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# As Democrats return to Texas, Republicans gets closer to erasing the seats of four Black members

By Lauren Burke

Republicans in Texas, on orders from President Donald Trump, are now closer to approving a new congressional map that would eliminate five seats Democrats have won over several cycles. The hyper-partisan move is designed to assist Democrats in boosting their chances in the midterm elections in 2026, as Democrats in Texas ended a two-week boycott aimed at stalling the plan.

The Texas Republicans' reaction to their boycott turned bizarre today as Texas Republicans who control the Texas House, led by GOP House Speaker Justin Burrows, mandated that police would escort Democrats over the next two days if they wanted to depart the Capitol. Much like the rising levels of disrespect that white Republican lawmakers in the south demonstrated in Tennessee towards Black Democrats Rep. Justin Jones and Rep. Justin Pearson in 2023, Texas Republicans appear to be operating on a level of partisanship that is racially driven — though lawmakers on the right deny it. Texas Democrats left the state



Republicans in Texas, on orders from President Donald Trump, are now closer to approving a new congressional map that would eliminate five seats Democrats have won over several cycles. (Photo via NNPA)

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## The battle rages on in Austin

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## Parents worry about their kids' health

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### People In The News ...



Gloria Gaynor



Candice Nicole

#### NDG Quote of the Week:

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

- Wilma Rudolph



## Gloria Gaynor

Gloria Gaynor, the disco legend whose 1978 anthem “I Will Survive” became a rallying cry for empowerment and resistance, will now stand center stage at Donald Trump’s first Kennedy Center Honors since seizing control of the institution.

Gaynor’s acceptance of the award from a president rejected by 92 percent of Black women voters is a stunning turn for the 81-year-old performer — one that critics say undercuts the very spirit of her signature song.

Trump unveiled this year’s honorees — Gaynor, KISS bassist Gene Sim-



Wikimedia via NNPA

mons, and actor Sylvester Stallone — in a made-for-TV spectacle, boasting he was “about 98% involved” in picking them and rejecting others for being “too woke.”

His involvement breaks with decades of tradition, when honorees were se-

lected by a nonpartisan committee, and underscores how the event has been reshaped to serve his political and personal brand.

Simmons’ inclusion is especially jarring. Once friendly with Trump from his *Celebrity Apprentice* days, Simmons has since accused him of unleashing open bigotry.

“Once upon a time, you were embarrassed to be publicly racist... now it’s all out in the open because he allowed it,” Simmons told SPIN, adding that Trump “got all the cockroaches to rise to the top.”

Despite that history, Simmons will take the stage this December under

Trump’s banner. Stallone, a loyal Trump supporter and one of his so-called Hollywood “ambassadors,” will also be honored.

The appearance gives the “Rocky” star a national platform to promote his ratings-challenged television series.

Trump’s control over the Kennedy Center began with a boardroom purge earlier this year.

He fired longtime president Deborah Rutter, ousted Biden-appointed board members, and made him-

self chairman — the first sitting president to do so.

Rutter accused Trump’s team of making “false allegations” and distorting audited financial reports.

The upheaval has triggered boycotts by major artists and cancellations of high-profile productions, including “Hamilton.”

The Kennedy Center Honors were once a rare bipartisan celebration of American cultural achievement. Under Trump, the ceremony is now a curated display of loyalty, where

politics takes the lead over artistry.

For Gaynor, whose defining hit once symbolized resilience in the face of adversity, this December’s performance will carry a far different message — one of approval for the very man her core audience overwhelmingly rejected.

“When you get into a position of power, it does affect lives,” Simmons has said of Trump.

However, this year’s honorees will show just how far that influence can reach.

## Candice Nicole

Black PR Wire) Miami, FL — Candice Nicole is an award-winning publicist who has built a reputation for amplifying voices and turning stories into impact. She’s also the remarkable founder and CEO of Candice Nicole Public Relations (CNPR).

Based in Charlotte, North Carolina, CNPR is a boutique public relations agency dedicated to helping entrepreneurs, small business owners, and personal brands increase their visibility through intentional storytelling, strategic media placements, and brand positioning. For nearly two decades, Candice has combined high-level strategy with hands-on execution, working with various clients from authors and thought leaders to wellness brands, tech startups, nonprofit organizations, and high-profile talent. Her clients have been featured in renowned outlets such as *Forbes*, *The TODAY Show*, *Essence*,



Black PR Wire

BET, *Black Enterprise*, and *HuffPost*.

Candice believes visibility is not a one-time event — it’s a long game. That is why CNPR customizes campaigns that secure media attention and builds lasting momentum for clients’ long-term goals. Candice’s commitment to long-term growth extends to her own business. In early 2026, she will guide Candice Nicole Public Relations into its next chapter — transforming it into a PR & Visibility Digital Education Agency. Rather than operating as a traditional PR firm, CNPR will focus on education-driven offer-

ings including digital products, courses, memberships, live trainings, and coaching programs — giving entrepreneurs and brands the tools to manage their own visibility with confidence. The exclusive Fractional PR Director role will continue, providing brands with a high-touch, direct hire engagement with Candice Nicole to deliver senior-level strategic leadership and oversee PR and visibility efforts from the inside out.

For entrepreneurs just starting out, CNPR’s digital store offers affordable, accessible resources to help build visibility before investing in full PR services. As Candice reminds us, “Always remain a student in your career and life. There is no way to know everything and that is okay. There is incredible value in learning daily.”

To connect with Candice at Candice Nicole Public Relations, reach out via email at [candice@candicenicolepr.com](mailto:candice@candicenicolepr.com), or by telephone at (704) 456-5644.

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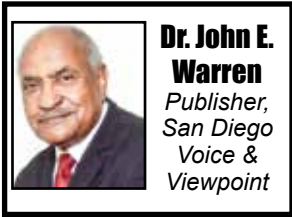
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# The 60th Anniversary of The Voting Rights Act And You



**Dr. John E. Warren**  
Publisher,  
San Diego  
Voice &  
Viewpoint

As some of us celebrate the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, there are those among us determined to destroy what's left of its significance.

The Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice has been gutted by Donald Trump with senior

staff either being fired or quitting.

Without the enforcement which gave the act teeth, we are seeing a Republican-led Administration moving on the redrawing of electoral districts to ensure that the Democrats do not retake control of the House of Representatives, without which we can not impeach Trump or stop his raid on federal dollars which are being redirected from their legislative intent on the move to wipe out represen-

tative government.

When one adds to that our own diminishing interest in voting, even though those before us died for our right to vote, we as a nation are in a crisis, which will require all our participation. That participation can only be exercised with the ballot.

Let us not forget that those who are dismantling our government and way of life are fewer than the majority of us, but they both vote and plan ahead to the next election. They know

that still too many of us are apathetic about voting.

So let's not get excited about the attacks on voting rights without looking at whether we are personally doing our part.

