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RALEIGH, N.C.

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Village Marks Struggle Against US Army Racism In WWII

BAMBER BRIDGE, England (AP) — The village of Bamber Bridge in northwestern England is proud of the blow it struck against racism in the U.S. military during World War II.

When an all-Black truck regiment was stationed in the village, residents refused to accept the segregation ingrained in the U.S. Army. Ignoring pressure from British and American authorities, pubs welcomed the GIs, local women chatted and danced with them, and English soldiers drank alongside men they saw as allies in the war against fascism.

But simmering tensions between Black soldiers and white military police exploded on June 24, 1943, when a dispute outside a pub escalated into a night of gunfire and rebellion that left Private William Crossland dead and dozens of soldiers from the truck regiment facing court martial. When Crossland's niece learned about the circumstances of her uncle's death from an Associated Press reporter, she called for a new investigation to uncover exactly how he died.

The community has chosen to focus on its stand against segregation as it commemorates the 80th anniversary of what's now known as the Battle of Bamber



Bridge and America reassesses its past treatment of Black men and women in the armed forces.

"I think maybe it's a sense of pride that there was no bigotry towards (the soldiers)," said Valerie Fell, who was just

2 in 1943 but whose family ran Ye Olde Hob Inn, the 400-year-old thatched-roof pub where the conflict started. "They deserved the respect of the uniform that they were wearing. ... That's how people felt about it."

That was in stark contrast to the treatment Black soldiers received in the wartime Army, which was still segregated by law.

The men of the 1511th Quartermaster Truck Regiment

(Aviation) stationed at Bamber Bridge complained that they received poor food and often had to sleep in their trucks when they stopped at white bases, according to evidence presented during the court martial proceedings. They also said white military police harassed Black troops, hassling them for minor transgressions that were often ignored for other soldiers.

EXPORTING SEGREGATION
Black soldiers accounted for about 10% of the American troops who flooded into Britain during the war. Serving in

segregated units led by white officers, most were relegated to non-combat roles such as driving trucks that delivered supplies to military bases.

U.S. authorities tried to extend those policies beyond their bases, asking pubs and restaurants to separate the races.

Bamber Bridge, then home to about 6,800 people, wasn't the only British community to resist this pressure. In a country that was almost entirely white, there was no tradition of segrega-

(See **RACISM IN WWII**, P. 2)

Prosecutor Won't Charge Officers Involved In Death

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) — A local prosecutor revealed Wednesday that she won't seek charges against officers in North Carolina's capital city who repeatedly used stun guns on a man who subsequently died, saying evidence reviewed fails to show the use of force was unreasonable.

Several Raleigh police officers were placed on administrative leave following the Jan. 17 death of 32-year-old Darryl Tyree Williams. They were trying to arrest Williams around 2 a.m. for possession of a controlled substance in a parking lot where a sweepstakes parlor and several closed businesses were located.

The State Bureau of Investigation looked into what happened and forwarded its findings to Wake County District Attorney Lorrin Freeman. In her summary report, Freeman determined "it has been concluded that the officers' actions were not a violation of the law."

"In a criminal prosecution of a law enforcement officer for a use of force, the State must prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the use of force was not reasonable under the circumstances," Freeman said, adding that she asked for the case to be closed because "the totality of the circumstances in this matter makes a prosecution unsustainable."

Freeman also received Williams' autopsy report made public two weeks ago by the state medical examiner's office. While the autopsy

(See **OFFICER INVOLVED DEATH**, P. 2)

The 50-Year Affirmative Action Culture War Over May Be Coming To An End

By Fabiola Cineas

Vox

When Clarence Thomas started his first semester of law school during the summer of 1971, a familiar fear set over him: He knew he could succeed academically, but he was intimidated by his new surroundings on Yale's tree-lined urban campus — and also terrified to fail.

During his first week of classes, he wondered how his peers were already comfortably decoding legal doctrine and whether he'd ever be able to catch up, he would later recount in his memoir *My Grandfather's Son*. Thomas spent part of his childhood in a rural Georgia community, where he lived in a shack, fetched water from the woods in lard buckets, and slept in a chair for a year when he was 6 years old. He questioned his abilities not because he was Black, but because he had grown up poor.

In New Haven, he was "among the elite," he wrote, and "no amount of striving" would make him one of them. Though he was eager to prove that he could achieve against the odds, just as he had done in the seminary and at College of the Holy Cross, he soon came to believe that his academic accomplishments were clouded by something beyond his control: racial preference, or, as



we know it today, affirmative action.

By the time Thomas set foot on Yale's Gothic-inspired grounds, affirmative action was "a fact of life at American colleges and universities," he wrote, filling institutions with marginalized students and faculty in part to correct historical exclusionary practices in education and employment. Though it is unknown how many institutions used affirmative action in admissions at the time, Yale Law School certainly did. It began using race-based preference in admissions in 1971, setting aside up to 10 percent of seats in each class for students of color. When this produced what the former dean of the law school called "remarkably weak" students, the univer-

sity devised standards on which to judge the pool of students of color separately, while taking into account typical benchmarks — undergraduate grades, LSAT scores, and the quality of an applicant's undergraduate institution.

