first remarks following confirmation, Johnson acknowledged the concerns and pledged to lead with transparency and openness.

"I hear your hopes, your dreams, your concerns," she said. "My door will always be open." Johnson emphasized that she intends to work collaboratively with students, faculty, and alumni to move the university

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## Dr. Robert DeHaas

Dr. Robert DeHaas, vice provost of the School of Education at Dallas College, has been selected for the prestigious Aspen Rising Presidents Fellowship, a leadership development program run by the Aspen Institute College Excellence Program. The year-long fellowship is designed to strengthen leadership in higher education and improve student outcomes. Dr. DeHaas was chosen from a pool of more than 120 applicants.

"I'm honored by the trust Dallas College leadership has placed in me by recommending and supporting my participation in this fellowship," DeHaas said. "It reflects the college's continued investment in developing leaders who are committed to transforming lives and communities through education."

DeHaas joined Dallas College in 2019 as the



founding dean of the Early Childhood Education Baccalaureate Institute and was named vice provost of the School of Education in 2020. He brings more than 15 years of experience in the education field and currently serves on the Dallas County Blue Ribbon Child Care Commission, Region 10 Head Start and Early Head Start Advisory Council, and the PNC Bank Foundation Grow Up Great National Advisory Board. In 2024, he was named the Champion for Early Childhood Education in Texas by Texans Care for Children.

"Dr. DeHaas is smart, strategic and forward-thinking," said Dr. Shawnda Floyd, provost of Dallas College. "More importantly, he understands the hard work required to lead real change. The Aspen Fellowship will further strengthen his leadership and provide a platform to share ideas with other top community college leaders across the country."

The fellows will work closely with highly accomplished community college presidents and national education leaders to examine research, analyze demographic and labor market trends in their communities, assess student outcomes and develop a clear vision for student success.

"Our research on high-performing colleges shows they share key traits: Their presidents focus on a few large-scale reforms that go beyond enrollment and

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The North Dallas Gazette, formerly Minority Opportunity News, was founded  
in July 1991, by Mr. Jim Bochum and Mr. Thurman R. Jones. North Dallas  
Gazette is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Minority Opportunity News, Inc.

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# Being honest about our history

By Joseph R. Biden, Jr.  
46th U.S. President  
2021—2025

The people of Galveston, Texas, have been commemorating Juneteenth since the Civil War ended. Yesterday, in honor of the 160th anniversary, I went there to join them.

You can read about the events of Juneteenth, but there's nothing quite like going to Galveston and seeing where it all happened.

After General Robert E. Lee surrendered at Appomattox Court House on April 9, 1865, Union troops marched across the South for two months, freeing enslaved people along the way. Their final stop was Galveston, an island off the Gulf coast of Texas. There, on June 19, 1865, Union troops went to Reedy Chapel, a church founded in 1848 by enslaved people, and posted a document titled simply "General Order #3."

"The people of Texas are informed," it said, "that, in accordance with a Proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free."

We can only imagine the joy that spread through Galveston — and across the state and nation — on that day and those that followed.

Yesterday, there was once again joy in Galveston, with a parade, picnic, and fireworks. There was also great solemnity, because Juneteenth is a sacred



Photo via NNPA.

day — a day of weight and power.

The Book of Psalms tells us: "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." Juneteenth marks both the long, hard night of slavery and subjugation, and the promise of that joyful morning to come.

As President, I had the great honor of signing the law declaring Juneteenth a federal holiday. It was our nation's first new federal holiday since Martin Luther King, Jr. Day was created in 1983.

Our federal holidays say a lot about who we are as a nation. We have holidays celebrating our independence... the laborers who build this nation... the servicemembers who served and died in its defense.

And now, we also have a national holiday dedicated to the emancipation of enslaved Black Americans.

Signing that law was one of my proudest acts as

President.

Yet for 156 years, Juneteenth was not written about in textbooks or taught in classrooms. Still today, there are those who say it does not deserve a holiday. They don't want to remember the moral stain of slavery and the terrible harm it did to our country.

I've always believed that we need to be honest about our history, especially in the face of ongoing efforts to erase it. Darkness can hide much, but it erases nothing. Only with truth can come healing, justice, and repair.

I also believe that it's not enough to commemorate the past. We must also embrace the obligation we have to the future. As Scripture says, "Faith without works is dead." And right now, we Americans need to keep the faith and do the work.

In honor of Juneteenth, let's help people register to vote.

For decades, we fought to expand voting rights in America. Now we're living in an era when relentless obstacles are being thrown in the way of people trying to vote. We can't let those tactics defeat us. In America, the power belongs with the people. And the way we show that power is by voting.

So let's reach out to family, friends and neighbors — especially those who have never voted before. Remind them that with voting, anything is possible. And without it, nothing is possible.

Yesterday in Galveston, we gathered in Reedy Chapel to commemorate Juneteenth, just like people have done for 160 years and counting. We prayed, sang, and read General Order #3 again. The pews were full of families. How many people must have prayed for freedom inside those walls. How many must have sent fervent thanks to God when slavery finally ended.

I remembered the words of my late friend John Lewis. He said, "Freedom is not a state. It is an act."

Juneteenth did not mark the end of America's work to deliver on the promise of equality. It only marked the beginning. To honor the true meaning of Juneteenth, we must continue to work toward that promise. For our freedom. For our democracy. And for America itself.

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# Popular diabetes and weight-loss drug may reduce risk of dementia

(Newswise) — CLEVELAND—Researchers at the Case Western Reserve School of Medicine have found that semaglutide, a popular diabetes and weight-loss drug, may lower the risk of dementia in people with type 2 diabetes (T2D).

Dementia, a condition that slowly makes it harder for people to remember things and think clearly, occurs when brain cells are damaged and their connections stop working properly. This damage, which worsens over time, can be caused by various modifiable factors, including obesity, T2D, cardiovascular diseases, traumatic brain injury and stroke.

According to the National Institutes of Health, more than 6 million people in



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the United States are diagnosed with dementia, and it causes more than 100,000 deaths each year. Encouragingly, research indicates that 45% of dementia cases could be prevented by addressing modifiable risk factors.

The study, published

recently in the Journal of Alzheimer's Disease, suggests T2D patients taking semaglutide had a significantly lower risk of developing dementia compared to other antidiabetic medications. These results were more profound in women and older adults.

Semaglutide, a glucagon-like peptide receptor (GLP-1R) molecule that decreases hunger and helps regulate blood sugar in T2D, is also the active component in the diabetes and weight-loss drugs Wegovy and Ozempic. Semaglutide has shown a broad

range of benefits, including reductions in cardiovascular diseases.

The research team—led by biomedical informatics professor Rong Xu—analyzed three years of electronic records of nearly 1.7 million T2D patients. The researchers used a statistical approach that mimics a randomized clinical trial.