We must contact our friends and relatives, wherever they live and demand that they join us in voting against this madness.

Let's register, look at who is running against these Republicans candidates and get out the vote. Our very lives depend upon it.

## Greg Abbott Fights Harder For Donald Trump Than He Ever Has For Texans

By Kendall Scudder  
Texas Democratic  
Party Chairman

*In response to the Texas House issuing 24/7 DPS surveillance to members who did a constitutionally protected quorum break, and Representative Nicole Collier's brave stand against it.*

I hope y'all see how much effort and determination Greg Abbott is willing to put into defending Donald Trump, an effort that he has never made for Texans. Dustin Burrows and Greg Abbott are taking cops off the beat to stalk their political opponents.

Why aren't Greg Abbott's police following Republicans who are sitting on their hands and refusing to pass flood relief in this



Texas State Representative Nicole Collier (White House photo)

state?

If anyone is getting locked in the legislative

chamber and held against their will, it should be these Republican politicians until

they pass flood relief, since it doesn't seem they'll ever do it otherwise!

Nicole Collier is standing up to this brazen abuse of power and fighting for what is right. Republicans are turning this country of liberty and freedom into a police state, and if you don't think you're next, you're mistaken. Standing with Nicole Collier means standing on the side of liberty against a tyrannical, oppressive government that forces dissenting voices into submission.

Thank you for standing up for what is right, Rep. Collier. The Texas Democratic Party and Democrats nationwide support you. Donald Trump and Greg Abbott will rue the day they trample on the liberty of free Texans."

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# Majority of parents believe children's physical and mental health is getting worse

(Newswise) — ANN ARBOR, Mich. — Most parents think that the health of U.S. children is going in the wrong direction, a new national poll suggests.

Two-thirds of parents believe children's physical health is declining while four in five say mental health is getting worse, according to the University of Michigan Health C.S. Mott Children's Hospital National Poll on Children's Health.

Leading the list of child health concerns were social media, too much screen time, and internet safety.

"These concerns from parents reflect a growing awareness that today's children are facing increasing challenges impacting both their physical and mental health," said Mott Poll co-director and Mott Children's pediatrician Susan Woolford, M.D.

"Parents continue to express concern about the pervasive role of technology in their children's lives," she added. "Excessive screen time and social media exposure are linked to poor sleep, less physical activity, and negative mental



health outcomes, including anxiety, low self-esteem, and unhealthy social comparisons."

Parents' views about technology likely differ depending on their children's age, Woolford notes.

"Those with younger kids often focus on screen time and its potential impact on attention and learning," she said. "Meanwhile, parents of teens are more likely to worry about how social media affects self-image, peer pressure, and worldview."

## Growing awareness of mental health struggles

The rising number of

children and teens facing mental health challenges may be heightening parents' awareness.

Parent concerns about children's mental health could also reflect the increases in child depression and anxiety seen before and during the Covid-19 pandemic, Woolford says.

Mothers were more likely than fathers to rate mental health as a major issue, according to the nationally representative report that's based on 2,021 responses from parents of children ages one to 18 surveyed in February.

"Mothers often take on

the role of emotional caretakers in the family, which may make them more attuned to shifts in their children's moods or behavior," Woolford said. "They may also be more likely to talk to their children about their feelings."

## Nutrition and exercise also high on parents' radar

Other related issues near the top of parents' concerns included an unhealthy diet (No.4), obesity (No.7), and lack of physical activity (No.11).

Overall, parents polled appear to have the most questions about their child's nutrition and level of exercise.

"Parents recognize that healthy eating and regular physical activity are foundational to their child's overall well-being but may feel unsure about the best way to help their children make healthy choices," Woolford said.

"Concerns about nutrition likely reflect the challenges of finding healthy food options that are accessible, affordable and acceptable to kids. Parents

may face similar issues with helping their children to be physically active," she added.

## A broad range of worries

Nearly every parent polled said at least one topic was a major concern for children and teens today—and nearly two-thirds rated 10 or more topics as a big problem.

"These views may stem from parents' experiences with their children and other children in their community, or what they have read about or heard from the media or other secondhand sources," Woolford said.

Parents identified a range of other major concerns affecting children's health and safety. More than half pointed to guns and gun-related injuries as a top issue, followed closely by fears of child abduction or sex trafficking and substance use, including alcohol and drugs.

Roughly two in five also cited systemic or environmental challenges, including a lack of mental health services, poverty and child abuse or neglect.

Other areas of health described as a big problem included parental stress and the spread of inaccurate or misleading health information, teen pregnancy or sexual activity, discrimination based on race or gender and worsening air and water quality and safety of the food supply.

Mothers were more likely than fathers to rate many of these as big problems, especially bullying, school violence, and child exploitation.

More than a third of parents were also worried about unequal access to healthcare and close to three fifths of parents rated the cost of healthcare and health insurance for children as a big problem.

"As policy changes go into effect, particularly those related to Medicaid, this may become a bigger issue for U.S. families," Woolford said. "Consistent access to healthcare is critical, especially when providers can help families manage the physical, mental, and social issues kids are facing today."

# There may be an alternative to LASIK — without the use of lasers

(Newswise) — WASHINGTON, Aug. 18, 2025 — Millions of Americans have altered vision, ranging from blurriness to blindness. But not everyone wants to wear prescription glasses or contact lenses. Accordingly, hundreds of thousands of people undergo corrective eye surgery each year, including LASIK — a laser-assisted surgery that reshapes the cornea and corrects vision. The procedure can result in negative side effects, prompting researchers to

take the laser out of LASIK by remodeling the cornea, rather than cutting it, in initial animal tissue tests.

Michael Hill, a professor of chemistry at Occidental College, will present his team's results at the fall meeting of the American Chemical Society (ACS). ACS Fall 2025 is being held Aug. 17-21; it features about 9,000 presentations on a range of science topics.

Human corneas are dome-shaped, clear structures that sit at the front of

the eye, bending light from surroundings and focusing it onto the retina, where it's sent to the brain and interpreted as an image. But if the cornea is misshapen, it doesn't focus light properly, resulting in a blurry image. With LASIK, specialized lasers reshape the cornea by removing precise sections of the tissue. This common procedure is considered safe, but it has some limitations and risks, and cutting the cornea compromises the structural integrity of the eye. Hill

explains that "LASIK is just a fancy way of doing traditional surgery. It's still carving tissue — it's just carving with a laser."

But what if the cornea could be reshaped without the need for any incisions?

This is what Hill and collaborator Brian Wong are exploring through a process known as electromechanical reshaping (EMR). "The whole effect was discovered by accident," explains Wong, a professor and surgeon at the University of California, Irvine. "I was

looking at living tissues as moldable materials and discovered this whole process of chemical modification."