Thomas, admitted under these standards, was one of 12 Black students out of about 160 students admitted for the class of 1974. He publicly supported affirmative action as a member of the Black Law Students' Association, which urged the school to recruit more Black faculty and students, but the pain of stigmatization privately shifted his views. "As much as it stung to be told that I'd done well in the seminary despite my race, it was far worse to feel that I was now

at Yale because of it," he would write. He believed that economically disadvantaged students were in a position to be helped through affirmative action; after all, legacy students at Yale got preferential treatment in admissions. But disadvantage couldn't be assumed solely on the basis of race, he thought.

Thomas began to believe that he was paying a high price for affirmative action, a conviction that followed him all the way to his current position as the longest-serving justice on the Supreme Court. "Every time you walked into a law class at Yale it was like having a monkey jump down on your back from the Gothic arches," he told a reporter in 1980. "The professors and the students resented your very presence." Thomas believed that affirmative action made him a test dummy for integration and the liberal paternalism of Northern whites, so much so that he has mocked the value of his degree altogether. After struggling to get a job after graduation — which he attributes in his memoir to the notion that "a law degree from Yale meant one thing for white graduates and another for blacks" — he affixed a 15-cent price sticker from a cigar box to the frame of his law

(See **AFFIRMATIVE ACTION**, P. 2)

New Stamp Honoring John Lewis Unveiled

By Stacy M. Brown

NNPA

House leaders joined forces with the U.S. Postal Service to reveal a commemorative stamp paying tribute to the late Rep. John Lewis on Wednesday. The unveiling occurred during a special event held at Capitol Hill. House Speaker Kevin McCarthy, House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries, and Linda Earley Chastang, Lewis' former chief of staff, were the prominent figures present.

According to a press release from the Postal Service, the stamp showcases a photograph of Lewis captured by Marco Grob for Time magazine in 2013. The design also incorporates a 1963 image taken by Steve Schapiro outside a nonviolent protest workshop, featured in the selva or margin of the stamp pane.

Officials called the combination of photographs a poignant reminder of Lewis' tireless commitment to civil rights and his instrumental role in the nonviolent protest movement.

Postmaster General Louis DeJoy, addressing the gathering, announced that the official dedi-



cation ceremony for the John Lewis Forever stamp is scheduled for July 21 at Morehouse College in Atlanta.

DeJoy shared plans to rename Atlanta's main post office in honor of the late congressman, acknowledging Lewis' immeasurable contributions to the nation. "Our nation certainly benefited from his fearlessness and his unflinching willingness to get into good trouble," DeJoy stated.

McCarthy emphasized the significance of Lewis' actions during the introduction of President Barack Obama at the 50th anniversary of "Bloody Sunday" in Selma, Alabama, back in 1965.

McCarthy, a Republican from California, acknowledged the power of Lewis' words and how they transcended party lines.

"I may be in a different party; I may have different views, but I'm an American," McCarthy asserted.

"I got goosebumps and tears thinking how far we had come and thinking that John Lewis led the march on that bridge and led the introduction that day."

Jeffries, the Democratic Representative from New York, expressed his belief that the stamp would forever symbolize Lewis' significant contributions and serve as a tribute to his unwavering dedication as the conscience of Congress.

He called Lewis one of the country's greatest sons and deemed it fitting for such an influential figure to be recognized with a Forever stamp.

Lewis, a Democrat representing Georgia, served in the House of Representatives from 1987 until his passing on July 17, 2020,

at 80, after battling stage 4 pancreatic cancer.

Known as the "conscience of Congress," Lewis dedicated his life to advocating for peaceful protests and equality.

An original member of the Freedom Riders, Lewis played a pivotal role in the civil rights movement, enduring brutal violence when Alabama state troopers fractured his skull during the infamous "Bloody Sunday" incident in Selma in 1965.

In July 2020, Lewis became the first Black lawmaker to lie in state at the Capitol, a testament to his indelible mark on American history.

Even after his passing, his words have continued to inspire and motivate, as evidenced by his 2020 New York Times op-ed, where he urged others to carry the torch and fight for their beliefs.

His famous phrase, "good trouble," remains a rallying cry for those seeking equality and justice.

Postal officials said the John Lewis Forever stamp is a lasting tribute to a remarkable individual who dedicated his life to making the United States a better place for all its citizens.



UK AND NORTH CAROLINA STATE HOLD SECOND WORKING GROUP MEETING

On Thursday June 22, United Kingdom Minister for Exports, Lord Offord welcomed the second working group under the UK-North Carolina Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on economic cooperation and trade relations at the Etihad Stadium in Manchester, England.

Attendees included more than twenty senior North Carolina officials responsible for economic development and academics, Greater Manchester Mayor Andy Burnham, the Leader of Manchester City Council Bev Craig and UK industry representatives with an interest in trade with North Carolina.

Following introductory remarks from Mayor Burnham, the Minister for Exports, Lord Offord, set out the UK Government's commitment to state-level engagement as a key component of our work to deepen US-UK trade and investment ties and summarised progress to date under the North Carolina-UK MoU.