They found patients prescribed semaglutide had a significantly lower risk for Alzheimer's disease-related dementia, compared to those who had taken any of seven other anti-diabetic medications, including other types of GLP-1R-targeting medications.

“There is no cure or effective treatment for dementia, so this new study provides real-world evi-

dence for its potential impact on preventing or slowing dementia development among at-high risk population,” said Xu, who also directs the School of Medicine's Center for AI in Drug Discovery and is a member of the Cancer Genomics Epigenomics Program at the Case Comprehensive Cancer Center.

Although their findings potentially support the idea that semaglutide could prevent dementia, the study's limitations restrict the researchers from making firm causal conclusions, she said.

“Our results indicate that research into semaglutide's use for dementia prevention will need to be further investigated through randomized clinical trials” Xu said.

## Social media language identifies young adults at high risk for alcohol harm

(Newswise) — Young adults are frequently active on social media – a source of significant exposure to alcohol-related content that is, in turn, associated with increased alcohol use. While most alcohol research focuses on college students, nearly 40 percent of young adults do not attend four-year colleges. New research has identified keywords used on social media that can identify higher alcohol risk among this underserved population. These results will be shared at the 48th annual scientific meeting of the Research Society on Alcohol (RSA) in New Orleans, Louisiana.

“Most alcohol research focuses on college students, who typically have



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greater access to resources such as alcohol prevention and treatment,” said Megan Strowger, a postdoctoral research fellow at the Center for Alcohol and Addiction Studies at Brown University. “However, about 40 percent of young adults do not attend four-year colleges. This population is often underserved in research and has fewer intervention options. Our study sought to understand this overlooked group, addressing a critical need to connect them with

resources to avoid alcohol-related harm or support them in reducing or quitting drinking.”

Strowger will discuss her research at the RSA meeting on 24 June 2025.

For this study, 610 non-college young adults 18 to 29 years of age were recruited from a large pool of individuals who had previously expressed interest in participating in research. Participants completed an

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# Thurgood Marshall College Fund and Savings Collaborative launch National Financial Resilience Program at HBCUs in honor of Juneteenth

(Black PR Wire) In commemoration of Juneteenth, the Thurgood Marshall College Fund (TMCf) and the Savings Collaborative today announced an ambitious new partnership to launch a comprehensive National Financial Resilience Program at the nation's public historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs).

This groundbreaking initiative builds on initial research findings that revealed both the financial challenges and aspirations of HBCU students, positioning this collaboration as a critical step toward achieving economic justice and building generational wealth.

The collaboration builds on the foundation of research and program development by TMCf's Dr. N. Joyce Payne Research Center and the Savings Collaborative.

In 2024, the partners launched a financial well-being course at TMCf's DevCon, engaging over 500 students from 40 HB-



Dwarris Shirichena/Unsplash

CU students who demonstrated foundational financial skills and knowledge, as well as a commitment to long-term economic empowerment. Focus groups with students yielded valuable insights that now inform the priorities of the National Financial Resilience Program.

"This Juneteenth, we celebrate not just freedom from the past, but our commitment to building economic freedom for the future," Dr. N. Joyce Payne, founder of TMCf, said. "Our research has shown that HBCU students are already demonstrating remarkable financial resilience, but they need target-

ed support and resources to fully realize their potential for building generational wealth. This partnership represents a transformative opportunity to address the systemic barriers that have historically limited economic advancement in our communities."

The initiative addresses critical findings from the organizations' preliminary research, which revealed that over two-thirds of HBCU students face significant financial challenges, with education, housing and transportation costs serving as primary stressors. Despite these challenges, the research also high-

lighted students' strong commitment to building savings and achieving financial stability.

Barbara Freeman, founder and CEO of the Savings Collaborative, emphasized the program's potential for long-term impact: "Financial resilience isn't just about managing money, it's about creating pathways to opportunity and breaking cycles of economic inequality. HBCU students represent some of our nation's most talented and determined future leaders, and this partnership ensures they have the tools and support needed to achieve their

financial goals and create lasting wealth for their families and communities."

The National Financial Resilience Program will feature several key components:

- Comprehensive financial education curriculum: Evidence-based programming covering budgeting, savings, credit management, and investment strategies

- Peer-to-peer learning networks: Student-led discussion groups and mentorship opportunities

- Career and entrepreneurship support: Resources connecting financial

wellness to career development and business creation

- Policy advocacy: Research-informed initiatives to address systemic barriers to financial security

- Technology integration: Digital tools and platforms to enhance accessibility and engagement

The program will initially launch at select TMCf member institutions before expanding nationwide. The collaboration represents a significant investment in the economic futures of HBCU students, aligning with both organizations'

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forward.

Still, many in the FAMU community are watching closely. As she prepares to take office in August, Johnson faces the challenge of

uniting a divided campus while navigating the legal and political scrutiny surrounding her appointment.

Her presidency begins at a pivotal time for FAMU—

financial growth, national visibility, and campus morale are all on the line. Whether she can build trust and push the university forward remains to be seen, but one thing is clear: the spotlight is on.

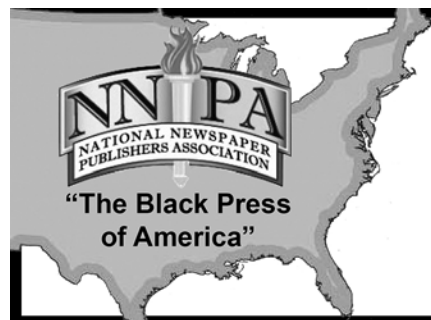
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# Dallas College graduates develop award-winning AVIADAR: A NASA-backed aircraft collision avoidance system

Four recent Dallas College graduates were selected as finalists in the national Community College Innovation Challenge (CCIC) for their project, AVIADAR (Alerts VIA Detection and Ranging). The team — Mang Cin, Khai Huynh, Taylor Hill and Christopher Zuniga — presented their LiDAR-based aircraft collision avoidance system at the CCIC Innovation Bootcamp in Washington, D.C., and claimed third place. The event, held June 9-12, was organized by the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) in partnership with the National Science Foundation (NSF).

AVIADAR is designed to provide pilots with real-time alerts about potential hazards in their flight path, aiming to reduce aviation



*The Dallas College CCIC team and their mentor: (left to right) Khai Huynh, Mang Cin, Professor L. Taylor Starr, Chris Zuniga and Taylor Hill (Dallas College photo)*

accidents and fatalities. The system utilizes LiDAR technology to detect obstacles and alert pilots, enhancing situational awareness and safety.

“There have been so many unfortunate accidents lately involving plane crashes,” said Cin, as she

underscored the need for her team’s project. “We have AVIADAR sensors on the plane that detect hazards in the flight path, providing real-time alerts to pilots.”

The team was selected from among 48 entries to participate in the CCIC In-

novation Bootcamp, where they engaged in professional development, mentoring, and coaching to refine their communication and entrepreneurial skills. The bootcamp culminated in a poster session and pitch presentation to STEM leaders and congressional stakeholders.