In the body, the shapes of many collagen-containing tissues, including corneas, are held in place by attractions of oppositely charged components. These tissues contain a lot of water, so applying an electric potential to them lowers the tissue's pH, making it more acidic. By altering the pH, the rigid attractions within the tissue are loosened and make the shape malleable.

When the original pH is restored, the tissue is locked into the new shape.

Previously, the researchers used EMR to reshape cartilage-rich rabbit ears, as well as alter scars and skin in pigs. But one collagen-rich tissue that they were eager to explore was the cornea.

In this work, the team constructed specialized, platinum "contact lenses" that provided a template for the corrected shape of

See LASIK, Page 6



# Trump targets Black-led cities despite record crime declines

By Stacy M. Brown  
NNPA Senior National  
Correspondent

Donald Trump's take-over of Washington, D.C.'s police force and his threats to extend the same approach to other Black-led cities are being denounced as racially motivated and tied directly to the Project 2025 blueprint.

The facts tell a different story: under Black mayors, these cities have recorded some of the most dramatic drops in violent crime in decades.

In the nation's capital, Trump declared what he called "liberation day in



Photo via NNPA

D.C.," vowing to "wipe out crime, savagery, filth, and scum."

But his rhetoric is at odds with his own Justice Department's data, which shows the District reached a 30-year low in violent crime in 2024. Overall violent crime fell 35% from

the year before. Homicides dropped 32%, robberies 39%, and armed carjackings an astonishing 53%. Assaults with dangerous weapons also declined, continuing a trend of steep reductions since a post-pandemic peak in 2023.

Chicago has seen similar

success. Mayor Brandon Johnson noted that the city reduced homicides by more than 30% and shootings by almost 40% in just one year, calling the progress historic.

The results reflect investments in youth employment, community outreach, and neighborhood-based violence prevention programs.

In Los Angeles, Mayor Karen Bass reported that homicides dropped 14%

between 2023 and 2024, crediting expanded gang intervention programs and community-based initiatives aimed at preventing retaliatory shootings. Bass dismissed Trump's federal intervention as nothing more than a "power grab," a political stunt meant to undercut local leadership.

Baltimore has also posted consecutive annual declines since 2022. Officials report that homicides and nonfatal shootings have

fallen significantly, carjackings were down 20% in 2023, and other major crimes decreased further in 2024.

Only burglaries saw a slight rise. Mayor Brandon Scott pointed to the city's Comprehensive Violence Prevention Plan, launched in 2021, which treats violence as a public health crisis and invests in community interrupters, victim

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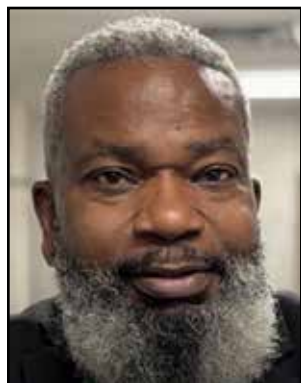
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# DeSoto ISD's Dr. Gene Morrow selected for prestigious SMU District Leadership Fellows Program

DeSoto Independent School District proudly announces that Dr. Gene Morrow, Executive Director of Student Support Services/Operations, has been selected to join the 2025–2026 cohort of the Southern Methodist University (SMU) District Leadership Fellows program. This highly competitive, year-long hybrid leadership training is hosted by the Institute for Leadership Impact in SMU's Simmons School of Education & Hu-



Dr. Gene Morrow (DeSoto ISD)

man Development in Dallas, Texas.

The new cohort of school

district leaders includes representatives from across Texas, Arkansas, Alabama, and California, serving districts ranging in size from 1,000 to 67,000 students. Through intensive collaboration with peers and nationally recognized education experts, Fellows will strengthen their leadership skills, address pressing challenges in K–12 education, and develop networks that will continue to impact student success long after the program concludes.

“Being part of the SMU District Leadership Fellows program is an honor and an opportunity to deepen my leadership practice while connecting with other dedicated educators across the nation,” said Dr. Morrow. “I look forward to bringing back innovative strategies that will support our students, staff, and community in DeSoto ISD.”

Prior to joining DeSoto ISD, Dr. Morrow most recently served as the Coordinator for the Texas Principal

Residency Program with the Texas Center for Educator Effectiveness in Austin, Texas, where he designed and implemented systems of support for principals and created innovative principal residency models. He also founded and led The Principal's Advantage, providing experiential leadership development for school and community leaders to enhance organizational performance.

His career includes service as a principal in

Lancaster ISD and Grand Prairie ISD, as well as an academic coach at Lamar University. In his current role as DeSoto ISD Executive Director of Student Support Services/Operations, Dr. Morrow oversees critical operational and student-centered departments, including Student & Staff Support Services, Child Nutrition, and Fine Arts. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Political Sci-

See MORROW, Page 7

## Dallas Baptist University earns full CACREP accreditation

Dallas Baptist University (DBU) proudly announces that the Master of Arts in Professional Counseling (MAPC) program has been awarded full accreditation from the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), the

leading standard of excellence in counseling education. This prestigious accreditation, granted in late July 2025, is valid through October 2033.

The accreditation marks the culmination of more than a decade of vision, preparation, and dedica-

tion from DBU faculty, staff, and leadership. The MAPC program now joins an elite group of counseling programs nationwide that meet CACREP's rigorous academic and professional standards, recognized by employers, licensing boards, and professional

organizations across the United States.

“This achievement affirms the quality and integrity of our program,” said Dr. Steve Hunter, Program Director of the MAPC program. “Our students are being equipped biblically from the truths of God's

Word, trained professionally to meet state requirements for licensure, as well as national standards for CACREP, and being sent globally to serve a hurting world.”

The journey toward accreditation began in 2012 and gained momentum in

2015 when Texas raised the academic requirements for Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) licensure. DBU restructured its curriculum, renamed the program to the Master of Arts in Professional Counseling,

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## LASIK, from Page 4

the cornea, then placed each over a rabbit eyeball in a saline solution meant to mimic natural tears. The platinum lens acted as an electrode to generate a precise pH change when the researchers applied a small electric potential to the lens. After about a minute, the cornea's curvature

conformed to the shape of the lens — about the same amount of time LASIK takes, but with fewer steps, less expensive equipment and no incisions.

They repeated this setup on 12 separate rabbit eyeballs, 10 of which were treated as if they had myopia, or nearsightedness. In

all the “myopic” eyeballs, the treatment dialed in the targeted focusing power of the eye, which would correspond to improved vision. The cells in the eyeball survived the treatment, because the researchers carefully controlled the pH gradient. Additionally, in other experiments, the team demonstrated that their technique might be able

to reverse some chemical-caused cloudiness to the cornea — a condition that is currently only treatable through a complete corneal transplant.