North Carolina Department of Commerce officials gave a presentation explaining why the Consumer News and Business Channel (CNBC) recently ranked North Carolina as the number one state in which to do business. The presentation outlined the state's ambitious plans for clean energy, highlighting trade and investment opportunities for UK companies, particularly in industries of the future, including electric vehicles, offshore wind, advanced manufacturing and aerospace.

During the second half of the meeting, the Prime Minister's Trade Envoy to the US for Regional Trade and Investment, The Rt Hon Sir Conor Burns MP, hosted a panel discussion with executives from UK companies, TNEI, Zenobe and Marshall Aerospace, exploring how greater collaboration between the UK and North Carolina will lead to greater opportunities for businesses on both sides of the pond.

Since signature in July 2022, under the framework of the MoU, the UK and North Carolina have:

- Facilitated a trade mission from Greater Manchester to North Carolina to boost trade tourism and investment;
- Organised a delegation of UK offshore wind exporters to visit North Carolina to share best practice and identify opportunities for trade, investment and academic collaboration;
- Supported a trade mission organised by the Motorsport Industry Association which brought ten UK motorsports technology and high-performance engineering companies to Mooresville, North Carolina, to visit major US motorsports companies and identify new business development opportunities;
- Facilitated a delegation from Manchester City FC to deepen ties in the women's game in North Carolina including exploring a possible festival of football; and
- Promoted trade and investment opportunities to SMEs between North Carolina and the UK through events including the North America Roadshow which was held across twelve UK cities with the aim of offering key information and guidance to UK businesses on the opportunities available in the US, including at the state level.

The next working group meeting will take place in North Carolina in six months.

NORTH CAROLINA GOVERNOR VETOES ANNUAL FARM BILL AND STATE GOVERNMENT ESG PROHIBITIONS

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) — North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper vetoed on Friday the General Assembly's annual farm measure and another bill that would prevent state government activities like pension investing from being directed based on environmental or social

STATE BRIEFS

Continued from page 1

justice concerns.

The vetoes bring the Democratic governor's total for the year to eight. Next, the two latest likely will be subjected to override votes by Republicans, who now hold veto-proof majorities in the House and Senate. Both measures also received some votes from Democrats on the way to reaching Cooper's desk earlier this month.

The annual farm bill covers more than 30 topics. But Cooper, like conservation groups and other Democrats, focused on a provision that would limit wetlands protections when combined with a recent U.S. Supreme Court decision and existing state law.

Opponents of the wetland language have said it would result in a massive amount of wetlands — important for absorbing flood waters and pollution — being open for development, harming water quality. In his veto message, Cooper wrote it would leave about half of the state's wetlands unprotected.

The provision "means more severe flooding for homes, roads and businesses and dirtier water for our people, particularly in eastern North Carolina," Cooper said, adding that while state government works to protect the state from flooding and stop pollution from contaminants, "this bill reverses our progress." Environmental groups on Friday praised the veto and urged it be upheld.

Supporters of the provision say the impact of the language is overstated, affecting isolated wetlands, like those that turn into streams only when it rains. Sen. Brent Jackson, a Sampson County Republican and chief bill sponsor, said he hoped the veto would be overridden and that the measure supports the state's top industry in agriculture.

Cooper's "objection fails to consider our obligation to comply with federal law and regulations," Jackson said. "The 2023 Farm Act ensures North Carolina is in compliance with federal laws."

The other vetoed bill would ban state agencies from using "environmental, social and governance" standards to screen potential investments, award contracts or hire and fire employees. It also says the state could not weigh how a company promotes sustainability, engages with its community or structures its leadership to support those goals.

The measure stems from Republican efforts nationwide to counterweight a focus by big business on environmental sustainability and workplace diversity that they say is so extreme that it harms shareholders and pensioners.

At least two other states have already enacted laws banning such criteria, and elected officials in several other red states have derided them or proposed similar policies to stop investors who contract with states from adopting them.

And on state investments like those in pension funds, the bill says the state treasurer could solely consider factors expected to have a material effect on the financial risk or financial return of an investment.

"This bill does exactly what it claims to stop," Cooper wrote. "For political reasons only, it unnecessarily limits the Treasurer's ability to make decisions based on the best interest of state retirees and the fiscal health of the retirement fund." State Treasurer Dale Folwell, a Republican, supported the bill.

CASH PURCHASE PROGRAM FOR VACANT NORTH CAROLINA PROPERTY ANNOUNCED BY LAND AVION

Private land acquisition firm Land Avion announces an expansion its long-running cash purchase program, making it available to owners of unwanted parcels of vacant property in North Carolina, South Carolina, and several other regions.

Owners of unwanted land parcels in North and South Carolina now have access to Land Avion's well-established cash purchase program. As part of the recently expanded service, the firm makes all-inclusive cash offers for all types of vacant property, including rural, forestry, and commercial- or residential-use lots.

Submissions can now be made via the Land Avion website, with offers being returned after due diligence has been carried out, often in as little as 24 hours. The move follows the successful introduction in several other states, such as Florida and Texas, where the program has been popular among those who own land in rural and/or undeveloped areas.

Land Avion explains that land in remote or less populated areas often takes significantly longer to sell, and the firm's service offers a new option for those who wish to sell in a short timeframe. The firm states that, on acceptance of an offer, closure can occur within 30 days.