In addition to their participation in the CCIC, the team collaborated with NASA’s Technology Transfer University (T2U) program. This partnership allowed them to incorporate NASA-developed technologies into their research and design processes. The team is the first from a North Texas college to be accepted into the T2U program.

Dallas College Professor L. Taylor Starr mentored the team throughout the process, which started with a pitch in Fall 2024.

She was impressed with the team’s determination, professionalism and knowledge.

“Every challenge I gave the students, they accepted, and their relentless commitment to research and continuous improvement is quite remarkable,” said Starr. “As an engineering professor with an MBA and an industry background in business development and aerospace, I enjoy nurturing the entrepreneurial spirit in our student innovators. The ability to help shape and mold student curiosity and creativity, from the conceptual phase through the engineering design process to product implementation, is why I became a professor in the first place.”

The AVIADAR team members include the following:

- Mang Cin, who earned an associate degree in computer science, plans to major in natural sciences. She was awarded the prestigious Jack Kent Cooke transfer scholarship.

- Khai Huynh, also a computer science graduate, intends to major in mathematics and computer science at the University of Texas at Austin. He has participated in SkillsUSA and will pursue a career as a data analyst.

- Taylor Hill, who studied mechanical engineering, aims to continue in the same field. He is interested in hands-on project leadership roles.

- Chris Zuniga, who earned an Associate of Science degree, plans to major in mechanical engineering and pursue a career in mechatronics.

## Collin County Detention facility open house highlights inmate education partnership with Collin College

The Collin County Detention Facility hosted an open house on June 13 to highlight partnerships providing life-changing opportunities for inmates. As a partner, Collin College, with the help of an Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) grant provided by the Texas Workforce Com-

mission, has funded various life skills educational courses for more than 100 inmates.

“Education is a powerful tool for change, and we are proud to work with our local jail to provide these courses,” said Dr. Neil Matkin, district president of Collin College. “By

equipping inmates with these skills, we are not only helping them build a brighter future for themselves but also strengthening our entire community. This initiative exemplifies our commitment to accessible education for all.”

During a presentation at the open house, which

aimed to provide insight about the current programs offered at the jail, Collin County Detention Facility Chief Deputy Assistant Johnny Jaquess expressed his gratitude for the strong partnerships formed. He added that these are the things that set their organization apart and position it

as a leader in the industry.

“It really is all about bringing in the right resources and being intentional about things,” Jaquess said. “We don’t just want to guard folks; we want to teach them leadership. With opportunities in education or in trade work like these, we might just

be providing the missing piece so that inmates don’t come back here. That’s the ultimate goal, and with the support of our partners, we are making that a reality.”

The in-jail classes provided by Collin College are taught by Collin College professors and are part

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# NAACP and other civil rights groups demand Department of Energy withdraw rule rolling back civil rights protections

(Black PR Wire) WASHINGTON — The NAACP, along with a coalition of allied organizations and legal experts, filed formal comments urging the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) to immediately withdraw a dangerous rule that dismantles long-standing civil rights protections in federally funded energy programs.

The rule, issued without meaningful public input, would eliminate long-standing rules to identify and address discrimination and roll back critical language access and disability protections, all while fast-tracking polluting energy projects that disproportionately harm Black and historically excluded communities.

The move comes as part of the Trump Administration's implementation of Executive Order 14281 that seeks to unravel fundamental safeguards for environmental justice, health equity, and civil rights.

"This is an attempt to override clear processes that our government has created to ensure community participation and our voices are heard," said Abre' Conner, Director of the NAACP Center for Environmental and Climate Justice. "Roll-



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ing back civil rights protections is an egregious act. It sends a chilling message to Black, Brown, disabled, immigrant, and working-class communities across this country that their lives and voices do not matter. That their health is disposable. That the government will side with polluters over people once again."

The DOE's Direct Final Rule, issued May 16, 2025, strips away the regulatory backbone that communities have long relied on to challenge discrimination in federally funded energy projects. It also sidesteps the legally mandated notice-and-comment process required under the Administrative Procedure Act — a move the NAACP calls an "end-run around democracy."

"Communities already overburdened by multiple pollution sources are now being robbed of long

standing legal protections. Without the disparate impact standard, the field of

civil rights protection for so many people shrinks to a pinprick: covering only those harms that can be proven by demonstrating an intent to discriminate, and leaving a vast area of injury experienced, but left unaddressed," said Chandra Taylor-Sawyer, Senior Attorney, SELC.

This filing makes clear that the DOE must withdraw the rule in light of significant adverse public

comments. Under federal law, a direct final rule cannot move forward when substantial opposition has been voiced.

"The rule is clawing back a standard for identifying discrimination that has been in place since the passage of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act was passed. But this standard, the "disparate impact" standard, is not just a legal term, it's a lifeline," said Lourdes

M. Rosado, President and General Counsel, Latino-Justice PRLDEF. "It's what keeps a toxic facility from being built next to a school, in our backyards. It's what helps ensure children with asthma have a chance to grow up breathing clean air. These are not abstract rights, they are protections our communities bleed for. And we will fight to keep

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completion metrics and prioritize long-term student success — whether in the workforce or in continuing their education," said Josh Wyner, executive director of the College Excellence Program. "This cohort of

fellows is deeply committed to student achievement and has the talent to lead transformative change. We look forward to working with them throughout the fellowship and welcoming them into our alumni network."





# Cooper Flagg poised to be top pick in 2025 NBA Draft

By Jamal Baker  
NDG Contributing Writer

The 2025 NBA Draft is set to take place on Wednesday, June 25, at Wintrust Arena and the Marriott Marquis in Chicago.

The worst-kept secret in the NBA is that the Dallas Mavericks will draft Duke phenom Cooper Flagg with the No. 1 overall pick.

The Mavericks all but confirmed their plans to draft Flagg by accidentally leaking their selection of the Duke star on their website before taking it down. The social media post was up on Friday and shared by Kevin Gray Jr. and Front Office Sports.

Flagg will join a Dallas team with a solid core already in place and ready to compete right away. He



NDG Composite / Duke Univ. photo

will team up with fellow No. 1 overall picks Anthony Davis and Kyrie Irving, forming an intriguing trio once Irving returns from ACL surgery.

"It would be a blessing for me to get drafted [by any] team in the NBA," Flagg said at the Final Four. "That's a dream of mine, to play in the NBA. I would feel completely blessed and honored to play for any team."

Flagg is a versatile scorer and defender who has the ability to be an impact player on both ends of the floor. Last season at Duke, he averaged 19.2 points, 7.5 rebounds, 4.2 assists, 1.4 steals, and 1.4 blocks per game.

"[He's] positionless," ESPN's Seth Greenberg said on "Get Up." "He is a perfect fit for the NBA. You think Grant Hill, you think Scottie Pippen, you think

Jayson Tatum, he fits in the NBA game perfectly.