Though this initial work is promising, the researchers emphasize that it is in its very early stages. Next up is what Wong describes as, “the long march through animal studies that are de-

tailed and precise,” including tests on a living rabbit rather than just its eyeball. They also plan to determine the types of vision correction possible with EMR, such as near- and far-sightedness and astigmatism. Though the next steps are planned, uncertainties in the team's scientific funding have put them on hold. “There's a long road be-

tween what we've done and the clinic. But, if we get there, this technique is widely applicable, vastly cheaper and potentially even reversible,” concludes Hill.

*This research was funded by the National Eye Institute of the National Institutes of Health and the John Stauffer Charitable Trust.*



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# Texas Representative Rep. Nicole Collier files a Writ of Habeas Corpus saying Texas Republicans detained her at state capitol

By Lauren Burke

After being told by Republicans who control the Texas House that she would not be permitted to leave the Texas State House after she refused to sign a “permission slip” for her freedom, Rep. Nicole Collier filed a writ of habeas corpus late on August 19.

A standard writ of habeas corpus is a court order that directs an individual “in custody” to bring that person before the court and



Photo via NNPA

determine if their detention is lawful or unlawful. Though many Democrats in the Texas House signed the makeshift “permission slip”

form to depart the Texas House Chamber on August 18, Rep. Collier refused. Yesterday, several members

tore up the slip they had signed and joined with Rep. Collier.

“A member may be compelled by the Sergeant-at-Arms to attend a legislative session if he or she is physically absent, but no such power is conferred on the Legislature to arrest or otherwise compel a member who is currently present (and not absent) to stay,” Rep. Collier’s lawsuit reads in part. “Representative Collier is under restraint

by virtue of the Speaker of the House’s order placing her into the custody of law enforcement prior to the Wednesday, August 20, 2025, Session,” her legal filing also asserted.

Rep. Collier represents Fort Worth, Texas, and was one of at least 45 Texas Democrats who left Texas on August 3 to delay Texas Republicans from enacting new congressional maps after President Trump requested they do so to win

the 2026 congressional midterms. The new proposed maps would likely mean the end of the congressional careers of five Democrats, including three members of the Congressional Black Caucus. The writ of habeas corpus was filed by Rep. Collier’s attorney in the district court of Travis County late on August 20. Rep. Collier is asserting that House Texas Republicans

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## DBU, from Page 6

and aligned its coursework with CACREP standards. By 2019, the program was producing graduates who met these high expectations.

Under the leadership of Dr. Kristi Tew, DBU submitted a comprehensive Self-Study Report in December 2023, detailing two years of data and demonstrating full compliance with CACREP standards. A successful site visit in February 2025 confirmed

the program’s strengths, culminating in this historic accreditation decision.

The benefits of CACREP accreditation are significant for DBU graduates, opening doors to work with the Veterans Administration, state agencies, and other organizations that require or prioritize CACREP credentials. It also enhances licensure portability, allowing graduates to practice in more states across the country.

## MORROW, from Page 6

ence, a Master of Education in Educational Leadership, and a Doctoral Degree. “Dr. Morrow’s selection to the SMU District Leadership Fellows program reflects both his leadership capacity and his commitment to continuous professional growth,” said DeSoto ISD Superintendent of Schools Dr. Usamah Rodgers. “His participation will not only benefit him as a leader but will also bring valuable insights and strat-

egies to strengthen our district’s operations and student support services.”

The SMU District Leadership Fellows program is strengths-based, focusing on cultivating transformational leadership skills uniquely tailored to the challenges of K-12 education. Fellows work together to address complex problems, build leadership competencies, and create sustainable improvement in their districts.





# Dallas Wings rebuild effort finds hope in Maddy Siegrist

By Jamal Baker  
NDG Contributing Writer

Dallas Wings forward Maddy Siegrist has established herself as a core foundational piece for the organization as they go through a rebuild.

Siegrist was the No.3 overall pick in the 2023 WNBA Draft and has dealt with an anterolateral tibial plateau fracture in her right knee that kept her out of the lineup for nearly two months this season.

She made her return to game action on Aug. 5 and recently took back over her starting role in the lineup.

Although the Wings are enduring an underwhelming season with a 9-26 record, Siegrist's stellar play as of late has been a major bright spot.

"Maddy Siegrist tied her career-high with 22 points in a win over the Fever on Tuesday, then set a new



Siegrist photo: wnba.com

career-high with 23 points in a loss to the Aces on Sunday. Injuries derailed her season again, but she's quietly averaging 11.8 points and 4.6 rebounds — both career-highs — on 50.6% shooting in 17 appearances. She looks like a legitimate part of the Wings' young core moving forward," CBS Sports contributor Jack Maloney wrote.

Siegrist has also proved to be an admirable fit alongside rookie sensation Paige Bueckers in the limited games the two have played together.

Bueckers has scored in double figures in every professional game she's played in and has lived up to the hype of being the first overall pick.

According to WNBA legend Candace Parker, the former UConn star should be the favorite to win WNBA Rookie of the Year this season, as Bueckers has consistently showcased her high basketball IQ and all-around game.

"Back in July, Paige became the first player in WNBA history to total 350 points, 100 assists in the first 20 games of their

career," Parker said. "And so Paige is having herself a season. I think it's just a matter of her being on the court, is what all of us want to see. So this could be interesting. I think I give the nod to Paige Bueckers for Rookie of the Year, but Sonia, make me change my ways."

With a 6-2, 175-pound frame, Siegrist is a relentless offensive rebounder and can score the ball on all three levels of the floor. She is also a plus defender that has the ability to switch on smaller, twitchier guards if needed.

As the Wings look to the future, Siegrist's versatility and growing impact on both ends of the floor make her a cornerstone in

the franchise's ongoing rebuild.

However, fans have grown restless with the leadership of a Wings team that had high hopes heading into this season, as fans could be heard behind the bench chanting "We want Nola!" in reference to assistant coach Nola Henry.

Wings head coach Chris Koclanes seems to be handling the criticism with poise and an attitude of self-improvement.

"I'm going to be my harshest critic and I'm going to look in the mirror every single day and figure out how I can be better, Koclanes said.

After a home loss to the New York Liberty on Aug. 8, Wings forward Myisha

Hines-Allen confronted a fan wearing a "Nola For Head Coach" shirt, asking for their continued support of the team and Koclanes.

"I understand. Well, we want to do well, too," Hines-Allen said to the fans. "We can hear all the outside noise! You know we didn't start the season off well, we're not playing how we should be playing. But we need the fans to support us! [And that shirt] isn't supporting us, though. Because at the end of the day, Chris is still our head coach. We still need him."

As the growing pains of a tough season continue, and despite the noise, Koclanes continues to lead with humility and a focus on getting better each day.

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# Film Review: 'First Steps' is not quite so Fantastic

By Dwight Brown  
NNPA Film Critic

(\*\*1/2) “I will not sacrifice this child for the world. I will not sacrifice this world for my child.” Hard to understand what could drive anyone to say that. Hard to understand what could put anyone in that position.