The company also points out that its program is designed to ensure fair and transparent pricing, a factor that is often a concern for those who want to sell quickly. Land Avion researches county data, recent sales data, and comparable properties prior to making an offer, with the goal of aligning all quotations with current market values.

In addition to a faster sales process, Land Avion's expanded process offers an all-inclusive price, without any associated commissions. The company explains that realtors rely on a percentage of property sales as part of their business model, which can reduce the final amount that landowners receive. Such commissions do not form part of Land Avion's business model and are therefore not required.

The firm also states that it can purchase property in any condition, and offers can be made regardless of landowners' financial situation. As a result, sellers who are behind on payments, own liens, or going through a divorce are also able to access the service.

While Land Avion's cash purchase program has only recently been introduced in several regions, the firm has been in operation since the 1990s. Based in New Mexico, the founders have refined their processes over many years, and they attribute the continued success of the service to fairness and efficiency.

US Army Racism In WWII—CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

tion, and after four years of war people welcomed any help they received from overseas.

What's different about Bamber Bridge is the desire of local people to preserve this story and pass it on to others, said Alan Rice, co-director of the Institute for Black Atlantic Research at the University of Central Lancashire.

"If we're going to have a fight against racism or fascism, these are the stories we need to talk about," Rice said. "If you're fighting fascism, which these people were, it's ludicrous, absolutely ludicrous, that the U.S. Army (were) encouraging a form of fascism — segregation."

Clinton Smith, head of the Black history group in nearby Preston, was among those who revived interest in the Battle of Bamber Bridge in the 1980s when he discovered bullet holes in the side of a bank and started asking long-time residents what had happened.

That helped attract wider interest, with local blogger Derek Rogerson publishing a short book, "The Battle of Bamber Bridge: The True Story," that includes photos of Black troops hosting a Christmas party for village children and watching movies with kids perched on their laps. A filmmaker, Danny Lyons, compiled oral histories.

Last year, the local government council installed a plaque outside the Hob Inn that outlines the community's relationship with the soldiers, the violence and its aftermath.

The story "just can't be allowed to wither on the vine," Smith said. "As much as it's withered, we're just now trying to rejuvenate it whilst maintaining the accuracy."

THE BATTLE OF BAMBER BRIDGE

Despite their friendships with the GIs, villagers weren't able to head off the violence when Black soldiers, frustrated by their treatment and angry about news of race riots in Detroit, faced off with military police outfitted with batons and sidearms.

On that hot June night, Private Eugene Nunn was sitting at the Hob Inn bar when a white

military police officer threatened to arrest him for wearing the wrong uniform. British soldiers and civilians intervened.

"Everyone was saying, 'Leave him alone. He just wants a drink. It's a hot day,'" Fell said as she recounted her mother's story. "People just didn't understand this viciousness."

When Nunn left the pub, the police were waiting. Tempers rose. A bottle smashed against the windshield of the police Jeep. Things escalated from there.

It wasn't until 4 a.m. that order was restored. Military authorities sought severe penalties to head off unrest at other bases.

Thirty-seven Black soldiers were charged with mutiny, riot and unlawful possession of weapons, and some 30 were convicted on some or all of the charges. Most received sentences of between three and 15 years in prison, combined with loss of pay and dishonorable discharges. As the allies prepared for the D-Day landings, many of the sentences were shortened to time served so the men could be cycled back into the war effort.

While the court martial criticized the white officers for poor leadership, the records give no indication that either they or the military police were disciplined.

LONGSTANDING CHANGE

Ken Werrell, a U.S. Air Force Academy graduate and retired professor of history at Radford University in Virginia, studied the court martial proceedings and reviewed other military re-

ports for an article published in 1975.

The documents show the accused were badly treated, Werrell told The Associated Press.

But the broader story is that senior generals, focused on improving morale and performance, quickly ordered changes in the treatment of Black troops. Many of the officers commanding Black units were replaced, additional recreation facilities were provided and the army deployed more racially mixed military police patrols.

"In this way, the Bamber Bridge affair was more than just a minor incident in World War II," Werrell wrote. "It was one of a number of incidents in the Black's and America's continuing crusade for freedom."

President Harry Truman in 1948 ordered the end of segregation in the U.S. military, though it took years to fully achieve that goal. Lloyd Austin, a Black man and retired four-star general in the Army, is now secretary of defense.

That progress was too late for Crossland, a former railroad worker was 25 when he died. Evidence in the court martial proceedings provided little detail on how he was killed, saying only that he was found gravely injured with a bullet near his heart. Officers said they believed he had been caught in cross-fire between two groups of Black soldiers.

Investigators placed most of the blame for the violence on the

Black soldiers, describing them as a "mob" that was "determined on revenge at any cost," according to reports submitted during the court martial proceedings. But locals say they knocked on doors and told people to stay inside to avoid getting hurt.

RE-ASSESSING HISTORY

Nancy Crosland Adkins, the daughter of one of William's brothers, said she was never told about the circumstances of her uncle's death. The family later changed the spelling of its last name.

Adkins, of Upper Marlboro, Maryland, wants to know more about what happened at Bamber Bridge.