"He could be a point forward. He can initiate your offense. You can move him all over the floor. Positionless is what I think of Cooper Flagg."

Flagg will potentially be entering an ideal situation in Dallas where he won't have to shoulder the entire offensive or defensive load—allowing him to properly develop into the superstar he is expected to become.

Flagg officially arrived in Dallas last Tuesday—not yet as an official member of the Mavericks but the former Duke superstar was in Dallas to meet with several team officials for a 48-hour private visit.

Flagg did not schedule

visits or workouts with any other teams, and the consensus No. 1 overall pick in the 2025 NBA Draft appears to be all-in on becoming a member of the Mavericks.

The 6-9 forward has been considered the front-runner to be the top pick in the draft since August 2023, when he decided to graduate high school a year early and enroll at Duke as a 17-year-old.

"Going forward, I think he's going to be just fine because of his ability to get to spots and raise over you, which you need to do in different moments of fourth quarters and playoffs and all that," Duke head coach Jon Scheyer said. "He's shiftier than you realize, his ability to beat you off

the bounce and obviously as an athlete, he'd go finish above the rim. And then the fact that you have to respect his shooting, he shot 45 [percent] from three [in ACC play] as a 17-year-old, 18-year old at that point, freshman.

"So, really, to score from three, at the rim, and then the ability to create his own shot with his shiftiness, handle, and just natural instincts. I think he's going to be one of the best scorers in the NBA in time."

Flagg's pre-draft visit with Dallas served as an opportunity for him to learn more about the Mavericks and how they envision building around him in the future. The Cooper Flagg era in Dallas is set to begin very soon.

## COLLIN, from Page 6



Collin County

of the Detention Facility's initiative in supporting inmate rehabilitation including the Sheriff's Convicted Offender Re-Entry Effort (S.C.O.R.E.). These courses are designed for younger or first-time offenders and focus on personal growth, academic readiness, and reentry preparation, aiming to reduce recidivism and create meaningful second chances. Collin College is working to expand offerings to include GED prepa-

ration and job training in the near future.

"The AEL grant has enabled us to expand our resources into this community that is often overlooked," said Jimmy Cervin, Collin College AEL director. "Our team has received great feedback from incarcerated individuals who seek our guidance to continue their education once they leave this facility. We look forward to building on this partnership and growing

the program further."

Along with Collin College's S.C.O.R.E. classes, the jail works with partners to provide other specialized courses. Veterans Assessing Lifelong Opportunities for Rehabilitation (VALOR) serves incarcerated veterans with trauma, Cornbread Hustle provides inmates with 12-step career-readiness training, along with Box Truck, an effort that provides inmates with skills in non-commercial delivery entrepreneurship and financial literacy.

"Our partnerships have made the biggest difference," said Amy Larson, Collin County Detention Facility inmate program coordinator. "Investing in education behind bars is not just the right thing to do, but it also improves public safety and strengthens our community."



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# Film Review: '29 Years Later' will please avid fans of the genre

By Dwight Brown  
NNPA Film Critic

(\*\*\*) Waking up in a hospital bed and discovering the world has been devastated by a Rage virus is an opening scene that's hard to beat. That set of images from the 2002 film 28 Days Later's intro passage may make some film fans eager to see this third chapter's beginning.

With that in mind, you wonder what was going through the head of screenwriter Alex Garland as he contemplated taking this legacy forward and devising its beginning: In Scotland, Little Jimmy is shocked when zombies are everywhere and turning his town into chaos. Biting, gnawing and changing humans into rabid, rampaging beasts who chase all in sight. That sequence ends, then there's a 180-degree turn.

Somewhere, on an isolated island off mainland Scotland, a village of survivors live a life both raucous and fearful. Drinking, dancing and joking around like pagans. But afraid to go outside their fortified gate. What scares them? Someone says what's on all their minds: "There are strange people on the mainland. That's why our village is so precious." The strange people are aggressive zombies infecting all who aren't. Fiends raging just across a fragile stone causeway that can only be traversed during low tides.

If the world outside is so dangerous, why does the dad Jamie (Aaron Taylor-Johnson, Nocturnal Animals) take his 12-year-old son Spike (Alfie Williams) into zombie land? With nothing more than bows and a limited supply of arrows? Against the wishes of the boy's mom (Jodie Comer), who's already suffering from fits of disabling anxiety? Why?



Image via NNPA

The screenwriter and director Danny Boyle keep their audience guessing. Nothing is predictable in this coming-of-age film, where a kid is pushed into adulthood. Into being a savior. In the process, what he sees, hears, runs from and into defies all the guesses any audience would make. At some point viewers will stop questioning and let this tale wash over them.

In the meantime, Boyle, aided by cinematographer Anthony Dod, peppers the screen with cryptic images. Fuzzy black and white footage displaying years long gone. Herds of deer running thunderously over hill and dale (with a great assist from telltale CGI effects). Ghouls sprinting around nude and dirty. A mountain of skulls that reach to the sky. Dazzling shots of sea water consuming a footbridge as people run for their lives. Entrancing, well-interspersed visuals set this drama horror film apart from the pack. Think Oppenheimer, but less static.

Boyle does well with action scenes. He also pulls solid performances from his cast, who deftly portray people in constant peril. The director's efforts get a major assist from the musical score, with its eccentric mix of rock 'n' roll songs, especially "Lowly" by the group Young Fathers. A progressive hip hop col-

lective comprised of Alloysious Massaquoi, Kayus Bankole and Graham "G" Hastings. Add editor Jon Harris, special makeup effects artist Sally Alcott and production designers Carson McColl and Gareth Pugh into the mix and it's no wonder the footage is fun to watch and listen to.

Although this is just a movie, what dad with half a brain takes his 12-year-old out to shoot angry wacked out and ex-human beings? This is child abuse. When dad says, "We're going back, you got your kill—that's what we came for," it's so cold and cruel. Shocking and dismal. As their relationship changes, the film finds its footing. What was shaky before, in terms of plotting, dissipates and a compelling and spiritual adventure story emerges.

Taylor-Johnson portrays a troubled man's immoral ways with just the right amount of selfishness. Comer as the mother adds complex layers of mental anguish to her character. Especially in a surprisingly humanizing scene when she confronts one of the female beasts. It's a primal moment. Warfare set aside. Humanity prevails. Precious. Very precious.

That scene is in direct contrast to the snarling mayhem brought

See FILM, Page 10



# Distinctively Debutantes to host 28th annual Grand Cotillion in Dallas

(Black PR Wire) For nearly three decades, the Distinctively Debutantes program has empowered exceptional young women through education, mentorship, and personal development.

This year's 28th Annual Grand Cotillion – presented by Distinctively Her, a women's empowerment initiative supported by the T.D. Jakes Foundation – will take place on Saturday, June 28, 2025, at 7:00 PM at the Hyatt Regency Dallas.