That’s the core of this film’s very thoughtful screenplay, as created by Josh Friedman, Eric Pearson, Jeff Kaplan and Ian Springer. Through their perceptive and creative efforts, this film’s emotionally compelling script turns superheroes into approachable people with issues. Which turns this Marvel entry into something more than just



Photo via NNPA

another money grab. This one feels like a superhero think tank merged ideas and created a story with heart.

A fated trip into space turned four folks into a fantastic foursome with superpowers. Reed Richards/Mister Fantastic (Pedro Pascal) is a brilliant sci-

entist who can stretch his body beyond recognition. Sue Storm/Invisible Woman (Vanessa Kirby) is his strong-willed wife. Johnny Storm/Human Torch (Joseph Quinn) is her ram-bunctious younger brother.

See FILM, Page 13



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# National Museum of African American Music announces transition in leadership

NASHVILLE - The National Museum of African American Music (NMAAM) has announced a transition in its leadership as H. Beecher Hicks steps down from his role as president and chief executive officer. Hicks, a visionary behind the museum, has played a pivotal role in its establishment and success. The museum is planning a community appreciation celebration for Hicks



later this year. Details will be announced soon.

“Henry Hicks is an invaluable

visionary and leader whose immense contributions have shaped the Na-

tional Museum of African American Music into the world-class institution it is today,” said NMAAM Board Chair Stacey Garrett Koju. “Under his guidance, NMAAM has become a beacon of inspiration, education, and cultural preservation. We are deeply grateful for Henry’s unwavering dedication and commitment to highlighting the rich history and profound impact

of African American music. His passion and vision have set a solid foundation for the museum’s continued success. We extend our sincere appreciation to Henry and wish him the very best in his future endeavors.”

“This has been an incredible ride,” said H. Beecher Hicks, III. “I took on this role as a two-year commitment, and a decade later, it is unbelievable how far we’ve

come. NMAAM showcases African American music, culture and history in a way that is not only important to Nashville but resonates around the world. It is humbling to have played a part in bringing this special project to fruition and setting it on a path for sustained success. It’s time for the next challenge, and I’m looking forward to new opportunities on the horizon.”

## COLLIER, from Page 7

unlawfully held her against her will and detained her in the Texas State Capitol Building when she refused to sign a makeshift “permission slip” to leave and agree to 24-hour law enforcement surveillance.

The GOP’s request for her and other members of the Texas House to sign was a strange and unprecedented move by Republicans who have long held power in the chamber. Rep. Collier and colleagues were escorted to

the Texas House chamber by law enforcement unless they signed a statement. Only Black State Rep. Nicole Collier of Fort Worth declared that she would sleep on the Texas House floor until September 1st, Labor Day, if it was necessary, rather than sign the

“permission slip” to leave.

On Monday, August 18, Rep. Collier began working from the Texas House Chamber and put up a 24-hour live feed of her view of

the large ornate room. Rep. Collier refused to agree to the GOP’s demand, led by Republican Texas House Speaker Dustin Burrows, to sign what amounted to a

contract for her freedom.

The moment marks an unheard-of level of partisanship witnessed at any statehouse in the modern political era.

## TEXAS, from Page 1

the group, arguing that winning national attention was the goal of their August 3 departure. Other Democrats in the Texas House regard the moment as a loss and say that a “moral victory” is not satisfactory.

“We killed the corrupt special session, withstood unprecedented surveillance and intimidation, and rallied Democrats nationwide to join this existential fight for fair representation — reshaping the entire 2026 landscape,” said Texas Rep. Gene Wu, Chairman of the Texas House Democratic Caucus, in a statement on August 18.

After leaving Texas for two weeks to stall the Republicans’ redistricting plans, the Democrats have now returned. Their return means that Republicans can procedurally move forward with changes in congress-

sional maps that are likely to flip and/or eliminate at least four seats now held by Democrats. They include the seats of Congressional Black Caucus members Rep. Jasmine Crockett and Marc Veasey.

Texas Republicans also moved the seat of Rep. Al Green, a Black Democrat who protested President Trump during his address to Congress on March 4, 2025, even further to the right. That change in the maps revealed on August 18 will make it even more difficult for Rep. Green to be re-elected.

Republicans are in the majority in the U.S. Congress with 219 members versus 212 Democrats. The 2026 elections in the U.S. House are all but guaranteed to be close. As President Trump’s polling numbers fall, he remains

fully aware that, as Gov. Newsom put it, his “presidency is over” if Democrats win the majority in the U.S. House starting in January 2027.

The moment represents one of the most unheard-of partisan moves in modern politics. Texas Republicans are barely shielding the intended purpose of their unprecedented mid-decade redistricting. Congressional redistricting usually takes place every ten years in tandem with the annual CENSUS.

But the moves by Texas Republicans will be challenged in court. The question is, will the challenge be met with the same partisan results as the maps that have been redrawn — and if the case makes it to the U.S. Supreme Court, will they remain consistent with the previous precedents regarding racially redrawn districts?



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# Tulane study finds smaller companies get kinder online reviews — and empathy is the reason why

Newswise — A new, large-scale international study analyzing millions of reviews from Yelp, Amazon, Twitter and Instagram, found that smaller companies consistently received higher ratings—even when the customer experience

was identical.

The research revealed that people were more likely to leave glowing reviews for small businesses and more forgiving when things went wrong.

Published in the Journal of Marketing, Chris

Hydock, co-author of the study and assistant professor of marketing at Tulane University's A. B. Freeman School of Business, said the fix for big companies was straightforward— simply being more responsive and writing back in a warmer

tone can shift how people feel about a company—and how they rate it.

“This project explored the inherent biases present in online consumer reviews, and our findings reveal that big businesses tend to receive lower av-

erage ratings compared to small businesses,” said Chris Hydock, co-author of the study and assistant professor of marketing at Tulane University's A. B. Freeman School of Business.

“Interestingly, this isn't

because consumers are more critical of big businesses, but rather because they are less inclined to leave positive reviews for big businesses and more likely to do so for small businesses after a good experience.”

## America's divisions are causing workplace dysfunction

By Blair S. Walker

(Newswise) — Organizational engagement with social issues is pushing culture wars into corporate America, leading to bickering and suboptimal performance, says Luke N. Hedden, assistant professor at the University of Miami Patti and Allan Herbert Business School.

He's co-authored a paper on the phenomenon,

“‘MOB’ mentality? On the formation and consequences of moralized opinion-based intergroup conflict in organizations.” The study was published by the Academy of Management Review earlier this month.

“We see organizations and the goals they're trying to accomplish coming to a halt while they work through some intense interpersonal, but largely in-

tergroup, conflicts,” said Hedden, who's with Miami Herbert's Department of Management. “If we look back over the last 10 years or so, this is something that we see more and more examples of, whereas 20 years ago there were certain things you didn't talk about at work.”