"Having dealt with direct discrimination myself by integrating the school system in North Carolina, and the racial injustice that my parents faced, I would love an investigation," she said.

Aaron Snipe, the spokesman for the U.S. Embassy in London, said he couldn't prejudice any military decision, but President Joe Biden's administration has shown a willingness to "right the wrongs of the past."

The U.S. Navy earlier this month issued a formal apology to the families of 15 Black sailors who were dishonorably discharged in 1940 after complaining that they were forced to serve as mess attendants who made beds and waited on tables. Earlier this month, the Army renamed a base for William Henry Johnson, a Black soldier who was awarded the Medal of Honor, the nation's highest military award, almost a century after he was wounded 21 times while beating back attacking forces during World War I.

Snipe also said he planned to pay tribute to the people of Bamber Bridge at an 80th anniversary event.

"Part of this story is about their unwillingness to accept segregation orders or regulations that were pushed on them," he said. "They pushed back ... at a time where it might have been more convenient for local folks to just go along with what the United States, the United States military, had said. They're to be commended for that."



Officer Involved In Death—CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

report declared Williams' death a homicide, his cause of death was listed as "sudden cardiac arrest" related to cocaine intoxication and the police confrontation. Williams' family urged officials to fire officers and charge them in his death.

Police have said they were trying to arrest Williams after they found a folded dollar bill with white powder in his pocket. Freeman's report said officers initially detained Williams after noticing a bag of marijuana in the front seat of a vehicle that he and another passenger had voluntarily agreed to exit.

Police said officers stunned Williams with a Taser three times as they tried to take him

into custody and he tried to flee.

Williams, a Black man, can be heard in body and dashboard camera videos released by police in February protesting that he didn't do anything and warning that he had a heart problem before what Freeman's report said was the final time he was stunned.

The DA's report said the two officers who deployed the Tasers told the SBI in an interview that they didn't hear Williams' comments about a heart condition.

"There is no way to substantiate whether they did in fact hear Mr. Williams," the report said, but "this point alone is not outcome determinative in the legal analysis."

Dawn Blagrove, executive director of Emancipate NC, a criminal justice reform group assisting Williams' family, called Freeman's decision not to prosecute "disgraceful. She has once again failed to protect the Black people of Wake County by rubberstamping the murder of an unarmed man by Raleigh Police Department."

Raleigh police Lt. Jason Borneo acknowledged the DA's decision not to charge the six officers involved but declined to comment further on what he described as an internal investigation.

Freeman's report listed over a dozen other factors that contributed to her decision not to

prosecute, including that a Taser deployment isn't considered a deadly use of force. Williams repeatedly failed to follow law enforcement commands, officers were unable to complete a thorough search of him — leading to fears he was armed — and he had a substantial size advantage over the officers, the report said. Williams was also on probation at the time of his death for a drug-related felony and that may have related to his decision to resist and flee officers, the report said.

The DA also cited the autopsy finding of multiple contributing circumstances to his death, including an enlarged heart, significant physical exertion and being subjected to a Taser.

50-Year Affirmative Action—CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

degree to remind himself of the "mistake" he made. Instead of hanging the degree on the wall of his Supreme Court office, he keeps it locked away in the basement of his Virginia home.

Thomas's tangled relationship with affirmative action is emblematic of a larger debate that's captivated America for decades. Since schools began using race-conscious policies, the nation has seen waves of campus protests, op-eds, public panel discussions and roundtables, talk show debates, congressional hearings and bills, broadcast spats, presidential and congressional investigations, ballot measures, magazine spreads, radio segments, documentaries, and lawsuits — all about affirmative action.

As Thomas's opposition to racial preferences grew, as is evident in his various Supreme Court dissents, the intensity of that public discourse ebbed and flowed — and sometimes completely boiled over. Now the Court, swaying closer toward Thomas's long-held views with the appointment of each new conservative justice, may finally put the debate to bed this summer as it considers ending race-conscious affirmative action in all higher education admissions, beginning with the programs at Harvard University and the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill.

In many ways, Thomas's rejection of affirmative action, and the debates about the programs that began just as he entered law school, are forerunners to today's backlash to diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives, the divisions over how to teach

American history, and the right-wing attack on critical race theory. The affirmative action debate has long tapped into resentments and anxieties that beset the American electorate. Though the policy directly affects a relatively small number of people at only a few higher education institutions across the country, it draws disproportionate attention, personifying deeply moral, political, institutional, economic, and cultural contradictions.

On the surface, the cultural skirmishes have focused on circular questions, like whether affirmative action policies count as preferential treatment, the difference between quotas and diversity goals, whether reverse discrimination exists, and whether affirmative action is merely a stopgap measure or here to stay. Below the surface, the enduring debate gets at something deeper, something that seems to nag even at Thomas, an affirmative action beneficiary: In America's fractured society, what does fairness look like?

Affirmative action was hobbled from the start.

