



# North Dallas Gazette

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## White House Budget Proposal Ignores Nation's Affordability Crisis

*\$73B cut to domestic programs including housing, education, and consumer protection*

By Charlene Crowell

At a time when American families across the country are struggling to cope with rising costs of living, the White House's Fiscal Year 2027 budget proposal makes clear that federal help for working people is not in the cards.

"A historic paradigm shift in the budget process is occurring and is producing real results for the American public" stated Russell Vought, Director of the Office of Management and Budget in his comments to Congress.

If approved by Congress, this new "paradigm" will increase defense spending by \$1.5 trillion –44 percent increase, while slashing \$73 billion from domestic programs that many people have come to rely upon, like rental assistance, career training, and the Low-Income Energy Assistance Program.

In reaction, a chorus of concerned opposition has emerged, demanding



*The proposed FY 2027 federal budget prioritizes massive defense spending increases while cutting essential domestic programs, drawing strong criticism for worsening affordability and inequality for working families, especially marginalized communities. (NDG Composite)*

that Congress account for how taxpayer dollars will be spent.

For example, the Center on Budget & Policy Priorities summarized its concerns with an April 03 statement:

"The public is clear that it is deeply concerned about affordability. Yet

the budget either proposes nothing to address core affordability issues or makes them worse... It makes cuts in a range of areas that matter to families, including education; healthy fruits and vegetables for low-income

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### People In The News ...



Pastor Rodney Goss



Dona Gassaway

#### NDG Quote of the Week:

*We should emphasize not Negro History, but the Negro in history. What we need is not a history of selected races or nations, but the history of the world void of national bias, race hate, and religious prejudice.*

- Carter Woodson

## Pastor Rodney Goss

By Kimberly Marsh  
Oklahoma Eagle

On Easter morning in 1970, 4-year-old Rodney Goss sat on the stoop of his Trenton, New Jersey home waiting for a father he never knew. Goss was outside for hours, dressed in his thick-heeled platform shoes and green plaid jacket.

When his mom told him to go inside, she uttered a phrase he hasn't forgotten: "He ain't comin'."

"That was the greatest disappointment of my life, and that was the beginning of my journey for happiness," he said.

That journey has taken him to the streets, jail, seminary, and, for the past 10 years, the pulpit.

The 59-year-old serves as pastor of Morning Star Bap-



Molly McElwain / Tulsa Flyer

tist Church in north Tulsa. Even though he's older now, he says he's still in the pursuit of happiness.

"I got seashells and pockets of gratification, but that happiness is so fleeting," Goss told *The Eagle*.

"It wasn't until I found the joy of God that I realized that I don't have to be happy every day." It took time for him to get there. Growing up in his neighborhood,

Goss remembers being different.

He said the other boys on his block idolized flashy drug dealers and new cars, but he was more interested in books and school.

In the fourth grade, he and his mom moved to the suburbs, where life was completely different. Goss walked along picket fences in Lawrence Township, where he met white people for the first time and enjoyed Little League baseball.

"I knew what dreaming looked like," he said. "I knew what getting good grades looked like. I knew what talking about college was like and having friends that didn't look like me."

But it was short-lived as he eventually returned to his old stomping grounds. He got mixed up with drugs and crime, but, knowing more about life's possibili-

ties, he turned himself in on Thanksgiving 1988.

Goss said the judge told him "because of the sincerity of your heart" he would only sentence him to six months in jail. "Everybody else was getting 25 years," he said. "I did 47 days."

During that short period, he found God on the inside and began using his words on the outside to help others dream bigger.

That moment affects his ministry even to this day. Part of his time as a pastor is

focused on helping kids expand their horizons beyond their day-to-day circumstances.

Now he's on a mission to connect faith with real life and equip his congregation with the spiritual resources they need to serve the community.

"You come to church to worship. You leave church to serve," he said. "My job is to inform you so that you can make educated decisions and know what direction to walk in on your

own."

Through it all, he says, the most important lesson he's learned is the difference between happiness and joy.

"Happiness is a personal journey. Happiness always comes with a condition. But joy is my contentment with the world as it is," Goss said. "I'm joyful when I love God for who he is and just loving him for who he is in spite of what he does. That's the joy that the world didn't give and the world can't take away."

## Dona Gassaway

In celebration of Art Month in Dallas, local artist Dona Gassaway Mitchell is giving back to the community in a deeply personal and meaningful way. In honor of her 60th birthday, Mitchell will donate 60 pieces of artwork to several South Dallas nursing homes through her special "gift give-back" project.



The collection, titled "Tea Anyone," was thoughtfully selected to inspire seniors and spark cherished memories. Each piece reflects moments of comfort, tradition, and connection—inviting residents to reminisce about simpler times spent enjoying tea, reading the Bible, or unwinding with a good book before bedtime.

"For many, these images may rekindle the joy of sharing conversations over tea and tea cakes," Mitchell

shares. "For others, it may bring back memories of the fresh aroma that filled the house at the start of the day. Either way, I hope this collection allows them to relive those meaningful moments."

Mitchell's inspiration is rooted in her own childhood memories.

"I can remember the fresh, homemade tea brewing in my mama's kitchen—it's part of my culture," she says. "I reflect on the glass

tea cups with the tea bag string hanging over the side, and the aroma rising from the steam. There was nothing like the smell of my mama's tea. Those moments shaped me, and I want to share that feeling with others."

Through this initiative, Mitchell aims not only to celebrate her milestone birthday but also to bring warmth, comfort, and joy to seniors in the Dallas community. Her artwork serves as both a visual experience and an emotional bridge—connecting past and present through shared traditions and memories.

Dona Gassaway Mitchell is a Dallas-based artist whose work is inspired by culture, family traditions, and everyday moments that evoke emotion and nostalgia. Her art often reflects themes of heritage, memory, and connection.

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# On the Frontlines of Hate: NAACP Links Victims to Critical Support

Joe Kocurek  
California Black Media

The California/Hawaii State Conference of the NAACP (CA/HI NAACP) has expanded its efforts to respond to rising hate incidents and civil rights complaints across California, supported in part by funding from California's Stop the Hate Program.

Through that grant, NAACP CA/HI has strengthened its ability to connect individuals experiencing hate or discrimination with critical resources. This includes referring those who file complaints to the CA vs Hate hotline, a statewide, non-emergency hate crime and incident reporting hotline and online portal created to help counter a more than 50% increase in reported hate crimes in California between 2020 and 2024. The system helps ensure incidents are documented and victims are guided toward appropriate support.

LaJuana Bivens, who has served in a number of roles within the NAACP, said California has seen an increase in civil rights violations and hate-related incidents.

"We have 52 branches and they are constantly receiving complaints," she said. "So, without the Stop the Hate we would not be able to refer those cases up to attorneys at the state level. A lot of the people would not have had an opportunity to be heard."

Carmen-Nichole Cox, an

attorney who works with NAACP CA/HI through California's Stop the Hate Program, provides legal consultation to victims of hate incidents and discrimination.

She said the complaints she receives span a wide range of issues.

"People are having home builders and landlords refusing to provide repairs, a student was denied promotion in an academic program, and targeted scrutiny at work," she said. "It's typically employment; it's housing; it's education."

"We'll meet and they'll share their experiences," she said. "And then I make some assessments about possible legal claims."

According to the California Civil Rights Department (CRD), nearly 1,200 reports of hate against minority groups were submitted in 2024 through the CA vs Hate hotline and online portal for non-emergency incidents.

While the California/Hawaii State Conference of the NAACP, which has tens of thousands of members, does not directly investigate hate incidents or crimes, it plays a key role in connecting victims to the state's reporting systems and support services.

The NAACP CA/HI has a long and well-established record of supporting victims of discrimination and hate crimes — providing critical referrals and, when necessary, direct assistance through legal advocacy and other forms of support.