Hedden and co-authors Michael Pratt, a management professor with Boston

College, and Hamza Khan, a postdoctoral scholar with the University of Illinois Chicago's business college, wrote that Moralized Opinion-Based (MOB) Inter-

group Conflict often stems from closely held opinions on social issues. Hedden said that racial and gender inequality, climate change, and LGBTQ rights are ex-

amples of issues that can foment workplace discord.

The Academy of Management Review piece offers

See DIVISION, Page 13

## CRIME, from Page 5

services, and neighborhood stabilization. Scott accused Trump of using crime as a “wedge issue and dog whistle” while cutting federal support for anti-violence programs.

Oakland stands as another example. According to the Major Cities Chiefs Association, homicides fell 21% and all violent crime dropped 29% in the first half of 2025 compared with the same period in 2024.

The gains are credited to the Department of Violence Prevention, created in 2017, as well as partnerships with grassroots organizations.

“The things we are doing are working,” said Nicole Lee of the Urban Peace

Movement, while warning that Trump's threat to send in troops or impose youth curfews would only create “an environment of fear” and put young people of color in the crosshairs.

Despite the hard data, Trump has smeared these cities as “crime-ridden” and “horribly run.” His words have been matched by actions — stripping authority from local leadership in D.C., deploying National Guard troops on city streets, floating youth curfews, and threatening to replicate the model elsewhere.

For Black mayors, the motive is clear. “It was not lost on any member of our organization that the may-

ors either were Black or perceived to be Democrats. And that's unfortunate,” said Savannah Mayor Van Johnson, president of the African American Mayors Association.

Trump's moves track directly with the hardline agenda of Project 2025, which aims to consolidate federal power and weaken local autonomy. Black mayors say they will continue to stand together and defend the progress their cities have made.

“We need to amplify our voices to confront the rhetoric that crime is just running rampant around major U.S. cities,” Johnson stated. “It's just not true. It's not supported by any evidence or statistics whatsoever.”



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# National Medical Association announces 2025–26 Board of Trustees and leadership at annual convention

(Black PR Wire) The National Medical Association (NMA) introduced the 29 members of the Board of Trustees for the 2025-2026 calendar year at the Annual Convention & Scientific Assembly in Chicago.

Roger A. Mitchell, Jr., M.D., FASCP, a forensic pathologist in Washington, D.C., was sworn in as the 126th NMA President for a one-year term. He succeeds Virginia A. Caine, M.D., Director and Chief Medical Officer of the Marion County Public Health Department in Indianapolis, Indiana, who specializes in infectious diseases. With the conclusion of her presidential term, Dr. Caine is the NMA Immediate Past President.

Michael G. Knight, M.D., MSHP, FACP, an internal medicine and obesity medicine physician in Washington, D.C., and Region II Trustee, was elected the new Chairperson of the NMA Board of Trustees.

Brandi Kaye Freeman, M.D., MS, a pediatrician in Colorado, was elected President-Elect of the NMA. Dr. Freeman will become NMA President in July 2026.

The other Executive Committee members on the NMA Board of Trustees for 2025-2026 are:

- Priscilla Mpasi, M.D., FAAP, a pediatrician in Pennsylvania and Region II Trustee, is Secretary of the Board of Trustees.

- Melanie Hanna-Johnson, M.D., a general internal medicine specialist in Detroit, Michigan, is Speaker of the House of



Delegates.

- George Barnett, M.D., a family medicine physician in Ohio, is Treasurer.

- Yvonne Collins, M.D., a gynecologic oncologist in Illinois and Region IV Trustee, is Finance Committee Chair.

- Damali Campbell Oparaji, M.D., an obstetrician-gynecologist in New York and Region I Trustee, is the Trustee-at-large member of the Executive Committee.

The new members of the Board of Trustees are:

- Dionne Hart, M.D., an addiction medicine psychiatrist in Minnesota, is Region IV Trustee.

- Stacey Hunt, M.D., a dermatologist in California, is a Region VI Trustee.

- Christle Nwora, M.D., an adolescent medicine fellow at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine, is the Post Graduate Section Trustee.

- Ms. Kailyn Geter, a medical student at Howard University College of Medicine, is the Student Trustee

Returning members of the Board of Trustees are:

- Juana Hutchinson-Colas, an obstetrician-gynecologist in New Jersey, is Corporate Trustee.

- Glenn McWilliams, M.D., a urologist in New York, is a Region I Trustee.

- Edith Smith-Rayford,

M.D., an obstetrician-gynecologist in Mississippi, is a Region III Trustee.

- Rodney Reid, M.D., a rheumatologist in South Carolina, is a Region III Trustee.

- Maurice Sholas, M.D., PhD., a physical medicine & rehabilitation physician in Louisiana, is a Region V Trustee.

- Melissa Walker, D.O., MPA-HS, a family medicine physician in Texas, is a Region V Trustee.

The Regional Chairs on the NMA Board of Trustees are:

- Monique DeFour Jones, M.D., an obstetrician-gynecologist in New York, is Region I Chair.

- Carole Guy, M.D., a pulmonary critical care physician in Delaware, is Region II Chair

- Ninita Brown, M.D., an ophthalmologist in Georgia, is Region III Chair.

- Lindi Randall-Hayes, M.D., FAAEM, FAACP, an emergency medicine physician in Illinois, is Region IV Chair.

- Derick Young, M.D., a family medicine physician in Texas, is Region V Chair.

- Khadijah Lang, M.D., a family medicine physician in California, is Region VI Chair

The additional officers of the House of Delegates on

the NMA Board of Trustees are:

- Jennifer Walton, M.D., MPH, FAAP, a developmental-behavioral pediatrician in Florida, is Vice-Speaker of the House of Delegates.

- Lindi Randall-Hayes, M.D., FAAEM, FAACP, an emergency medicine physician in Illinois, is Secretary of the House of Delegates.

- Lawrence Sanders, M.D., is an internal medicine physician in Georgia, is Chair of the Committee on Administrative and Financial Affairs (CAFA).

Members of the NMA Board of Trustees are elected by physicians and medical students representing the 53 state, district, and

territory medical societies and the 26 scientific sections who gather for the Annual Meeting of the House of Delegates, the NMA's policy-making body.

The National Medical Association (NMA) stands as the collective voice of African American physicians, tirelessly championing parity and justice in medicine while striving to eliminate disparities in health.

The National Medical Association (NMA) is the largest and oldest national organization representing African American physicians and their patients in the United States. The NMA is a national professional and scientific organi-

zation representing the interests of more than 50,000 African American physicians and the patients they serve. NMA is committed to improving the quality of health among minorities and disadvantaged people through its membership, professional development, community health education, advocacy, research, and partnerships with federal and private agencies. Throughout its history, the National Medical Association has focused primarily on health issues related to African Americans and medically underserved populations; however, its principles, goals, initiatives, and philosophy encompass all ethnic groups.