Though political leaders were well-intentioned, they never clearly defined affirmative action, leaving the door open to early resistance. When President John F. Kennedy signed Executive Order 10925 in 1961, encouraging affirmative action in employment, he acknowledged that deep-rooted structural oppression was the cause of modern-day inequality. Two years later, shaken by the bombings and riots in Birmingham, Alabama, Kennedy pleaded with university leadership to further "expand

opportunities for Negroes at all levels of the educational system" as a way of defusing racial tensions. He also embraced the idea that equal opportunity for education, bolstered by Brown v. Board of Education, wasn't enough if Black people couldn't apply and be admitted. "Young people and adults alike who have been disadvantaged need special programs in both general and vocational education if they are to be ready for further formal education or for employment," he wrote. "The main task, of course, has to be carried out by state and local educational systems and by public and private institutions." But he never offered specific solutions. His successor, Lyndon B. Johnson, carried on the message, proclaiming in a 1965 speech that "we seek not just legal equity but human ability, not just equality as a right and a theory but equality as a fact and equality as a result."

Affirmative action was meant to increase equality by counteracting historical imbalances. Those who were at a disadvantage due to slavery, Jim Crow, and racial discrimination would be brought up to the starting line to better compete with those who were privileged. Following Kennedy's original mandate, university presidents by the late 1960s took steps to admit students and hire faculty of color, also making room for white women in the process.

Almost immediately, culture clashes challenged these efforts, continuing over the following decade. One white man who filed a lawsuit against the Virginia Commonwealth University for

alleged discrimination on the basis of sex told the New York Times in 1977, "For a while in the 60's, we were afraid to say what we believed. ... All conscientious whites wrestled with white guilt, and reverse discrimination was the vehicle to get rid of that guilt. Now we can speak our minds."

The conflict was drawn. On one side of the aisle, supporters of affirmative action decided it was up to schools to reimagine ways of measuring academic merit and expand the pool of people who were considered for admission. On the other, the opposition believed that the white students applying to college weren't rabid segregationists and that it was wrong to hold them accountable for the sins of their forefathers. Affirmative action, these critics claimed, amounted to a new form of racial discrimination, one that moved the country further from a supposed colorblind ideal. The 1974 case DeFunis v. Odegaard led a trial court to require that the University of Washington Law School admit a white man after he was rejected despite having higher test scores than some applicants of color — and put affirmative action on the legal radar. Four years later, in Regents of the University of California v. Bakke, the Supreme Court ordered the university's medical school to admit Allan Bakke after he was rejected twice, seemingly as a result of the school's 16-seat quota system for applicants of color that the Court deemed illegal, dealing affirmative action its first blow. But the policy itself, albeit weakened, managed to hold.

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Business & Finance

Gannett Sues Google, Alleging An Advertising Monopoly

By Stacy M. Brown

NNPA

Gannett, the leading newspaper publisher in the United States, has taken legal action against Google, accusing the tech giant of monopolizing the digital advertising market.

The USA Today publisher and more than 200 local publications filed the lawsuit on Tuesday in a federal court in New York. The company is seeking unspecified damages, claiming that Google and its parent company, Alphabet, exert control over publishers' buying and selling of online ads.

In court documents, Gannett asserts that this control has significantly reduced revenue for publishers and Google's ad-tech competitors while allowing Google to enjoy excessive monopoly profits.

According to eMarketer,



Google holds about 25% of the digital advertising market in the United States, while Meta, Amazon, and TikTok account for another third.

News publishers and other websites make up the remaining

40%. Although Big Tech's market share is gradually declining, Google remains the dominant player by a wide margin.

Consequently, publishers often depend on Google's advertising technology to sustain their op-

erations, with Gannett claiming that Google controls 90% of the ad market for publishers.

Michael Reed, Chairman and CEO of Gannett, expressed his concern over Google's dominant position in the online advertising

industry, stating that it has come "at the expense of publishers, readers, and everyone else."

Reed emphasized the significance of digital advertising for the online economy, highlighting that publishers can invest in their newsrooms with fair competition for digital ad space.

In response to the lawsuit, Dan Taylor, Google's Vice President of Global Ads, disputed the claims made by Gannett, asserting that they were unfounded.

Taylor pointed out that publishers have multiple options for using advertising technology to monetize their content, including Google Ad Manager, which Gannett utilizes along with numerous other competing ad services.

Taylor argued that publishers retain the majority of revenue when they use Google tools and stated that Google would demonstrate to the court how their ad-

vertising products benefit publishers and contribute to funding their online content.

Gannett's legal action against Google comes amidst an increasing number of antitrust complaints faced by Google in the United States and the European Union concerning its advertising business, which remains its primary source of income.

European Union officials recently called for the breakup of Google's advertising business, citing "inherent conflicts of interest" resulting from the company's involvement in various aspects of the digital advertising supply chain, which pose a threat to competition.

Similarly, earlier this year, the U.S. Department of Justice and eight states sued Google, alleging that the company's dominance in the online advertising market harms competition and advocating for its separation.

SBA Will Host Its 2nd Annual Small Business Cyber Summit

WASHINGTON—The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) announced today that the agency will host a cyber summit in October 2023. The free cybersecurity series supports America's 33 million small businesses with tools, tips, and resources from multiple federal agencies to bolster their cybersecurity infrastructure, in addition to exploring new trends and challenges entrepreneurs are increasingly facing.