Beyond responding to incidents, the organization continues to advocate on broader civil rights issues, including voting rights and legal protections. It has also worked to counter efforts at the state and federal levels that could weaken the voting power of communities of color.

Bivens recently traveled to Sacramento to speak with state lawmakers about voting rights during an advocacy day event hosted by the organization.

"It's just so hard for communities of color to be up to date because of all of the confusing information coming from the federal level," she said. "I love our great state of California because here it is possible to vote by mail and to vote early."

"And I'm seeing that trying to be eroded. So, I'm here to urge continued support for vote by mail and early voting."

When Texas moved to redraw congressional districts in ways critics said would dilute minority voting strength, NAACP CA/HI supported the passage of Proposition 50 in California. The organization also intervened in United States v. Shirley Weber, where federal officials sought access to unredacted California voter records, including Social Security numbers, raising concerns about misuse and voter intimidation.

A federal district court dismissed that case in January 2026.

The organization's current work builds on a long history of civil rights advocacy. Founded in New York City on Feb. 12, 1909 — the 100th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's birth — the NAACP was established to secure the rights promised under the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments following the Civil War.

While those protections were written into law, they required sustained advocacy to enforce, particularly during the post-Reconstruction era when Jim Crow laws, racial violence, and systemic discrimination undermined progress.

Over the decades, the NAACP expanded nationwide, including in California, where local branches helped dismantle segregation and discriminatory barriers in housing, education, and employment. The organization also contributed to legal challenges that weakened the "separate but equal" doctrine established in Plessy v. Ferguson.

Today, Bivens says, the organization's mission remains as urgent as ever.

"We are the oldest, boldest, most feared Civil Rights organization," Bivens said. "What we do every day is fight for better housing, education, economic development and political inclusion. We take it on because there are just so many people who need that support."

"You would be amazed that our phones ring every single day."

Keep up with the news

O N L I N E

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# AI Tool May Spot ADHD Years Before Children Are Diagnosed

(Newswise) — DURHAM, N.C. — Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) affects millions of children, yet many go years without a diagnosis, missing the chance for early support that can change long-term outcomes even when early signs are present.

In a new study, Duke Health researchers found that artificial intelligence tools can analyze routine electronic health records to accurately estimate a child's risk of developing ADHD years before a typical diagnosis. By reviewing patterns in everyday medical data, the approach could help flag children who may benefit from earlier evaluation and follow-up.

The research, published in *Nature Mental Health* on April 27, highlights how powerful insights can come from information already collected during regular health care visits to help support early decision making by primary care providers.

"We have this incredibly



Matthew Engelhard, M.D., Ph.D. (left) and Elliot Hill (right) (Duke Health)

rich source of information sitting in electronic health records," said Elliot Hill, lead author of the study and data scientist in the Department of Biostatistics & Bioinformatics at Duke University School of Medicine. "The idea was to see whether patterns hidden in that data could help us predict which children might later be diagnosed with ADHD, well before that diagnosis usually happens."

To arrive at the findings, researchers analyzed electronic health records from more than 140,000 children, with and without ADHD. They trained a specialized AI model to look at medical

history from birth through early childhood. The model learned to recognize combinations of developmental, behavioral, and clinical events that often appeared years before an ADHD diagnosis was made.

The model was highly accurate at estimating future ADHD risk in children age 5 and older, with consistent performance across patient characteristics like sex, race, ethnicity, and insurance status.

Importantly, the tool does not make a diagnosis. It identifies children who may benefit from closer attention by their pediatric primary care provider or an earlier

referral for ADHD assessment by a specialist.

"This is not an AI doctor," said Matthew Engelhard, M.D., Ph.D., in Duke's Department of Biostatistics & Bioinformatics, and senior author of the study. "It's a tool to help clinicians focus their time and resources, so kids who need help don't fall through the cracks or wait years for answers."

The researchers note that earlier identification for screening could lead to earlier diagnosis and therefore earlier support, which is linked to better academic,

social, and health outcomes for children with ADHD. They also emphasize the need for further studies before such tools are used in clinical settings.

"Children with ADHD can really struggle when their needs aren't understood and adequate supports are not in place," said study author, Naomi Davis, Ph.D., associate professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences. "Connecting families with timely, evidence-based interventions is essential for helping them achieve their

goals and laying a foundation for future success." Hill and Engelhard have also researched the use of AI models in predicting potential risks and causes for mental illness in adolescents. In addition to Hill Engelhard, and Davis, the authors for this study include De Rong Loh, Benjamin A. Goldstein, and Geraldine Dawson.

The study was supported by grants from the National Institute of Mental Health (K01-MH127309, U11 TR002553) and National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences.

## Medicaid Expansion Helped Enrollees' Long-Term Financial Health, Study Finds

Newswise — Twelve years ago this spring, the first Michiganders began getting their health care coverage from the Medicaid expansion program known as the Healthy Michigan Plan.

Today, more than 650,000 are enrolled in the program, which provides health care to individuals with low incomes. Multiple studies have already shown the program is linked to better physical and mental health, and ability to work

or seek a job.

Now, a new University of Michigan study shows that enrolling also had a positive and long-lasting impact on the financial health of its first enrollees.

Over time, the study shows, those who enrolled in the first four years saw large drops in their amount of medical debt in collections — as much as 75% from the peak. That means they had fewer medical bills that were left unpaid for so long that they were

turned over to a collection agency.

Medical debt kept declining for at least seven years after enrollment, according to the findings published in the journal *JAMA Network Open*.

Having medical bills sent to collections can lower someone's credit score, which can make it more difficult for them to get a loan. It can also lead them to avoid needed medical

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# Fort Worth Black News Founder Jill Darden Passes Away at 52

By Terry Allen

Jill Darden, a pioneering journalist, publisher and community advocate who founded *Fort Worth Black News*, has died. She was 52.

Darden, widely respected for her commitment to amplifying underrepresented voices, spent nearly three decades building a publication that informed, empowered and connected Fort Worth's Black community. Through her work, she brought visibility to stories often overlooked by mainstream media while highlighting achievements, challenges and solutions



*Fort Worth Black News publisher and founder Jill Darden sits with a newspaper in hand at Ensemble Coworking at 1617 Park Place Ave. in May 2022. (Cristian ArguetaSoto)*

within the community.

Founded in 1997, *Fort Worth Black News* became a trusted source for local

coverage rooted in cultural awareness and accountability. Darden's approach to journalism emphasized

both truth-telling and community uplift, helping shape the narrative of Black life in Fort Worth.

Colleagues and community leaders described her as a steady and influential presence whose impact extended far beyond the newsroom.

"I knew Jill when she and her mother started the paper," said Karen Shields Smith, an art curator and photojournalist. "Jill was always accommodating and very passionate about news in the African American community of Fort Worth."

Dallas-based communications strategist and journalist Terry Allen said

Darden's work helped define the role of community media in North Texas.

"Jill wasn't just a publisher — she was a builder of people and a protector of our stories," Allen said. "She had a steady, intentional way of making sure our voices were heard with dignity and truth."

Allen, who shared a long-standing personal friendship with Darden, said her influence was both professional and deeply personal.

"This is more than the loss of a media figure," he said. "This is the loss of a friend and a voice our community depended on."

Darden's legacy is re-

flected in the platform she built and the journalists and community members she inspired. Her work reinforced the importance of representation and the role of local media in preserving culture and driving change.

As tributes continue across Fort Worth, those who knew her say her mission will endure through the stories she helped bring to light.

"We don't just mourn her," Allen said. "We carry the work forward."

Darden is survived by her family and a community committed to continuing the legacy she established.

## City Of Dallas Office of Arts and Culture Awarded Grant from the National Endowment for the Arts Spotlighting the Spirit Of Sports

Selected as one of the eleven awardees of the "Arts Projects Spotlighting the Spirit of Sports" grant, this award will support projects that are coordinated by the host cities of the FIFA World Cup 2026™. Each of the grant recipients will receive \$30,000 for their projects, which will take place between May 1 and December 31, 2026. Of the projects there is a range from performances, exhibitions, concerts, festivals, and educational programming.