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## FILM, from Page 9

And Ben Grimm/The Thing (Ebon Moss-Bachrach), a strong man with a rocky-looking physique, rounds out the quartet. Somewhere, sometime during the mid-century, the four are ensconced in their city's culture, providing protection and justly being hailed as local heroes.

And so, when a metallic looking emissary named Shalla-Bal/Silver Surfer (Julia Garner as) flies into their community, it's no wonder that the squad jumps into action. She warns them: "Your planet is now marked for death." As the messenger for Galactus (Ralph Ineson), an evil, power-hungry space god who intends to destroy earth, she knows what she's talking about. But there's a hitch. That ominous being wants more than just the world. It wants something far more precious, and closer to the heart of the Fantastic Four. Now, they're in the fight of their lives for humankind and a vulnerable soul who's barely been born.

The general premise is older than the galaxies. Heroes fighting for earth's future is formulaic to the point of being cliché. The difference in this Marvel chapter is that a lot of time is spent on developing and nurturing the relationship of

this extended and non-traditional family. That personal angle overrides some of the film's imperfections. It's a choice too few superhero movies make these days. The exception being the new Superman movie.

Hard to think of a sci-fi, superhero, action, adventure film that includes pregnant characters. Harder still to fathom a superhero giving birth in space. Yet Sue is having contractions aboard a spaceship that's under attack and the audience is watching like they're in a gallery surrounding a hospital's birthing room. It's like the movie is giving a free Obstetrics 101 intro course. This innovative scene is almost worth the price of admission. Credit the writers for dreaming this stunt up. Wish there were more scenes that were this unique. Also, having different countries across the world unite for a common cause is such a needed message. It's a theme that's so relevant these days at a time when selfish alienation has become the norm.

Equal praise should be heaped on the cast for humanizing four oddballs who are trying to save the world, protecting a baby and balancing work and home life, just like everyone else. Pascal is the actor of the mo-

ment. His ability to bring humanity and vulnerability to Reed is uncanny. Kirby seems stoic as the mom who is making the toughest decisions. The two actors behave like a couple feeling their way through life. Figuring out their relationship and trying to make things right. Sue to Reed: "Sometimes you being you hurts me." The rest of the cast, including Sarah Niles as Lynne Nichols a press secretary, are sufficient to good with their roles.

Script, characters and acting are the strong points. The weak points add up too. The direction by Matt Shakman, whose base is TV, cable and streaming series (WandaVision), isn't innovative or stylish. Feature films are not in his wheelhouse, and it shows. What's on view feels like a series of strung-together vignettes and generic action scenes. With obvious sets (Kasra Farahani), cartoony costumes (Alexandra Byrne), a conventional score (Michael Giacchino) and special visuals effects (Scott Stokdyk) that aren't memorable. Fortunately, the editors (Nona Khodai and Tim Roche) nip scenes at the right moment. But who cares if the scenes are long or short if what you're watching isn't all the eye-catching? And when Galactus finally makes his ap-

pearance, he's not that scary looking. Big and foreboding, but not astonishingly so. It's a missed opportunity. His image should have scared the daylights out of everyone.

Knowing that these four are part of a much larger family is not a prerequisite for enjoying parts of this film. If you stumbled into a theater playing The Fantastic Four: First Steps, and knew nothing about Marvel, you'd still enjoy the storyline, even without knowing its background. That's because this film feels like a self-contained unit. It has a beginning, middle and end and will be quite watchable on cable and streaming services for viewers who like the genre.

Getting back to the hearts of characters may let the MCU live to fight another day. If they could just get the directing, production elements and stunts to fly as high as the script and acting, maybe there's still life in this saga about four heroes.

But audiences shouldn't have to sacrifice eye-catching stunts and imagery for great writing and acting. Nor sacrifice great writing and acting for eye-catching stunts and imagery. They should have it all. Should but won't in this case.

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

## DIVISION, from Page 11

illustrative examples of several corporations that have been impacted by MOB Intergroup Conflict, including Wayfair, Disney and Coinbase.

"Groups inside organizations have actually staged walkouts," Hedden said. "Sometimes, employees

are quitting altogether, or writing public letters. All of those things can hamper group and organizational productivity.

"In the paper, we talk about how there are some general societal trends kind of pushing this," Hedden continued. "One being that

workers in organizations now are expecting, and sometimes even putting pressure on, their leadership to take stances on issues. Once that public pronouncement comes out, then you have a lot more potential for these fires to start."

Hedden's paper takes pains to note how the emotion of disgust typically

underlies opinion moralization, which makes MOB intergroup conflict uniquely dehumanizing, contagious, and difficult to resolve.

Hedden's paper broadly points organizations, managers, and organizational scholars to look at two big ideas to help mitigate the impact of MOB intergroup conflict.



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# Practice Doesn't Always Make Perfect

By Dr. James L. Snyder

This month The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage and her amazing husband will celebrate 54 years of marital bliss. I can't believe how fast the time has gone. It only seems like yesterday that we got married. Maybe that's the benefit of getting old.

I remember the beginning of our life together. I went to a Bible college to prepare for the pastoral ministry, and that's where I met her.

As a young person, I had no qualities when it came to dating. Up until I met this young lady, I had never dated in my life. My parents planted the seed in my mind that most girls had cooties. I didn't know what that meant, but I wasn't going to explore it. I just stayed away from girls.

In going to college, my one prayer was that God would lead me to the young lady who would be my wife in my pastoral ministry. I had no way of choosing who that would be. With no dating experience, I just let it in God's hands. I was still nervous.

The first day of Bible college is when I met her, but I tried to dismiss it because it was just the first day. In classes, we crossed paths almost every day. Then one of the men in the men's dorm invited me to go out with him and his girlfriend for dinner one

night. He said his sister would be coming along if I didn't mind. Well, I didn't mind, so we went out together. Guess who it was?

That was the beginning. Slowly, we began seeing each other, and then one day it hit me like a pie in the face. I started thinking that maybe I was dating a girl for the very first time. It took me some time to get over that thought, and it made me wonder about certain things.

When I began to realize that we are actually dating, a thought came to my mind I had never thought before in all my life. What if, and I thought about this very seriously, but what if she expected me to kiss her?

I almost passed out when that thought run through my brain. I've never kissed anybody in the world, and nobody's ever kissed me. Well, except for my dog Sparky. But outside of that, I have been kiss-free all my life. I did not know how to handle it if it got to that point.

Maybe I should begin practicing kissing. I didn't know how to do it, and I sure wasn't going to ask anybody in the men's dorm about this subject.

One morning, I walked into the bathroom and looked in the mirror, and there I saw it. I saw how I could begin to practice kissing by using the mirror.