"Digital tools represent some of the most exciting revenue growth opportunities for American small businesses - from the \$5.2 trillion global e-commerce marketplace to cutting-edge AI and other digital tools," said SBA Administrator Isabella Casillas Guzman. "As small businesses increasingly rely on technology to start and grow their businesses, our SBA Cyber Summit and our work modernizing the SBA will help more entrepreneurs make the digital pivot safely by leveraging SBA resources and private sector solutions to defend their businesses, their customers, and their livelihoods from the ever-

evolving threats from cyber criminals."

"The rapidly evolving and interconnected world continues to present new challenges for small business owners, and it is our objective to empower them with the proper tools. Through our SBA Cyber Summit, the goal is to bolster the confidence and the know-how of our resilient U.S. small businesses to deal with these cyber challenges head-on," said SBA Associate Administrator of the Office of Entrepreneurial Development Mark Madrid.

The summit will feature various speakers, including SBA Administrator Guzman, SBA Associate Administrator Madrid, SBA Resource Partners, Small Business Development Centers, the SBA Small Business Digital Alliance, the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), FBI, business chambers, state government partners, experts from the public/private sectors, major technology platforms, and award-winning business coaches.

Comprised of digestible and compact segments, attendees

will have the opportunity to network and access practical tips, problem-solving strategies, industry trends, threat avoidance, and small business testimonials in order to learn how to help small business owners defend themselves against cyber-attacks.

Cyberattacks are a growing threat to small businesses and the U.S. economy. According to the FBI's Internet Crime Report, the cost of cybercrimes against the small business community reached \$3.31 billion in 2022.

Small businesses are attractive targets because they have information that cybercriminals want, and they typically lack the security infrastructure of larger businesses.

Surveys have shown that a majority of small business owners feel their businesses are vulnerable to a cyberattack. Yet many businesses cannot afford professional IT solutions, have limited time to devote to cybersecurity, or do not know where to begin. The 2nd Annual SBA Cyber Summit will address these formidable challenges with turnkey solutions.



Military Contract Could Make Howard A Research Powerhouse

The U.S. Air Force wants scientists at Howard University to figure out how its fighter pilots can team up with robotic co-pilots to defeat enemy combatants.

But aerial superiority isn't the only goal of Howard's new Research Institute for Tactical Autonomy (RITA). University officials are also hoping the Air Force's initial 5-year, \$90 million

investment in RITA—under a special arrangement that makes additional funding all but certain—will help Howard become the first historically Black institution to ascend to the top ranks of the nation's research universities.

"This should be a real game changer," predicts Danda Rawat, an electrical engineer and associate dean for research at Howard who will be RITA's founding director. "We've been doing a lot with a small amount of resources," says Rawat, who now directs a \$7.5 million Department of Defense (DOD) center of excellence on artificial intelligence and machine learning. But the new university-affiliated research center (UARC) announced in January "is a huge step."

The Air Force's expected long-term investment in Howard, one of the nation's 104 historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs), addresses a congressional mandate that DOD begin to distribute its massive research budget more equitably. The UARC—the 15th such center funded by DOD and the first for the Air Force—is a potent mechanism for doing so.

Special rules that allow a UARC to receive a steady stream of DOD contracts without external competition have fueled the growth of such academic powerhouses as Johns Hopkins University. In 1941, a project at Hopkins to develop a more lethal artillery shell morphed into DOD's first UARC, the Applied Physics Laboratory. APL is now a \$2-billion-a-year juggernaut with more than 8200 employees.

No HBCU has a research budget even 1/10th that size. "I'm told this is largest research award ever received by an HBCU," says Victoria Coleman, chief scientist for the Air Force. "The underresourcing of HBCUs didn't get created overnight, and the problem isn't going to get solved overnight. And in my book, [this center] is still not enough. But a vehicle like UARC, something that's going to be there for the long haul, can be an important stepping stone."

In announcing the Howard contract, Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin noted that HBCUs train 30% of all Black scientists and engineers yet receive only 0.05% of DOD's massive R&D budget, which is approaching \$100 billion. In 2020, Congress directed the agency to do more to build the research capacity of HBCUs, and the next year it gave DOD permission to use the UARC funding mechanism to achieve those goals.

Last year, legislators were even more explicit, telling DOD to target funding to HBCUs striving to join the roughly 150 universities

labeled R1 under a voluntary classification system for academic institutions based on their research activity. In response, DOD took the unprecedented step of restricting competition for the UARC to the 11 HBCUs that had announced the goal of becoming R1s. Four submitted proposals, and in January the Air Force chose Howard, arguably the best known HBCU, as the lead institute in a consortium of eight HBCUs that will operate RITA.

The institute's mission is to develop technologies that make possible seamless and instantaneous joint reasoning and decision-making between human and machine. That is a much bigger challenge than the autonomy needed for a self-driving vehicle, Rawat says.

Those who follow defense research give the Air Force's decision a thumbs-up. "This award makes perfect sense given the congressional directive," says Andrew Metrick, a defense fellow at the Center for a New American Security. "Tactical autonomy is a critical need for the Air Force," he notes, and the cachet of a UARC will make it easier for Howard to win contracts from other branches of the military for related work.