"Dallas is honored to receive this support from the National Endowment for the Arts as we prepare to welcome the world for the FIFA World Cup 2026™. Projects like *The World is Ours* reflect the creativity, culture, and energy that define our city," said City of Dallas City Manager, Kimberly Bizzor Tolbert. "By bringing together art,

community, and a global event of this scale, we are creating an experience that celebrates Dallas while connecting us to an international audience."

"... [A] grant to the City of Dallas will fund a temporary public art installation called 'The World is Ours' by artist Risk Rock," said in the press release published by the National Endowment for the Arts. "The sculpture will be installed at Fair Park on the same platform as the iconic Big Tex and will coincide with the site's role in hosting FIFA World Cup 2026™ team activities and Fan Fest events," said the press release. Currently the piece is on view at Gallery DeFi in West Dallas.

"We are so excited to have Rock's piece on display for residents and visitors to experience," said City of Dallas Office of Arts and Culture Director,

Martine Elyse Philippe. "The sculpture and its representation of the world is a clear example of how we can bridge the arts and sports together. Serving as a welcoming beacon for the many international fans we expect to see this summer, 'The World is Ours' truly embodies what makes Dallas an inviting and vibrant place."

"The World Is Ours" by artist Risk Rock is a large-scale sculpture measuring eight feet wide and twelve feet high. The work features a bold bronze hand lifting an immense, gently rotating globe. The globe itself is engineered from repurposed spray cans and embellished with vibrant license plates collected from around the world. This fusion of art and engineering invites viewers to engage with the work through curiosity, cultural recognition, and a sense of shared glob-

al identity. The sculpture reflects the spirit of international sport by symbolizing how global communities come together through shared experiences such as

the World Cup™.

The full list of grant recipients and their projects can be found online by visiting [arts.gov/sites/default/files/ArtsProjectsFIFAlist.pdf](https://arts.gov/sites/default/files/ArtsProjectsFIFAlist.pdf). This program supports the celebration of American creativity and highlights local artistic and cultural traditions in connection with soccer-related celebrations.

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# Dallas College Holds First Athletic Banquet

For the first time in its history, Dallas College brought together student-athletes, coaches, alumni and administrators from all seven campuses to celebrate championships, All-American honors, Hall of Fame careers and Legacy Awards, during its inaugural athletic banquet April 21 at the Curtis Culwell Center.

Among those recognized, Eastfield Baseball Head Coach Michael Martin was named National Junior College Athletic As-



Dallas College

sociation (NJCAA) Hall of Fame Honoree. In his 25th season at Eastfield, Martin

has built one of the most successful and respected programs in NJCAA his-

tory.

Each of the seven Dallas College campuses —

Brookhaven, Cedar Valley, Eastfield, El Centro, Mountain View, North Lake and Richland — maintain their own athletic teams competing in the Dallas Athletic Conference (DAC). Executive Athletic Director Lynn Nabi oversees the entire program, while each campus is administered by its own athletic director.

“Every day, I wake up grateful for the opportunity to be part of such an outstanding organization — and even more grateful to be part of your journey

as student-athletes. My job is to make sure the student-athlete experience at Dallas College is the very best it can be,” said Nabi in his welcome address.

“I have always had a deep love for college athletics, because athletes understand perseverance. You know how to shake off a bad play, stand back up and take the next shot. You bring that same mindset into the classroom, and that’s why student athletes

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## MEDICAID, from Page 4

care in the future.

The study also finds that the credit scores of Medicaid expansion enrollees improved, with substantial drops in the numbers who scored below 600, a number considered sub-prime or risky for lenders. The drop in rates of subprime scores was between 30% and 50% relative to the rates at the start of enrollment.

The new findings have importance for states as they implement new Medicaid requirements and funding limits signed into federal law last year. The findings can also inform policymakers and voters in the 10 states that have still not expanded Medicaid, and several states that expanded it in the past few years.

“As Medicaid changes and enrollees face new requirements for new or continued access to coverage, these findings can help to give a fuller picture of the financial benefits of these programs,” said Nora Becker, M.D., Ph.D., the U-M primary care physician and

health economist who led the study. “We know that financial stress from medical debt is closely intertwined with physical and mental health, including decisions to go without health care to avoid more potential costs. People with more financial security also earn higher incomes and pay more taxes in the future, so Medicaid expansion may also have benefits for state and local government budgets as well. This is why it’s important to look at personal financial factors over time to give a full picture of Medicaid expansion’s impacts.”

Becker is part of a team from the U-M Institute for Healthcare Policy and Innovation that conducted the official evaluation of the Healthy Michigan Plan through a partnership with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. The evaluation was required under the state’s waiver with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services that spanned the period 2019-2023, and data

from the evaluation were used in the new study.

John Z. Ayanian, M.D., M.P.P., the leader of the evaluation and IHPI’s director, is the new study’s senior author.

Other financial impacts

The study looks at four kinds of financial outcomes, using anonymous data from Healthy Michigan Plan enrollees and from a major credit agency.

It focused on adults ages 26 to 62 – the years when someone can’t be covered by a parent or guardian’s insurance, and can’t receive Social Security retirement benefits or be eligible for Medicare.

To get the long-term view, the team concentrated on those who enrolled in the Healthy Michigan Plan in its first four calendar years of operation, from 2014 to 2017, and were still alive for at least three years after enrolling. In all, data on 575,283 individuals was analyzed, nearly half of whom enrolled in the program’s first year.

The researchers looked at anonymous financial information for each person,

starting several years before their enrollment and for up to seven years after enrollment.

The drop in medical debt in collections really began to be seen in the third year after enrollment, and accelerated after that. Subprime credit score rates began to drop even after the first year of enrollment.

Ayanian notes that these

effects may be tied to another effect already documented by previous IHPI research. On the whole, he and his colleagues showed earlier, Healthy Michigan Plan enrollees reported that the coverage increased their ability to work or seek work. Half of enrollees are employed but have incomes low enough to qualify for Medicaid coverage

However, two other financial indicators did not change after enrollment: rates of non-medical debt in collections and bankruptcy rates.

*Data collection was funded by MDHHS and CMS for the purposes of the evaluation but the new paper does not represent the official views of either agency.*

### Policy of Non-Discrimination Wisdom and Truth from The Storehouse, Incorporated

Wisdom and Truth from The Storehouse, Incorporated places emphasis on the dignity and worth of all people while valuing everyone. As we preserve the integrity of our beliefs, **Wisdom and Truth from The Storehouse, Incorporated** is committed to welcoming membership and participation in our religious practices regardless of race, color, and national origin.

According to Galatians 3:28 – “There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male or female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.”

# 'Slavery Was a Good Thing,' Black Leader Says MAGA Told Him

Aisha Winfrey  
Los Angeles WAVE  
Wire Report

WASHINGTON, D.C.—U.S. Rep. James Clyburn, one of America's most influential Black political leaders, says that some MAGA Republicans told him directly that slavery was a good thing, according to a clip from a political news show that's gaining renewed attention online.

The South Carolina congressman also warned that some Make America Great



U.S. Park Service

Again loyalists would bring back Jim Crow-style systems in the U.S., if given the chance, according to the news clip.

Clyburn made the comments during an interview on PBS's "Firing Line with Margaret Hoover." Ac-

ording to Atlanta Black Star, a clip from the show that's garnered recent attention online shows Clyburn detailing interactions he's had with MAGA loyalists, some of whom want the country to return to a segregated state.

When asked whether he thought MAGA Republicans were explicitly racist, Clyburn said he doesn't liberally apply the term to the entire group.

"I'm very circumspect about using the term. There are racists," Clyburn said. "There are white supremacists. There are people who are supporters of this president who admit to me that they are white supremacists. I've had people who support this president tell me that they thought slavery was a good thing."