In the morning, I would go in and practice kissing myself in the mirror over

and over again. Then, in the evening before going to bed, I would go into the bathroom and stand in front of the mirror and kiss myself over and over again.

I'm not sure how long I was doing this, but I did not have confidence I was learning how to kiss anybody. I can hardly kiss myself in the mirror and get away with it.

I always heard that practice makes perfect, and so I practiced, and practiced, and practiced as much as I could. I had no confidence I had perfected any kissing.

Up until now, I have never told anybody about this aspect of my life. After all, who would I tell? And, who would believe me?

Keeping to my diligence, I practiced this kissing procedure day after day. I had to be very careful I didn't get caught in the dorm, because how would I explain what I was doing? Some things are better left secret.

As our dating got a little more serious, I got a little more nervous. There was going to come a time when she would expect me to give her a kiss good night. Oh boy. How do you fix such a situation in life?

Even now, I'm not exactly sure when it took place. But there was one date that I took her to the ladies' dorm and walked her to the door, and before I knew it, we kissed. I still don't know if I kissed her or if she kissed me. The

only thing I remember was that woozy feeling I had following that kiss.

Not all my practice in the bathroom mirror prepared me for what I experienced.

After that experience, I guess we kissed a lot, but once I was over that first one, everything else seemed to fall in place.

I must say that all my practicing did not prepare me for what I expected to happen. The more I practiced, the less prepared I became.

A verse of Scripture came to mind along this line. The Apostle Paul writers in 2 Timothy 2:15, "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

In my life I have learned

that preparation and practice is important. I personally like the phrase, "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed." I need to work at my life and not assume things will be OK.

I need to prepare my heart for what God has

next for me.

*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.jamesnsnyderministries.com.*

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# His Vision, His Way, In His Timing



**Sister Tarpley**  
NDG  
Religion  
Editor

*"Then God said, 'Take your son, your only son, Isaac, whom you love, and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains I will tell you about'"*

**Genesis 22:2.**

Have you ever wanted something so bad that you would do almost anything to get it? Such was the case for Abraham.

God promised Abraham that he would have a son and be the father of many

nations. But, Abraham panicked when Sarah aged beyond child bearing years and tried to help God by birthing Ishmael through Sarah's servant.

Ishmael was not son that God promised to bless Abraham through. Eventually, Isaac was born, who was the promised son. Later on God tells Abraham to sacrifice his promised son on an altar to demonstrate his obedience to God.

Truly, this is one of the hardest instructions given to one of God's people in all of scripture. It compares only to the Heavenly Father sacrificing His own Son.

God often births a vision in our lives only to allow it

to die first before the purest version of the vision is manifested.

When God gives a vision and darkness follows, waiting on God will bring you into accordance with the vision He has given if you await His timing.

When God's vision is finally birthed, nothing will stop it. Our job is to allow God to birth His vision through us in His way and in His timing.

When you allow God to birth His vision through you, in His way and in His timing, then your ways are pleasing to the Lord.

There is a requirement to be blessed at a deeper spiritual level by God. Christ requires it of each of His

servants. He required it of Paul when He struck him down on the Damascus Road. He required it of Joseph when he was left in the pit and then sold into slavery.

He required it of Jacob when he left his homeland

penniless and needy. He required it of most every major leader that He used significantly – brokenness, which cannot be achieved on your own.

It is something God does Himself. We cannot determine that we are going to be

broken, but we can refuse to become broken. When God begins this deeper work in our lives, we can kick and scream and refuse the process, God gave you a will to make choices; he

**See TARPLEY, Page 16**



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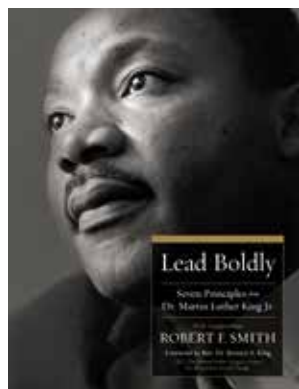
# NDG Bookshelf: 'Lead Boldly' offers a good start to learning more

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

Watch and learn.

If you've ever had to do something thorny or tricky, something you've never done before, that's how you get good at it: you watch a video online or see someone do it in person before trying it and putting your own spin on it. See one, do one, show one, they say. As in the new book "Lead Boldly" by Robert F. Smith, it's always best to learn by example.

Though he was there at the March on Washington in August of 1963, Smith doesn't remember it. He was an infant in his



mother's arms then, but he grew up on stories of that day, and other accounts of Dr. Martin Luther King's efforts. He cut his teeth on tales of Jim Crow, the Green Book, and the lack of generational wealth. Understanding this history

is why, in his business, he reaches for the seven principles that Dr. King taught.

Leaders, he says, know the importance of equal opportunities and they work to change wealth gaps, and to raise up future generations of Black citizens – often through CDFIs (Community Development Financial Institutions), which help underserved areas.

Leaders build community, then they work to move everyone forward by encouraging STEM education in local schools, and by ensuring that the latest technology is within reach of all citizens. They meld

both sides of America into one cohesive citizenry to harness the power of togetherness, and to create equity and opportunities. Leaders build bridges between their group and others, and they work to keep them strong. A good leader is brave enough and willing enough to step up and declare that something's wrong, and to see that that thing is fixed.

And finally, you can "lead boldly" by taking the reins, gathering your team, and continuing on with efforts to better all citizens in all corners.

Looking for some inspiration from the C-Suite?

You might find it inside "Lead Boldly," but you might also notice that what you'll read here is somewhat inadequate. Rather than hearty information, it's a lot of opinion – valid opinion, but opinion nonetheless – that may work better for younger, up-and-comers. Worse: there's really not enough of it.

That can be frustrating. Author and head of Vista Equity Partners Robert F. Smith starts each chapter with a different speech by Dr. King, and he then makes each relevant for anyone who hopes to make change. After those rousing words, though, readers

may be left wanting more direction. You'll be fired up... and then cooled down quick, probably because this book is relatively short, at just 240 pages, roughly half of which is speech transcripts. That leaves the other half to cover a lot of ground.

Which it does, but just not enough.

This isn't a bad book; it's full of great information but it feels incomplete. Perhaps the best way to get the most out of it is to study the speeches and use Smith's lessons as a launching pad. Do your own homework and then let "Lead Boldly" inspire you further.

## TARPLEY, from Page 15

will not interfere with your choice and your adversary doesn't have permission to interfere.

As individuals, we can manipulate and strive to stay on top, but this only delays God's work. Pride

and mammon are ruling strongholds of the community and the workplace.

Brokenness is considered a weak position. However, God says until

we are broken we cannot be an aroma pleasing to the Lord.

God wants you to be an aroma in the community and workplace.

Ask God's help to prioritize your daily activities to align with His will, His plan, His purpose, and to do what is most important as well as the little mun-

dane tasks that must be done.

*(Editor's Note: This column was originally published in August 2014. It has been edited for space.)*