Founded on the vision of Serita A. Jakes — author, speaker, and leader in women's empowerment — the debutante program guides academically accomplished girls (ages 10–17) through a year-long curriculum focused on leadership, etiquette, and life skills. The Grand Cotillion marks the culmination of this transformational journey, celebrating the grace, confidence, and character cultivated in each participant.

The gala brings together debutantes, their families,



Crowning of Serita Jakes (Enhanced Artistry / Courtesy)

and community mentors for an elegant evening of celebration. The event features a formal procession and crowning ceremony for the Core Debutantes (age 16+ or graduating seniors), recognizing their excellence in scholarship, service, and integrity. As Distinctively Her describes it, the Cotillion “celebrates the transformation of ex-

ceptional young ladies as they blossom into poised and confident leaders.”

Beyond the gowns and ceremony, the Cotillion represents a powerful rite of passage. In African American culture, debutante balls have historically served as affirmations of dignity, self-worth, and leadership. Originating in the late 19th century as

cultural acts of resistance and resilience, these traditions continue through programs like Distinctively Debutantes, which offers year-round instruction in financial literacy, public speaking, civic engagement, and more.

As part of this year's celebration, Distinctively Her and the T.D. Jakes Foundation will present college

scholarships to each of the 49 Core Debutantes in support of their continued academic journeys. Over the past three years, the initiative has awarded more than \$700,000 in scholarships — reinforcing its commitment to long-term success and opportunity for young women of excellence.

“Each year, the Grand Cotillion is a powerful reminder of what's possible when young women are poured into with intention, love, and leadership,” said Tiara Moore, Executive Director of Distinctively Her. “With the support of the T.D. Jakes Foundation, we're thrilled to provide scholarships that affirm our debutantes' bright futures. This event is more than a celebration — it's a launching pad.”

“The Grand Cotillion is more than an elegant celebration — it's a milestone in the journey to leadership,” added Kelley Cornish, President and CEO of the T.D. Jakes Foundation. “We are honored to help further Mrs. Jakes' vision by investing in the next

generation of trailblazing young women.”

“It is a true joy and profound honor to officially celebrate the legacy of the Distinctively Debutante Program at this year's Grand Cotillion, honoring the remarkable Class of 2025,” said Serita Jakes. “As the heart behind this cherished 28-year journey, I am overwhelmed with pride and gratitude. These exceptional young ladies have not only embraced the values of grace, character, and sisterhood, but they have also flourished academically and personally. Their growth inspires me, and their bond as Distinctively Debutantes is a beautiful reflection of all we stand for.”

Under the leadership of Moore, Distinctively Her continues to champion this mission — empowering girls through wisdom, mentoring, and a spirit of excellence.

For more information about the 2025 Grand Cotillion: DistinctivelyHer.org.

## HBCU, from Page 5

missions to create sustainable, impactful solutions for historically underserved communities.

Established in 1987, the

Thurgood Marshall College Fund (TMCf) is the nation's largest organization exclusively representing the Black college com-

munity. TMCf member schools include the publicly supported historically Black colleges and universities, predominantly Black institutions and historically Black community

colleges, enrolling nearly 80% of all students attending Black colleges and universities. Through scholarships, capacity building and research initiatives, innovative programs and

strategic partnerships, TMCf is a vital resource in the K-12 and higher education space. The organization is also the source of top employers seeking top talent for competitive

internships and good jobs. TMCf is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt, charitable organization.

For more information about TMCf, visit [www.tmcf.org](http://www.tmcf.org).

## FILM, from Page 9

on by the alpha zombie Sampson, as played by former MMA fighter Chi Lewis-Parry. And his demonic antics are diametrically opposed to the controlled calmness of the shaman-like character Ian Kelson,

played by Ralph Fiennes. A stoic man who espouses heady beliefs. If the film has a peak, it's when the philosophical Fiennes explains, like his words come from above, what the Latin phrase “Memento mori”

means.

For a kid, Williams paces his dialogue like a pro. Never rushing, always emphasizing the right words with his phrasing.

The camera likes his face and captures his emotions well. It's a performance that should bring him more

opportunities. It's so good audiences will attach their hopes to him. He must endure. He must be the one who can make sense of it all.

An alarming but undistinguished beginning is bookended by an awkward ending. One where charac-

ters, who aren't supernatural, do almost supernatural things. There's no viable reason for their powers. It throws off the reverent scenes that came before it. Like a misguided afterthought. This may make some viewers yearn for the original and near flaw-

less 28 Days Later. Proving years later aren't necessarily years better.

Classy, arty, horror. Good enough for genre fans. Advanced enough for grown-ups. More than enough.

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



# Credit scores of corporate executives may reveal their decisions

(Newswise)—COLUMBUS, Ohio – The personal credit scores of top-level corporate executives can help explain their decision making in the corporate environment, at least when it involves evaluating risk, a new study suggests.

Researchers at The Ohio State University conducted an experiment with a national sample of high-level executives and found that those with subprime credit scores tended to be “yes persons” – even when it was counterproductive.

In contrast, executives with prime credit scores critically evaluated external information, more effectively processing decisions involving risk.

“Responsible CEOs do not want executives who are going to be ‘yes persons,’ they want someone who evaluates data objectively,” said Noah Dormady, co-author of the study and associate professor at Ohio State’s John Glenn College of Public Affairs.

“That’s the issue we’re picking up in this study. Executives with higher credit scores were much more likely to think thoughtfully and critically about the data and make objective decisions.”

Dormady conducted the research with Yiseon Choi, a doctoral student in the Glenn College. Their study was published recently in



DWG Studio

the International Journal of Production Economics.

Executives who participated in this study self-reported their FICO scores, which is one type of credit score. The two biggest factors in FICO scores are a person’s payment history – such as how often they are late paying bills – and how much they owe. Other factors include their credit mix, length of credit history and how much new credit they have.

These factors tend to be correlated with income; however the study focused exclusively on the top-level executives in a company, who are referred to as C-suite executives. These executives would all have similar levels of income.

Credit scores are known to be predictive of a person’s risk tolerance, Choi said.

“This is important because prior research suggests that personal financial habits may extend to professional decision making,” she said.

This study involved data from a controlled experiment previously led by Dormady, and involving 303 C-suite executives at middle-market firms (those with annual revenues between \$10 million and \$1 billion), in partnership with Ohio State’s National Center for the Middle Market.

In the experiment, the participants had to make an investment recommendation to a chief operations officer involving inventories. They had to decide whether to invest in inventories that could act as a buffer in case of a catastrophe, like a hurricane, that temporarily halted production at the company.

“The decision to stockpile inventories is one of opportunity cost. For a company, the cost of those inventories can take away from currently productive plant, equipment, and workforce.” “It can be a difficult decision that involves managing risk for the company,” Dormady said.