Clyburn said he believes the MAGA Republicans "wish to get us back as close to slavery as they can possibly get us" without violating the Constitution and would attempt to reinstitute Jim Crow-like "separate but equal" policies with the help of the Supreme Court.

"Anything that's happened before can happen again," Clyburn said. "All it takes is a rogue Supreme Court."

In the same discussion, Clyburn spoke about his book "The First Eight,"

which looks at South Carolina's first Black members of Congress after the Civil War and how they shaped political progress.

Clyburn wrote the book following the deadly U.S. Capitol insurrection on Jan. 6, 2021, which he believes was inspired by the Antebellum era and came to pass as a result of reactionary politics.

He also referenced earlier polling of Trump supporters that showed differing views on emancipation and Civil War history.

## Youth Peace & Justice Foundation to Honor To Shanmugasundaram Through Trees for Peace Memorial and Newly Proposed Campus Tribute

AUSTIN — The Youth Peace & Justice Foundation today, also known as the Uvalde Foundation For Kids, formed following the mass 2022 shooting in Uvalde, Texas; announced this afternoon, its continued commitment to honoring the life and legacy of Savitha Shanmugasundaram, the University of Texas at Austin student whose leadership, compassion, and



dedication to educational opportunity continue to inspire communities across Texas and beyond.

The Foundation will honor Savitha through its national Trees for Peace living memorial initiative by planting a dedicated memorial tree in the Sam Houston National Forest. This living tribute will serve as a lasting symbol of remembrance, resilience, and peace in a natural setting designed for reflection and healing.

In addition, the Foundation has reached out to

campus officials to present a formal proposal for a permanent on-campus memorial at the University

of Texas at Austin, following consultation with Savitha's family to ensure their wishes are fully respected

and reflected in any future commemorative efforts.

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# Cowboys Reload Defense in 2026 NFL Draft

By Jamal Baker  
NDG Sports Writer

It's hard not to get excited about what the Dallas Cowboys did in the 2026 NFL Draft and the collection of talent the organization walked away with this past weekend.

Dallas clearly knew the defensive side of the ball needed to be addressed—resulting in them using five of their seven picks on defenders.

“We have changed the concept of what we’re doing defensively,” Cowboys owner and general manager Jerry Jones said. “We’ve executed a dramatic change.”

Former Ohio State defensive back Caleb Downs is certainly someone that can positively change the entire landscape of a defense on all three levels of the field. The Cowboys traded up one spot to select Downs at pick 11, as many experts did not expect Downs to make it outside the top ten.

“The guy is so instinctive, he’s got really good ability,” former Alabama head coach Nick Saban said. He’s a phenomenal person, and he is a football junkie.”

Downs started as a true freshman on Saban’s defense in 2023 and led the team in tackles with 107.

New defensive coordinator Christian Parker will get the most out of Downs as the quarterback of the defense and use his abilities as a nickel corner, box safety, deep safety and blitzer.



With their second first round pick, the Cowboys traded back from pick No. 20 to No. 23 to select edge Malachi Lawrence from UCF.

Lawrence is a freakishly athletic pass rusher with prototypical size at 6-4, 253 pounds, and a deep bag of pass rush moves to keep offensive linemen off balance.

“He’s probably got more juice than DeMarcus [Ware] from a pure speed standpoint, but the relentless method that he goes after the quarterback reminds you a little of DeMarcus there,” vice president of player personnel Will McClay said. “And I think the first-step quickness, not to say that he’s him, but one of the things that made DeMarcus Ware a great rusher is the ability to get off the ball and turn the corner. This kid has some of those traits.”

Drawing comparisons to a Hall of Famer is no small feat and emphasizes the potential impact Lawrence can have on the Cowboys defense for years to come.

Dallas continued to build their defense with pick No. 92 in the third round by drafting linebacker Jaishawn Barham out of Michigan.

Three words to describe Barham are versatility, physicality and range—turn on the film. Head coach Brian Schottenheimer has already stated that Barham will start at inside linebacker but in college he showcased his ability to play both off-ball linebacker and edge rusher.

Barham has the potential to be the steal of the draft and will bring much needed juice to Dallas’ defensive unit.

In the fourth round, the Cowboys double-dipped on defense by selecting cornerback Devin Moore out of Florida at pick No. 114 and edge LT Overton from Alabama with pick No. 137.

Moore stands 6-3, 198 pounds and has ideal size to be a physical boundary corner. While injury concerns were one of the reasons Moore lasted till the fourth round, he started in every

game for the Gators last season to put past injuries behind him.

With a proven track record of developing corners, Parker will have the opportunity to help Moore reach his full potential as a special playmaker in the secondary.

The run defense for the Cowboys has quickly gone from a weakness to a strength this offseason, and Overton will certainly help set the edge with his massive frame.

Overton is listed at 6-3, 274 pounds, and plays with a combination of power and

a relentless motor.

Dallas potentially added several difference-makers to its revamped defense, earning a draft grade of an A.

The 2026–27 season should be an exciting one for the Cowboys organization and its fan base.

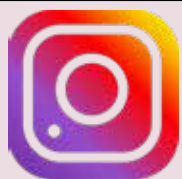
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## Billy Childs Releases New Album *Triumvirate*, in Notable Collaboration

Six-time Grammy-winning pianist and composer Billy Childs has released his new album *Triumvirate* on Mack Avenue Records.

His first trio recording in 25 years, *Triumvirate* harnesses the energy and creative prowess of his touring group — bassist Matt Penman and drummer Ari Hoenig — into a masterclass of material revisited from his earliest recordings, within an intimate setting of equal parts lineage and evolution.

Over the weekend, Childs spoke with NPR's Weekend Edition Saturday to share insight into the making of *Triumvirate*, including his single "One Fleeting Instant."

In preparing the setlist for *Triumvirate*, Childs reached back into his rep-



billychilds.com

ertoire from some of his earliest recordings to find material ripe for revisiting.

For this momentous occasion, he enlisted a pair of elite bandmates in Penman and Hoenig. A longtime member of the all-star SFJAZZ Collective, Penman has worked with such acclaimed names as John Scofield, Joe Lovano and Wayne Shorter, and

co-founded the collective quartet James Farm with Joshua Redman, Aaron Parks and Eric Harland. Hoenig has played extensively with a variety of groups, including Chris Potter Underground and Kurt Rosenwinkel Group, and bands led by Wayne Krantz, Mike Stern, Richard Bona and Pat Martino.

While Childs hadn't offi-

cially recorded with either Penman or Hoenig in the past, they had formed the rhythm section for quartets with frontline players like Steve Wilson, Chris Potter and Sean Jones. During the course of those gigs, they would typically include a trio number in the set. Since the word was first coined in the days of ancient Rome, *Triumvirate* has indicated a

group of three, all holding equal power and responsibility. Such is certainly the case for this incredibly adaptable trio, each member contributing an integral share and each able to steer the sound in any direction — all of which makes this album a long overdue and determinedly welcome return to the format for Childs.

*Triumvirate* is the anticipated follow-up to Childs' 2023 LP *The Winds of Change*, which took home the GRAMMY for Best Jazz Instrumental Album upon its release. An acclaimed and in-demand classical music composer, he has maintained an eminent reputation as an adept and deeply swinging jazz musician over his nearly

50-year career. Along the way, he has garnered six GRAMMY Awards and an astounding 17 nominations, while receiving commissions from such esteemed ensembles as the Kronos Quartet, the Detroit Symphony Orchestra under the baton of Leonard Slatkin, Esa-Pekka Salonen and the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the National Symphony, the Orpheus Orchestra, the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra, and the American Brass Quintet. His works have been performed at Carnegie Hall, Kennedy Center, and Disney Concert Hall.

Later this month, Childs will bring his new music to cities including Los Angeles, San Francisco and New York. Visit [billychilds.com](http://billychilds.com) for more information.