Coleman says some senior Air Force officials had reservations about forming a major, long-term relationship with an HBCU because it lacked the pedigree of the top-tier research universities that operate most UARCs. But Coleman says her boss, Secretary of the Air Force Frank Kendall, backed her up when she presented the idea of an HBCU-only competition for a new UARC. "What took you so long?" Coleman recalls his reaction. "That was a really good day."

In holding the competition for its new UARC, the Air Force decided it would only accept proposals from consortia of institutions, seeing that structure as a good way to both build capacity across HBCUs and to draw on their unique assets. DOD first used that approach 15 years ago in funding a UARC on systems engineering, and its director says there is strength in numbers.

"When you're a large university, your natural inclination is to think you can do it all yourself," says Dinesh Verma, a systems engineer at the Stevens Institute of Technology who has led the Systems Engineering Research Center since its formation. "There were quite a few naysayers at the beginning because all the previous UARCs were located at large, well-established universities. But a smaller university is more open to the idea of a network, which has worked very well."

So, What Is Revenue-Based Financing?

Revenue-based financing allows businesses to use their future business revenue to get financing from investors or financing firms. An alternative to debt or equity financing, revenue-based loans can be good for startup businesses or businesses that don't qualify for financing through traditional means.

What is revenue-based financing?

Revenue-based financing, also known as revenue-based lending, royalty-based financing or revenue-based investing, is a type of small-business lending that involves an initial investment from a financing company or equity firm. Then, investors receive a percentage of the business's monthly revenue on an ongoing basis.

It differs from debt financing in that there is no fixed monthly payment. And unlike equity financing, the borrower doesn't have to trade any percentage of ownership for capital.

Revenue-based loans can be less risky for startup businesses or businesses that are struggling with cash flow, because they don't require a fixed monthly payment. Rather, your monthly payment is a percentage of your cash receipts, or the revenue you generate.

How does revenue-based financing work?

After deciding on an initial investment amount, the lender will determine the repayment cap. A repayment cap is similar to a factor rate and is used instead of interest on a revenue-based loan to calculate the total repayment amount. A repayment cap can vary by company, but usually falls between 0.4 and 2.0. Your total repayment amount is calculated by multiplying the initial investment amount by the repayment cap. For example, if your initial investment amount is \$100,000 and your repayment cap is determined to be 1.1, your total repayment amount would be \$110,000 (\$100,000 x 1.1).

Next, the company may decide on a fixed percentage of the

business's monthly revenue that must be repaid each month — usually 1%-3% of the monthly revenue, but it may be higher in some cases. This means that the amount of each monthly payment will vary because it is dependent on the amount of revenue your business brings in. To determine the percentage, lenders may look at the amount of revenue that the business is likely to generate each month, as well as the expenses they need to cover.

Because the amount of the payment each month can vary, revenue-based loans often don't have a set end date or term; however, some companies may offer terms, similar to traditional loans. For example, Founders First Capital Partners, a financial services company that specializes in revenue-based lending, offers revenue-based financing with two- to five-year terms.

Who should get revenue-based financing?

Revenue-based financing is usually best suited for high-growth businesses; certain startups; existing businesses that are experiencing cash flow problems but still maintain high revenue; and borrowers who cannot qualify for traditional financing because of poor personal credit. You don't necessarily need to be turning a profit, have collateral or strong personal financials to qualify for revenue-based financing.

Revenue-based loans rely on immediate revenue, so if you are in a pre-revenue stage of business, it won't be an option for you. Businesses that aren't yet generating revenue might be better off with a business line of credit or another startup loan option.

Pros and cons of revenue-based financing:

Pros
Revenue-based loans are accessible to more types of businesses and business owners. Because revenue-based loans are underwritten to the future revenue of a business, they don't rely on business cash flow, personal assets or personal credit. That typically

makes them more accessible for businesses and business owners who don't qualify for traditional financing.

Flexible with business's month-to-month revenue. With a revenue-based loan, you pay a percentage of the revenue you generated for that month, which allows the payments to be flexible with your monthly business cash flow.

Business owners don't have to trade ownership for capital. Unlike equity financing, revenue-based lenders don't take any shares in exchange for providing capital. This allows a business owner to retain full ownership control of their business.

Cons

They can be more expensive than traditional loans. Be wary of the repayment cap, and compare it with interest rates on traditional loans if you can. Using our earlier example of a typical repayment cap of 1.1 on a \$100,000 loan, consider a traditional loan of the same amount with a 6% fixed interest rate. For that loan, your total repayment amount would be \$106,000.

They can be risky if you have high monthly expenses. Monthly payments on a revenue-based loan can eat into your monthly cash. If your business has high monthly expenses, even if you also have high revenue, you may be better off with a loan that will give you a fixed monthly payment.

Revenue is required. This may sound obvious, but it bears repeating — revenue, usually a good amount of it, is required for a revenue-based loan. Because you are repaying a small percentage of that monthly revenue, a lender likely wants to see a certain minimum amount of monthly revenue. For example, Founders First Capital Partners requires a monthly revenue of \$1 million or higher, and Flow Capital wants to see at least \$4 million.

Alternatives to revenue-based loans

Invoice financing
Depending on your type of business, and especially if you're