The executives in the

study went through 10 decision making periods, and each period had 2 rounds. In each period, they were randomly given a unanimous recommendation from a group of advisers that, in the scenario, were appointed by their CEO. The advice in each period was either to invest in the inventory or not, and this was given between each round of decisions.

After that, the participants were told whether a catastrophe had occurred or not. Overall, the participants had a 25% chance of having a catastrophe in each period. In the end,

some participants in the study experienced no catastrophes, and some had as many as 7 in their 10 periods.

The key finding was that executives with the best, prime credit ratings tended to take the advisers’ advice only when it matched their own experiences in the experiment. If the executives experienced more catastrophes, they were more likely to accept the advice of the advisers if they told them to invest in more inventory.

But they weren’t afraid to reject the advice if it conflicted with their own experience.

“Those with higher FICO scores were more confident to make their own decisions, possibly because the financial decisions they made in their personal lives worked out well, compared to those with lower FICO scores,” Choi said.

In fact, executives with subprime credit scores were about twice as likely to follow the advice of advisers, even when it was inaccurate, when compared to those with prime credit.

“Executives with subprime credit were more likely to simply defer to the

**See CREDIT, Page 13**



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## NAACP, from Page 7

them.”

The NAACP was joined by Alternatives for Community & Environment (ACE), Environmental Justice Initiative, NYU

School of Law, Harvard Environmental & Energy Law Program, Latino Justice PRLDEF, and Southern Environmental Law Center in calling on the Depart-

ment of Energy to honor its obligation to civil rights and environmental justice by immediately rescinding the rule and engaging with impacted communities in a full and fair public rule-making process.



# Women still ascend the corporate ladder more slowly than men

**Newswise** — While women have made gains in the workplace in recent decades, data shows it still takes women longer to get promoted than men. And even fewer women make it to the top of the corporate ladder compared to men.

Elizabeth L. Campbell, an assistant professor of management at the Rady School of Management at UC San Diego, studies gender differences in career advancement. Her research addresses why women still lag behind men in earnings and positions in the public and private sectors.

“Women are doing what conventional wisdom says is necessary for success,” says Campbell. “They’re earning advanced degrees, entering high-paying industries and acquiring impres-



*Women are doing what conventional wisdom says is necessary for success,” says Campbell. “However, progress toward gender equality has stalled. (UC San Diego)*

sive qualifications at rates equal to or higher than men. However, progress toward gender equality has stalled.”

Campbell’s research finds that gender matters significantly when making hiring decisions.

“Our research suggests

that overqualified women and sufficiently qualified men tend to be hired for the same jobs and ranks,” she says. This discrepancy is due to gender-biased assumptions.

“People tend to fall back on unconscious biases and

stereotypes without realizing it,” says Campbell. “Our study found that hiring managers thought overqualified men would feel that they’re ‘too good for this job’ and were a ‘flight risk.’”

Yet, hiring managers

didn’t have this same concern with overqualified women for two reasons: First, they fell back on gender stereotypes about women — i.e., “the motherhood penalty,” a type of labor market discrimination in which women, who are often also mothers, are stereotyped as the primary caregiver with competing work and family demands. This assumption was applied to all women, even though hiring managers had no information on the candidate’s family status. Second, hiring managers rationalized overqualified women’s motivations and guessed they were trying to leave a company with unfair barriers to their advancement, so they would be willing to take a relatively lower-ranking position in a new firm.

According to Campbell, if workplaces are interested in correcting this problem, system-based changes are more effective at reducing inequality rather than relying on individual managers and employees to fix inherent biases in their hiring and promotion processes.

“System-based changes, even simple ones, are more effective at reducing inequality than antibias awareness training alone, which has short-lived effects when not linked to actionable strategies for people to change their behavior,” says Campbell. “In addition, company leaders should look hard at their retention practices to ensure they are standardized and not left to the discretion of individual managers.”



City of Dallas

## 2024 Drinking Water Quality Report

The City of Dallas’ Drinking Water Quality Report is produced annually to provide information about the City’s water system including source water, the levels of detected contaminants and compliance with drinking water rules. The report is also produced to answer your water quality questions.

The 2024 Drinking Water Quality Report shows that the levels of contaminants in Dallas’ water meet or are below the amounts allowed by law.

A copy of the 2024 Drinking Water Quality Report can be downloaded from the City website at [www.dallaswqr.com](http://www.dallaswqr.com) or obtained by calling Dallas’ 3-1-1 information line.

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## MILITARY, from Page 1

cans—more likely to face systemic barriers to college and employment—are disproportionately represented among enlistees seeking stability, education, or opportunity. Once enlisted, they are less likely to be promoted into leadership roles, often due to bias in evaluation and selection processes.

According to the VA's National Health Study, 21.9% of deployed Black veterans screened positive for PTSD, compared to 14.1% of white veterans.

Studies have shown that Black veterans are less likely to receive long-term, culturally competent mental health care and face more barriers to follow-up treatment. Military justice records also reveal that Black service members are more likely to face court-martial than their white counterparts.

"Black Americans have historically been over-represented in the U.S. military while being under-protected both at home and abroad," Cazoshay Marie, a disability advocate, artist, and writer, wrote in an email to Black Press USA. "From the disproportionate impact of PTSD and other invisible war wounds among Black veterans to the lack of adequate support upon returning home, the psychological and so-

cioeconomic costs of war weigh heavily."

"Increased military spending often coincides with the defunding of essential programs—education, healthcare, and community infrastructure—which are lifelines in our communities," Marie said.

Those federal divestments have long-term consequences. During the post-9/11 wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, it's estimated that the U.S. spent over \$6 trillion on military operations, interest payments, and veteran care.

As those expenses ballooned, domestic programs—including housing subsidies, public education investment, and job training—faced cutbacks. Black Americans, already on the receiving end of wealth gaps and institutional neglect, felt those losses acutely.

In their February 2024 essay "The Race Gap That Shapes American Views of War," published in Foreign Affairs, Naima Green-Riley of Princeton University and Andrew Leber of Tulane University wrote that Black Americans have consistently been less likely than white Americans to support U.S. wars abroad. The authors cited not only political and moral skepticism but also a deeply rooted sense that these wars

are carried out in the name of democracy while offering little tangible benefit to Black communities.

"Black Americans are more inclined to ask: Is this war just? Will our people gain anything from it? And what are we sacrificing for a country that so often withholds justice at home?" Green-Riley and Leber wrote.

The article pointed to cultural responses, including KRS-One's 2008 track "Our Soldiers," which critiques the Iraq War and opens with a siren that initially evokes U.S. policing. The song's hook, "Frontline of the political war," highlights a dual consciousness: the experience of fighting abroad while being targeted and marginalized at home.

"As a historian of public health and policy, I can say that when the U.S. goes to war, Black Americans often shoulder a disproportionate share of both the burden and the consequences—on the battlefield and at home," Dr. Zachary W. Schulz, of the Department of History at Auburn University, told Black Press USA.