## Daddy Yankee and Shenseea Unite for 'Echo' on the Official FIFA World Cup 2026 Album

MIAMI — The Official FIFA World Cup 2026™ Album expands with the release of "Echo," a new collaboration between Daddy Yankee and Shenseea, released via SALXCO UAM & Def Jam Recordings. Co-produced and executive produced by multi-Grammy Award-winner Tainy, the track samples Ibrahim Maalouf's "Red & Black Light," with additional production from Maalouf, Massari, Adium, Jota Rosa, and Albert Hype. "Echo" brings together two of the most influential voices in dancehall and reggaeton and introduces a new dimension to the album's global sound.

Uniting Shenseea's dynamic, genre-blending style

with Daddy Yankee's lasting impact on reggaeton, "Echo" blends dancehall and reggaeton through a shared rhythmic foundation.

On "Echo" and joining the Official FIFA World Cup 2026 Album, Daddy Yankee shares: "What a blessing to be able to unify the world through music and fútbol. It's an opportunity to bring people together beyond any language or border." Shenseea adds: "Music and fútbol both speak a universal language, and to be part of something that brings the world together like this is special."

"Echo" follows the release of "Lighter" by Jelly Roll & Carín León and "Por Ella" by Los Angeles

Azules & Belinda, marking the third single from the Official FIFA World Cup 2026 Album. Each release introduces a distinct sound and perspective—from the cross-border collaboration of the host nations to a culturally rooted Latin record—building a broader picture of the project's global identity. With "Echo," the album evolves further, bringing Caribbean and Latin influences into focus as part of its expanding sonic identity.

As the Official FIFA World Cup 2026 Album unfolds, it brings together artists from across continents and genres, reflecting the diversity and global reach of the tournament.

## 2026-2027 Dallas ISD Budget Meetings

You are invited to discuss Dallas ISD's 2026-2027 budgeting process by attending any of the meetings below. We look forward to seeing you.

| DATE              | TIME   | LOCATION   |
|-------------------|--------|--|
| Wednesday, May 6  | 6 p.m. | Charmaine and Robert Price Career Institute South<br>4949 Village Fair Drive<br>Dallas, TX 75224 |
| Thursday, May 7   | 6 p.m. | Career Institute North<br>10115 Midway Road<br>Dallas, TX 75229                                  |
| Monday, May 11    | 6 p.m. | Environmental Education Center<br>1600 Bowers Road<br>Seagoville, TX 75159                       |
| Tuesday, May 12   | 6 p.m. | Resource Center West<br>2200 Dennison St.<br>Dallas, TX 75212                                    |
| Wednesday, May 13 | 6 p.m. | Virtual<br><a href="http://DallasISD.org/budgetmeetings">DallasISD.org/budgetmeetings</a>        |



Visit [www.dallasisd.org](http://www.dallasisd.org) to learn more.

# Film Review: 'Michael' Offers Nostalgia, but Not That Much More

By Dwight Brown

(\*\*1/2)

He was a Black singer who yearned to cross over from the African American community to mainstream America. He did. Ironically, in the end, the Black fans who loved him first may be the loyalists who embrace this conventional biofilm, when others won't.

This sanitized portrait lacks scandal and may disappoint some. But those who want to be reminded that Jackson was a singular talent get a nice refresh. Glimpses of his eccentric behavior (do you have a pet llama?) and the making of *Thriller*, still the best-selling album of all time, are highlights. Seeing why Jackson set 39 Guinness World Records and cemented his legend is also enticing. So, what's the story behind the façade? A fairly compelling but never extraordinary script by John Logan (*Gladiator*) gives us a peek that lasts up until the late '80s. Up until the allegations.

Clearly young Michael Jackson (Juliano Krue Valdi) is the protagonist and his father Joe (Colman Domingo) the antagonist. The patriarch demands attention, obedience and excellence from his sons who form the musical group The Jackson 5. Their allegiance to their dad has been manipulated by harsh intimidation and threats of beatings by a belt for those who don't obey. Michael has felt that wrath. Katherine (Nia Long), the matriarch, has witnessed it. Still, dad and family are jointly determined to seek a better life, like many working-class families—



Glen Wilson / Universal Pictures

especially Black working-class families. Joe warns about the downside of staying in Gary, Indiana: "Y'all want to work in a steel mill like me for the rest of your days?"

Action-film director Antoine Fuqua (*The Equalizer*) got his start as a music video director for Prince, Usher and probably most famously for Coolio in the "Gangsta's Paradise" video. Thus, the music and dance scenes in this film are well-composed, invigorating and expertly shot. The kinetic visuals are helped tremendously by Oscar®-winning cinematographer Dion Beebe (*Memoirs of a Geisha*), who moves the camera around Jackson's performances as swiftly as a backup dancer. Four editors (Conrad Buff IV, Tom Cross, John Ottman and Harry Yoon) snip the scenes down to their essence, add a steady beat and let the music drive the footage. While costume designer Marci Rodgers' (*BlacKkKlansman*) aptly replicates Jackson's famous accoutrements, from the sequined glove to the shiny military-style jackets. There's glitz where it needs to be.

Encino, California, here they come. In a heartbeat

the family is in Los Angeles and have become renowned Motown Record Corporation artists thanks to company executive Suzanne de Passe (Laura Harrier) and owner Berry Gordy (Larenz Tate). As crafty and menacing as Joe is, young adult Michael (Jaafar Jackson) is two steps ahead of him. Jackson 5 hits like "ABC" (1970) and "I'll Be There" (1970) enhance the group's popularity. But Michael itches for his own career, "I love my family. I just want to do my own thing." His driver Bill Bray (KeiLyn Durrell Jones) becomes his confidant and lawyer John Branca (Miles Teller) his representative. Jackson: "You know what I'm after?" Branca: "To be the biggest star in the world!" Add producer Quincy Jones (Kendrick Sampson) to the team, and Michael's first solo album *Off the Wall* makes a big splash with hot singles like "Don't Stop 'Til You Get Enough." Next it's *Thriller*, with "Billie Jean" and its iconic, thumping bassline. Fame and independence follow—then suddenly the final credits roll.

Two elements elevate the film: groundbreaking music and innovative dancing in-

spired by Fred Astaire and Gene Kelly. Their moves inspired Jackson, who put his own stamp on popstar performance choreography. As long as there are still videos of Jackson's famed 1983 appearance on TV's "Motown 25: Yesterday, Today Forever," kids will be moonwalking their hearts out.

Valdi as little Michael and Jaafar Jackson as the bigger one, embody the best of the artist. They have his movements down to a science. And through the magic of audio vocal effects, they sound almost like him too. The young actor displays an innocence so vulnerable and tangible, you wince when his dad beats him. The older actor expresses a quiet, passive-aggressive strength and determination. It peaks in scenes when he pulls away from his dad and manipulates the head of his record company (Mike Myers) into forcefully getting his videos on MTV, which

had refused to play Black music. The kind of barrier many African American audiences will recognize. As Jackson's look-alike nephew, Jaafar is the man in the mirror. However, the novice actor's performance doesn't match the depth of Jamie Foxx's in *Ray* or Rami Malek in *Queen*. Domingo's interpretation of the narcissistic, helicopter dad and Long's portrayal of the mother who tries to protect her son are strong. Teller, Tate, Harrier, Jones, Simpson and other supporting actors, equally so.

The script and direction present a narrative about an artist who found his way to stardom, but not in a birth to grave way. It's closer in approach to Bob Marley: *One Love* and lacks the visual imagination of the Elton John bio *Rocketman*. All three biographies would benefit from a miniseries more than a feature film. What's on view seems pat, professional and truncated,

never daring, exceptional or comprehensive.

If you're a music fan who wants Michael Jackson's spirit brought back down to earth, his persona does hover in the room. Whether you're in an IMAX theater, a cineplex or living room you feel his presence, joy and music. Does the footage push biofilm genre boundaries? No. Does it remind everyone that the '70's and '80s music was more fun because of Michael mania? Yes. It does that consistently for two hours and seven minutes.

Obvious omissions (Janet Jackson's participation, his children, etc.) may frustrate potential viewers seeking a tell-all. But Black fans—the first to embrace Michael—may still find joy in this celebration of his artistry, along with those seeking a PG-13 version of Michael's life.

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

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# Why Employers Are Investing in Building a Culture of Collaboration

Some reasons why a culture of collaboration is important for modern businesses are that it improves efficiency and problem-solving, and it impacts employee engagement and satisfaction.

The modern business world is quite different from the past, where soft skills weren't as in demand or emphasized as they are now. With AI emerging, as Harvard Business School says, soft skills are going to become even more important.

One soft skill that a lot of businesses are focusing on in 2026 and beyond is collaboration.

Collaborative workplace strategies and skills are going to become more important as global teams emerge and need to work in sync with each other to build projects and products.

If you are an individual performer who believes that a project relies entirely

upon your shoulders, think again. It's team synergy improvement that's going to get a project where it needs to go. The benefits of collaboration cannot be emphasized enough.

## Need for Innovation

As competition grows and innovation becomes even more important, the need for collaboration grows in tandem. You cannot come up with a breakthrough idea in isolation, sitting by yourself, in a remote workspace.

Even though the misconception floats around the blogosphere of the lone innovator who comes up with brilliant ideas in the lab or the garage by him/herself, that's not true. Innovation is the result of diverse interests and minds coming together to create brilliant ideas.

That back and forth between interesting ideas is what creates a new product or concept. When employ-

ees from different departments or backgrounds collaborate, they bring unique insights that can lead to more effective and innovative solutions.

## Technology Enables Collaboration

Even though a lot of people think that technology ruins collaboration, that is not the case. If used properly, some kinds of technology can actually improve collaboration between teams.

Tools like Slack and Microsoft Teams allow employees to communicate in real time, share files, and coordinate projects regardless of location. These platforms have become essential in supporting remote and hybrid work models, where team members may be spread across different cities or even continents.

When project management comes into play, there are some technological solutions there as well, which can help make a project

more successful. Look into Project Management as a Service (PMaaS).

## Impact on

### Employee Engagement and Satisfaction

The great thing about a culture of collaboration is that it improves employee engagement and satisfaction. Employees do not want to work in a silo on their projects but are interested in collaborating with their colleagues to create better, bigger solutions to the world's problems.

People tend to feel more motivated and connected when they are part of a team that values their input

and encourages participation. Collaborative cultures foster a sense of belonging, which can lead to higher morale and lower turnover rates.

When employees feel heard and supported, that's when they eagerly contribute to the organization, moving towards the organization's goals.

### Improves Efficiency and Problem-Solving

When teams work together effectively, they can identify issues more quickly and develop solutions more efficiently. Instead of working in silos, employees can leverage each other's

expertise to overcome challenges.

This can also speed up decision-making, rather than the red tape of waiting for layers of leadership to make a decision. It also reduces the risk of errors, as several minds can collaborate to ensure potential problems are identified early in the project.

### Good Leadership Fosters a Culture of Collaboration

A collaborative culture cannot exist in an organization if the leadership is not in on it. It all starts at the

See CULTURE, Page 13

## HONOR, from Page 7

The proposal will be developed collaboratively, fully funded by the foundation and in alignment with university policies and family guidance.

If approved, a campus memorial would provide a permanent place of reflection within the university environment where students, faculty, alumni, and visitors may honor Savitha's life, achievements, and lasting impact on the academic community.

The Foundation notes the distinction between its Trees for Peace living memorial and the proposed campus memorial. Trees for Peace creates living tributes in national forests

across the United States, offering natural spaces for remembrance and reflection through planted trees that grow and endure over time. A campus memorial, by contrast, would serve as an academic and community landmark within the university setting.

"Savitha embodied the very best of her generation — brilliant, compassionate, entrepreneurial, and deeply committed to lifting others through education and service," said Daniel Chapin, Founder and President of the Youth Peace & Justice Foundation.

"Her legacy deserves to endure in meaningful and lasting ways. Through a liv-

ing memorial tree and our commitment to proposing a permanent campus tribute in coordination with her family and the university, we hope to ensure that Savitha's spirit continues to inspire future generations of students."

The Foundation also commends Savitha's family and the University of Texas at Austin for establishing the Savitha Shan Endowed Scholarship, a lasting tribute that will carry forward her belief in opportunity, hope, and educational access.

For more information about the Savitha Shan Endowed Scholarship and the foundations current tribute please visit <https://savitha-shan.com>.



## Ed Bell Construction Company

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## SPORTS, from Page 6

consistently post some of the strongest retention and graduation outcomes in higher education,” said Dr. Beatriz Joseph, Dallas College vice chancellor of student success, in her opening remarks.

She added that Division III athletes, who compete without athletic scholarships, deserve special recognition. “You do this because you love the game, because you believe in hard work and because you understand that the win is bigger than the scoreboard.”

Prior to the awards, a special keynote speech was

delivered by former NBA player Shawn Bradley, who was one of the most recognizable and dominant defensive players during his career. He has since dedicated himself to giving back through charitable work, mentoring young athletes and inspiring others with his story of resilience and strength.

### Championships

The 2025-2026 DAC champions were Eastfield Baseball and Volleyball, Brookhaven Women’s Soccer, Richland Men’s Soccer and Men’s Basketball and Cedar Valley Women’s Bas-

ketball. Eastfield Volleyball went on to win the national championship. Cedar Valley’s Aaban Khan captured the Tier 1 NJCAA Fall Esports Championship.

### Top Athletes and Coaches

At the banquet, Khan was named Esports Player of the Year, along with Platinum Ranked player Elena Ku, El Centro esports team captain. El Centro’s Skylar McCort was named Esports Coach of the Year for her strong commitment to developing talent, fostering teamwork and guiding the program to success.

Mia Santos (Eastfield Volleyball) and Alexis Cruz

(Richland Men’s Soccer) were honored as Athletes of the Year for their performance, leadership and dedication. Santos earned DAC Most Valuable Player, NJCAA Division III National Player of the Year and was named Most Valuable Player of the 2025 NJCAA Division III Volleyball National Tournament. Cruz played a key role in the postseason success of the 2025 NJCAA Division III All-Tournament Team and was named the 2025 DAC Most Valuable Player. Both student-athletes were First Team All-American athletes in their sports.

Additional 2025-2026

First Team All-American student-athletes were Romiel Carter (North Lake Men’s Basketball); Jase Tarver (Richland Men’s Basketball); Charles Chimezie and Victor Gomez (Richland Men’s Soccer); Ava Little (Brookhaven Women’s Soccer); McKenzie Mitchell and Brooke Tyler (Brookhaven Volleyball); Madison Mosley (Eastfield Volleyball) and Ben Sheppard (Eastfield Baseball).

Phil Nickel, head coach of the national champion Eastfield Volleyball team, was named Women’s Team Coach of the Year. He was recognized for his demon-

strated exceptional leadership, strategic excellence and mentorship guiding their team to success both on and off the court. Nickel was named the 2025 National Coach of the Year and DAC Volleyball Coach of the Year.

Men’s Team Coach of the Year went to Jonathan Havens, Richland Men’s Basketball Head Coach. Honored for his dedication, vision, excellence and making a lasting impact on the program and its athletes, he guided his team to back-to-back DAC championships and NJCAA Division III National Tournament appearances.

## BUDGET, from Page 1

pregnant and postpartum parents, toddlers, and preschoolers; food assistance for low-income seniors; and utility assistance. It also cuts the number of households who get help paying the rent.”

Other advocates addressed specific concerns on the future of education, housing, and consumer protections.

In response to the proposed \$3.2 billion cut to the Department of Education, National Education Association President Becky Pringle said, “This administration is sending an unmistakable message: students, educators, and working families do not matter. It turns its back on students with disabilities, students from low-income families, students who live in rural areas — students that need more support, not less.”