"Historically, military service has been a double-edged sword for Black Americans," Schulz said. "From the Civil War through Iraq and Afghanistan, Black soldiers have fought for freedoms abroad they were denied at home.

Military service offered mobility, education, and sometimes even a pathway to civil rights advocacy—as in the case of the Double V campaign during WWII—but it also exposed Black personnel to racism within the ranks, limited advancement opportunities, and post-service disparities in veteran care."

"Civilians are also deeply affected," Schulz said. "Wars often fuel economic shifts and labor demands that open up jobs for Black workers—only to see those gains reversed when the war ends.

"Wartime policing and surveillance disproportionately target Black communities, and anti-war protest movements led by Black activists—think Muhammad Ali or Martin Luther King Jr.'s 'Beyond Vietnam' speech—have historically met with state suppression and public backlash."

"The impact is layered," Schulz added. "Black Americans are over-represented among the fighters, under-resourced in the aftermath, and frequently erased from the national narrative of sacrifice."

"We must tell the full truth," Isaboke concluded. "Black Americans have always shown up for this country, even when this country has not always shown up for them, especially in times of war."

## CREDIT, from Page 11

appointed advisors, even disregarding their lived experience," Dormady said.

"That suggests executives with lower credit scores are more likely to be the type of decision maker who follows consensus

over fact."

The researchers noted that they took into account a variety of demographic and other factors about the executives in the study, including gender, veteran status and other personal

details. But it was the FICO score that was most meaningful when it came to how they responded to risk in the scenarios.

Given the strong results in this study, does that mean companies should use FICO scores to screen candidates for top execu-

tive positions? Dormady said that is a complex question that raises ethical issues.

More replication studies should be done to confirm the results, he said, and guidelines are needed to ensure that credit score data is not misused or abused.



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# Did My Body Warranty Just Expire?

Dr. James L. Snyder

Just when I recover from the latest ache in my body within a few minutes, I will get a "Boo, I'm back."

I'm not quite sure why these Aches and Pains love my body so much. Why don't they just get over it and move on to another circus. The problem is, after I'm through with one ache, the next ache is just a wee bit more painful. I think the previous ache is just a practice for the next ache.

Getting up from bed the other day, I complained to The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage that my body was achy all over. I'm not sure why I thought she needed to know about all of these aches and pains, but I had to spill my beans.

After my lecture, she looked at me and said, "Maybe you need some body parts replaced." Then she continued, "I know an antique store I could take you."

I did not find that very funny, and smiled sarcastically at her and went to my office to complain to myself.

I've been to the doctor quite a few times in the last few years to deal with a variety of body aches and pains. He prescribed to me so much medicine that I kind of believe I'm a drug addict at this point. I have a pill for every ache and pain in my body along with substitutes.

While in my office, the telephone rang, and it was, you guessed it, a call reminding me that my car warranty was about to expire. Of course, I have no such warranty on any of my vehicles. However, it did get me to think about something.

Is my body warranty on the verge of expiring?

I'm waiting for someone to call me and offer me a renewed body warranty. That would solve a lot of my problems, I think.

In the meantime, I have to settle for what I got.

I started to chuckle. I discovered The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage is having an affair with Mr. Arthur Ritis. He's in her hand, fingers, and knee. No matter where she goes, Arthur goes along with her. I will never know why she puts up with Arthur.

Some of my worst pain is a pain in the neck. I get this so often as I get older. When I was younger, I had no pain of this nature. But getting older, I've had this pain in the neck. Personally, I want to be a pain in the neck to somebody, like The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. I know what would happen if I were a pain in her neck. She would say something very nice at my funeral.

I was having a little trouble with my hip, and was tempted to ask her to take me to her favorite antique store. After all, what did I

have to lose in that regard?

When I told her, she smiled at me and said, "I don't think I can. I'm afraid they will want to keep you."

Talk about a pain in the neck?

As I get older, I am trying to learn how to deal with all the aches and pains that come daily. As soon as I get used to one pain, a new one shows up and I have to start all over again. Why isn't there one pain pill to deal with all the pain in my body?

I tried several things to deal with my pain. First of course is the doctor. Every time the doctor sees me he smiles and greets me very heartily. I used to think he was happy to see me, but then I realized when I went to him, he was getting money out of my insurance, Medicare, and whatever else I have. Realizing this, I began to understand that to all those doctors I am an ATM machine. I guess I'm glad that my pain benefits somebody in this world.

Another thing I try to deal with is ignoring my pain. Pretending it doesn't exist. That doesn't always work.

When I wake up in the morning, the first thing The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage asks is, "How are your aches and pains today?"

It's hard to ignore them when somebody is always talking about them.

Then there's another as-

pect of this. I am learning that although these aches and pains are a curse, they are also a blessing. I never knew that before.

When The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage asks me to do something I don't want to do, I start complaining. "Oh, dear, I'd love to, but my shoulder hurts so much. I just can't do it."

I'm not sure she believes me or not, but it works most of the time, and I'm happy with anything I can get.

I might never get used to my aches and pains. But if I can turn them into an advantage, that will be a very happy day for me.

I then thought of one of my favorite verses in the Bible. James 1:2-4, "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this,

that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."

A pain sometimes helps me to be patient and learn a new lesson of patience in

life.

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

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# It Ain't Cool Being a Fool



**Sister Tarpley**  
NDG Religion Editor

**Text:** Proverbs 12:15;  
**Reading Proverbs 1:8-19**

**Synopsis:** Scripture portrays fools as those who have rejected God and his ways and are unable or unwilling to appreciate the wisdom of knowing and obeying him.

**Graduates,** our God wants us to be wise, not fools or evil. There are three types of people you will meet in the world:

1) A Fool is a silly or stu-

pid person; a person who lacks judgment or sense. He jests and jokes; waste time, is sexually promiscuous, squanders his resources, is irresponsible and unproductive, but he unrealistically thinks he has it all together.

A Fool thinks he is always right, but a wise man listens to good advice. **Proverbs 12:15** says, "The way of a fool seems right to him, but a wise man listens to advice." **Proverbs 14:12** says, "There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death."

**Proverbs 28:26,** "He who trusts in himself is a fool, but he who walks in wisdom is kept safe." 1

**Timothy 6:4,** "he is conceited and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicions"

**2 Timothy 2:23,** "Don't have anything to do with foolish and stupid arguments, because you know they produce quarrels." **Titus 3:9,** "But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies and arguments and quarrels about the law, because these are unprofitable and useless."

**Proverbs 14:7,** "Stay away from a foolish man, for you will not find knowledge on his lips." A fool

speaks unwisely, he despises instruction and discipline.

**2) An Evil Man** is bad and wicked. He is harmful and desires to injure and hurt you. He is characterized by anger. He is sinful,

depraved, corrupt, destructive and unrighteous. He causes disaster, misery, suffering and sorrow.