Among the Education Department’s post-secondary programs slated for elimination in FY 2027 are: Student Support Services,

Federal Family Education Loans, Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants, Upward Bound, and Career, Technical, and Adult Education.

Proposed cuts to housing programs are even more severe: \$10.7 billion. An analysis by the Bipartisan Policy Center showed that HUD programs affected by the cuts include:

- \$4.6 billion to eliminate Community Development Block Grants (CBDG)
- \$922 million cut to homelessness assistance
- \$285M reduction in rental assistance that helps the elderly and people with disabilities;
- \$206 million from family self-sufficiency and job training programs;
- \$60 million to eliminate programs for fair housing investigation, enforcement and training programs

Last year, nearly six million consumers — a 200 percent increase — filed reports with the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau

(CFPB) complaint database. Although federal court rulings denied the Trump administration’s efforts to shutter the agency, the FY 2027 budget now proposes an 84 percent cut to examination staff, from 463 to just 75 people.

Such a severe staff cut would leave remaining employees unable to fulfill the agency’s statutory duties that span investigations, supervision, enforcement, and community outreach. At the same time, financial bad actors would get a green light to continue predatory lending, financial scams, and junk fees — all of which siphon off hard-earned consumer dollars.

“The CFPB cannot meet its statutory obligations at these bare bones staffing levels and the resulting lack of oversight will help bad financial services firms evade compliance with longstanding federal consumer protection laws and regulations,” stated Graciela Aponte-Diaz, vice president of community engagement at the Center for Respon-

sible Lending’s (CRL) Julian Bond Institute. “The CFPB already has cancelled enforcement actions that would have returned hundreds of millions of dollars to consumers.”

Similar comments came from Tom Feltner, Associate Director of Consumer Policy at Americans for Financial Reform.

“Rather than cutting enforcement, supervision, and outreach staff, we should be strengthening the capacity of those offices to hold financial wrongdoers accountable, prevent emerging risks like those that caused the 2008 financial crisis, and prevent the wave of scams making everyone’s lives more difficult and more expensive,” said Feltner.

For Black America, already financially short-changed by nagging wealth inequality, the nation’s affordability crisis worsens our ongoing quest for full participation in this nation’s opportunities.

Our hopes and dreams still yearn to know and en-

joy America’s bounty, and not just its disproportionate burdens. A fair federal budget enacted by Congress is not only appropriate but deserved.

*Charlene Crowell is a senior fellow with the Center for Responsible Lending. She can be reached at [Charlene.crowell@responsiblelending.org](mailto:Charlene.crowell@responsiblelending.org).*

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This is a series of mini-docs dedicated to memorializing locations in the Dallas area of specific importance to the African-American community. Subscribe to NDG Video Channel

\*Anybody interested in Dallas' Black community and on its culture - North Dallas Gazette's inaugural season of Black Dallas: Hallowed Ground is a MUST SEE\*

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[youtube.com/@ndglive6056](https://youtube.com/@ndglive6056)

- The Publisher

# Federal Home Loan Bank of Dallas 2025 Affordable Housing Advisory Council Annual Report Highlights Community Investment Funding

The Federal Home Loan Bank of Dallas (FHLB Dallas) has released its 2025 Affordable Housing Advisory Council (AHAC) Annual Report, now available at [fhlb.com](http://fhlb.com). The report highlights a year of progress in addressing housing affordability challenges, strengthening homeown-

ership pathways and advancing resiliency in its five-state District.

“Each year, the Affordable Housing Advisory Council helps ensure we stay closely connected to the housing needs of our District,” said Greg Hettrick, senior vice president and director of Community In-

vestment at FHLB Dallas. “The 2025 report reflects progress alongside our members and community partners to expand access to affordable housing for families and individuals.”

In 2025, FHLB Dallas responded to strong demand for affordable housing and homeownership sup-

port through its Affordable Housing Program (AHP), homeownership programs and voluntary initiatives in Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Mexico and Texas.

Key 2025 results include:

- \$73.5 million awarded through the AHP General Fund supporting 53 projects

delivered via 26 member institutions to rehabilitate 3,777 rental units

• \$21.2 million provided through the Homebuyer Eq-

uity Leverage Partnership [JJ1](HELP) assisting 1,008 first-time homebuyers

The full report is available at [fhlb.com](http://fhlb.com).

## CULTURE, from Page 11

top.

This involves:

- Encouraging open communication
- Promoting transparency
- Creating an environment where employees feel comfortable sharing ideas

Leaders who model collaborative behavior set the tone for the entire organization, making it clear that teamwork is both expected and valued.

### Diversity and Inclusion

In an organization where everyone’s voices are heard equally, employees of diverse backgrounds will feel more included. If you wish to have a diverse workforce, make sure to engage everyone and bring in all their opinions when building a new product or project.

Employers are recognizing that inclusive collaboration not only drives better business outcomes but also strengthens organizational culture. That’s why many organizations are building this mandate into their hiring process as well.

### Frequently Asked Questions

*Are There Challenges to Building a Culture of Collaboration?*

Absolutely. There are many challenges to building a culture of collaboration.

For example, differences in communication styles, conflicting priorities, and a lack of clarity around roles can create friction within teams.

Also, collaboration can sometimes interfere with productivity. While teamwork is valuable, excessive meetings or unclear processes can slow progress. You might have noticed this in your company, where you spend more time in meetings than actually working.

Even so, the benefits of collaboration far outweigh any challenges, and it’s important for organizations to start adopting a collaborative culture as soon as possible.

*What Does the Younger Workforce Expect for Collaboration?*

Younger people who are entering the workforce like teamwork, collaboration, and purpose-driven work environments. They don’t want to work for the sake of working.

If you don’t give them a bigger goal to work towards with their colleagues, they aren’t going to feel motivated. Employers who prioritize collaboration are better positioned to attract and retain top talent in an increasingly competitive job market.

The way you hired employees in the past isn’t going to work for the younger generations coming into the workforce now. Collaborative workplace strategies have to change as well.

### Investing in Employee Collaboration Matters

Things move fast in the modern business world, and to keep up isn’t easy, especially when you have so

much competition. Using a culture of collaboration can help greatly in this battle against time.

As the nature of work continues to evolve, the ability to work effectively with others will remain a defining factor in long-term success for both employees and leadership. How are you going to create a culture of collaboration in your organization?



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## Multitasking Is Not My Cup Of Tea

Dr. James L. Snyder

Usually, I have a lot of work on my desk, from writing to radio programs. Even though I have many projects, I can only do one at a time.

I have often wished I could multitask, which would help me get through many more projects more quickly. But that has never been my style of working. I focus on one project at a time and move on to the next when it is finished.

Some people can multitask, but that is not me. Often, it would be great if I could multitask and get a bunch of projects done at the same time. I have tried that, but it has not worked for me.

Multitasking is not my way of working.

For many years, I looked into multitasking to learn how to do it. I figured out that if I could do that, I could accomplish much more in my life. The more I studied

it, the less I understood what it was all about.

When it comes to multitasking The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage is the Queen. I am not sure how many she can do at once, but it is more than I can even think of. When she is doing something, she is doing everything. I only wish I had that skill.

Now that we are retired, her multitasking has grown even bigger. Whenever I walk by her craft room, I see her doing several things at once, and I am not quite sure how she manages it.

As I learn a little more about this multitasking, I begin to understand The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage more.

For example, when she is speaking to me, I really cannot follow all that she is saying because she is talking about at least six things at the same time. In her speaking, she does not have any "periods." Everything flows

together, but I do not understand multitasking, so I do not understand what she is talking about.

Often she will say, "Don't you remember what I said yesterday?"

That is completely beyond my mental scope. Because yesterday she probably said a thousand things, and I did not get a handle on any of them.

I do not know if this is true, but I read somewhere that women speak 20,000 words a day, while men speak 7,000. I am not sure where they get that, but I'm not going to doubt that for a moment. It is pretty close to reality.

The reason women speak 20,000 words to a man while he only speaks 7,000 is that they multitask while speaking. A man can never multitask while speaking, whereas a woman can multitask even while speaking.

When I am speaking, for example, I am think-

ing about one particular thought. I usually do not go beyond that one thought. I have noticed that when The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage is speaking, she has many thoughts at that moment. Because I cannot multitask, I cannot figure out what she is talking about. That is what gets me into trouble all the time.

Don't get me wrong, I would sure enjoy being able to multitask like her. Of course, if I could multitask like her, we would never finish talking because we would be all over the place, not knowing exactly what we were talking about.

Often when she is talking, she will stop and say, "Did you hear what I just said?"

I do not say this, but I am thinking, "Yes, but I haven't been able to sort it out to find what you were talking about."

I listen, but I cannot keep up with everything she says at the time. Much of what

she says is unrelated to each other, which is why I am often confused about what she is saying.

What she is saying is good, you can be sure, but it is not related to each other, which is why I get confused when she talks to me like that.

I try to be a thoughtful person and think before I speak. I cannot process half a dozen thoughts at once.

At my stage in life, I will probably never learn to multitask. I have tried studying that for a very long time, and I really have not discovered its secret.

I did find a secret to this multitasking in my relationship with The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. Now that I know a little bit of how she multitasks, especially when she is talking, I can pretend to understand and go along with it. It does no good for me to try to sort out what she is saying, because by the time I do, she is on to

another multitasking talk.

This year, we celebrate our 55th wedding anniversary. After all those years of being married, I have discovered that marital bliss is not about agreeing on everything. Rather, it is not contesting what you do not understand at the time.


A verse of scripture came to my mind on this subject.

James 1:19, "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath."

This has become an important verse for me. I am trying to focus on hearing and not on speaking. The less I speak the less trouble I get into. What could be better?

*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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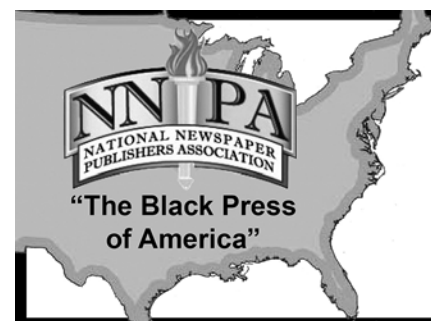
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# Faith in God



**Sister Tarpley**  
NDG  
Religion  
Editor

belief and faith looked like when combined. If you were a trapeze artist and were skilled at walking across tightropes over high places, you might even be willing to walk across Niagara Falls.

In fact, people would have confidence that you could walk across Niagara Falls because they had seen your abilities as a trapeze artist. However, if you asked one of them if you could push them in a wheelbarrow across Niagara Falls, you would be challenging them to put their beliefs into action.

That would require faith, participation and risk; which, until now, was based only on their mental assent of you. The writer of Hebrews is telling us that if we believe God but do not enter into those promises, we are like the man who chooses not to get into the wheelbar-



row.

If we don't act on our beliefs, then we remain in the desert like the people of Israel who never received God's promises. They did not combine what they knew in their head with a faith that was put into action.

Has God spoken to you about an area in your life that requires a step of faith? Let God provide you the courage, as He does the knowledge, to act in faith on

The people of Israel were called out of the bondage of Egyptian slavery. God said they would be brought out of 400 years of slavery so that they might worship Him. God desired to bring them into a place of milk and honey -- the Promised Land.

Yet, that generation never entered into the Promised Land. Why not? They never took what they knew in their head and transferred it to their heart. Finally, it never resulted in actions that were based on what they believed.

As a Christian I had heard of an illustration of what

Ask God to keep you focused on what is important in life. Ask Him to help you to sow good things in this world; in case you are not doing enough, or you are not doing all He wants you to do.

Seek God to remind you and to guide you. Always praise God, give Him the honor, the glory and the praise for the things He has done.

Invite God to give you an insatiable desire and thirst for Jesus and for His Word. Ask Him to open your eyes that you may see yourself as He sees you, in order that you may see and love others from His viewpoint.

Seek Him with the inten-

tion that He will be the absolute center and the guiding light of your life. Ask God to refresh your daily walk so that you may walk with Him in quiet places, in heavenly places and throughout all of life into eternity.

Thank Him; for God is the source of life, of comfort and being. That is when Knowledge + Action = Faith in God.

"Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedien-

See TARPLEY, Page 16

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## NDG Bookshelf: 'The War Within a War' Details a Pivotal Historical Footnote

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

Uncle Sam needs you.

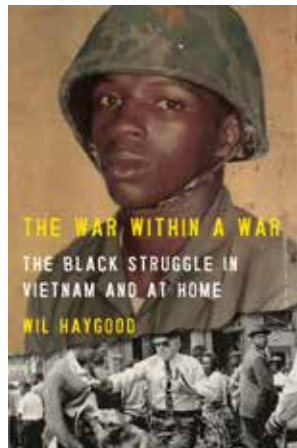
He has work for you, a steady job that may be the most difficult thing you'll ever do but you'll gain pride in your accomplishments and decent pay for the work, plus three hots and a cot. Hey, it's a great opportunity to gain on-the-job experience – even if, as in the new book “The War Within a War” by Wil Haygood, you once might've experienced racism, too.

Dan Bullock was a boy who'd always dreamed of becoming a Marine.

And so he did, and after graduating from basic training, he was sent to Vietnam to fight. Sadly, Dan was asleep one night in May of 1969, when a Vietcong soldier threw a grenade into the tent where he lay. Dan Bullock was killed instantly.

Wallace Terry knew about Bullock, and he couldn't stop thinking about him.

Terry was one of a handful of Black journalists in Vietnam, and he'd heard bitter talk and hot anger from Black troops - talk of discrimination, of terrible assignments, of seeing greater danger than white soldiers saw. Black young men enlisted in the military because opportunities for



them were scarce at home. Once in Vietnam, they'd become politically savvy and smart about current events, hoping things might get better in America but knowing, down-deep, that nothing would.

Though the American military had been officially integrated for years, what Terry heard was that Black soldiers felt like Vietnam was a “war within a war.” Many said that race didn't seem to matter in combat. At base camp and from their superiors, there was the problem. In the meantime, President Lyndon Johnson signed bills to help the poor but his policies didn't stop racism or the war itself.

By wars' end, more than 58,000 American soldiers died in Vietnam.

One of them was Dan Bullock, who wasn't sixteen, as he'd told the Ma-

rine recruiter. As Terry learned, Dan was fourteen when he enlisted, fifteen when he died, the youngest American soldier to perish in Vietnam...

It's not on there, but “The War Within a War” should have a Trigger Warning sticker on the cover. If you're a veteran of combat, you should know that before proceeding.

Using the stories of dozens of people who went to Vietnam in various ways and for myriad reasons, author Wil Haygood offers tiny stories and a window to American warfare that often goes unknown. Here, you'll meet the Common Man and those who were quite uncommon, brave women who played parts in history, and entertainers who raised consciousness through music. You can smell the jungle here. You'll feel the heat and hear the sudden, terrifying silence as you read this must-read, highly relevant, heartbreak of a book.

Just beware: it's sometimes very graphic and certain readers might want to skip it, even though it's one of the better books you'll find on the subject. Absolutely, if you're unfamiliar with or want to know more about this part of American history, “The War Within a War” is a book you need.

### TARPLEY, from Page 15

ence received a just recompense of reward;

“How shall we escape, if we neglect so great a salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard

Him;

“God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will? For unto the angels hath he not put

in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak.” Hebrews 2:1-5

*(Editor's Note: This column was originally published in April 2015. Sister Tarpley passed away in May 2024. We keep her words alive in our print edition every week.)*