An evil man seeks to use you and destroy you. **Proverbs 6:12-19,** "A scoundrel and villain, who goes about


with a corrupt mouth, who winks with his eye, signals with his feet and motions with his fingers, who plots evil with deceit in his heart— he always stirs up

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# NDG Book Review: 'The Ghosts of Gwendolyn Montgomery' is a winner

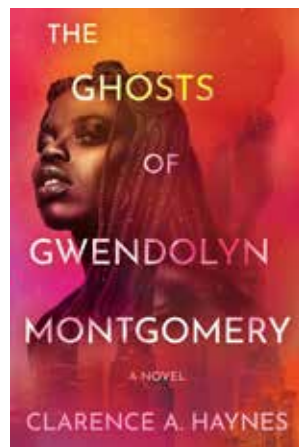
By Terri Schlichenmeyer

You fit right in.

Whatever it takes, that's alright. It's human nature to change your mind and be one with the group. To relax your presence to maintain good will. To stay quiet and under the radar – but be careful. As in the new book, "The Ghosts of Gwendolyn Montgomery" by Clarence A. Haynes, denying who you really are can be deadly.

Beautiful, talented, and driven, Gwendolyn Montgomery's touch was magic.

Everyone who wanted to be famous knew that she alone could make it happen, that her work at Sublime



Creative could make someone a legend like Gwendolyn herself.

Yes, she was a superstar. Personally, though, things were different. Working long hours with whiny, demanding stars was fine,

but Gwendolyn wanted companionship. She was lucky she met James, who was sweet and kinda geeky, not perfect, but better than another one-night stand.

And there was that other problem: someone or something was trying to ruin Gwendolyn's career.

It was horrible when a fashion show she'd organized at the Brooklyn Museum was trashed by a red substance that the police said was blood. It was terrible when the same thing happened at an event she'd done for her baddest, most spoiled client. But the gory Spanish words scrawled on the wall of both venues were what scared her the

most.

"TRAIDORA," they said. Traitor.

Ever since he was a teenager, Fonsi Harewood talked to ghosts; recently, he learned that he could sleep with one, too. That super-hot incubus was literally only the man of Fonsi's dreams, though, and so Fonsi renounced love and threw himself into being a part-time psychic and running La Playa, a store for believers in the spiritual.

He loved that store and his customers but lately, he'd noticed that something was wrong and his BFF's mother, Estelle, also a psychic, confirmed it. El Intermedio, the spirit world, was

roiling and they needed someone with more power to help hold the spirits back.

Someone like Fonsi's long-estranged cousin, also a Guardián, wherever she was...

If you're like a lot of people, you pick up a book, skim the first few pages, and make your decision: to read or not to read. Do that with the beginning of "The Ghosts of Gwendolyn Montgomery" and you'll be tempted to put it back.

Trust this, though: despite that it's a jumble at first, you won't be sorry if you stay.

Whether you believe in ghosts or you scoff at the idea of a spirit world,

this novel will satisfy your cravings with lots of hair-raising moments and one or two moderately-explicit eyebrow-raisers, along with an intriguing backstory that includes a bit of mystery. But it's not all boo-who: author Clarence A. Haynes injects enough excitement and humor to keep even the most sober-minded reader entranced with a plot that's twisty fun.

For your vacation this year, you know you're going to want to take a good book along and you can't go wrong with "The Ghosts of Gwendolyn Montgomery."

Check your suitcase. It'll fit right in.

## TARPLEY, from Page 15

dissension.

Therefore disaster will overtake him in an instant; he will suddenly be destroyed—without remedy.

3) A wise man is discerning and has good judgment. He can see what is right and wrong. He is sensible, well informed, and knowledgeable. He is able to take what he knows and applies it to life. Know this, we have a little of all three in us.

A Wise Man Wisdom is the ability to make sound judgments on what we know, especially as it relates

to life and conduct. Psalm 1:1–3 says, "Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers.

But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on His law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers."

Proverbs 1:8–9, says, "Listen, my son, to your father's instruction and do

not forsake your mother's teaching. They will be a garland to grace your head and a chain to adorn your neck."

--By Dr. Terrance Woodson, Senior Pastor, Bethel Bible Fellowship, Carrollton, Texas.

It has been said that there is a constant war going on between our flesh and the Spirit; as Christians, the Spirit seeks to move us under the authority of God's domain in order for us to fulfill all that we were created for.

Every individual was designed to be under some

form of authority. Jesus modeled this in His own life. He lived under the authority of His heavenly Father. He made no independent decisions.

Jesus, unlike us, was sinless and always remained under His Father's authority. He acknowledged that the prince of this world has a hold on many, but did not have a hold on Him.

The prince of this world does have his hold on many in our world, even among our brothers and sisters. The one thing most of us want the most is the freedom to make our own deci-

sions.

It goes all the way back to the Garden of Eden when the decision was made to exercise a personal right: freedom to decide, freedom of choice, freedom from hindrances, freedom from pain.

However, Jesus chose to live under the authority of the Father's desire for His life. He was the ultimate model of a man under authority.

Each day we must determine if we'll willingly choose to be under the authority of the Father and the direction of the Holy Spirit.

It is a choice each graduate and each person must make. It is a choice that actually leads to freedom, not bondage.

Choosing to live under the authority of our heavenly Father frees graduates and an individual to gain the greatest fulfillment in life—His mission and the purposes God has for each of us. It is the little decisions of a graduate's life and a person's life that reveal whether he truly lives under God's authority.

(Editor's Note: This column originally ran in June 2014.)

## SOCIAL, from Page 4

online survey or individual qualitative interview, listing alcohol-related keywords recalled from social media, how often they saw or posted alcohol content on social media, and their typical alcohol consumption and consequences.

"We compiled a list of

alcohol-related keywords and categorized them by themes like 'drunk' or 'alcohol harm,'" said Strowger. "We found that young people who recalled seeing more negative alcohol-consequences keywords on social media also reported experiencing more negative

consequences themselves. This means we've begun to pinpoint some specific keywords linked to higher alcohol risk, providing a concrete first step to identify at-risk young adults through the alcohol-related language they encounter on social media."

Strowger added that these findings can offer a promis-

ing pathway to help protect non-college young adults from alcohol-related harm. "The high-risk keywords we identified can be used to train machine-learning algorithms to detect problematic alcohol posts on social media," she said. This information could then be used to trigger targeted interventions, such as per-

sonalized direct messages or advertisements, or connecting vulnerable young adults with alcohol-related support and resources they might not otherwise access or even be aware of.

"Social media platforms are widely scrutinized for their impact on youth mental health," added Strowger. "Our research reveals

that seeing harmful drinking content on these platforms might also impact young people's physical health. This underscores a pressing need to develop interventions that counteract the influence of this online content, to hopefully reduce both the short- and long-term consequences of heavy drinking."