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68% of America's Economy Depends on You Spending Your Money

How The Economy Changed From Production To Consumer Driven

About 100 years ago, Americans were overwhelmed by the rise of a modern consumer culture. In response, many of the bitter cultural tensions that had divided Americans had begun to subside. The growth of exciting new opportunities to buy cars, appliances, and stylish clothing made the country's cultural conflicts seem less significant. The collapse of the new economy at the decade's end would generate economic debates as intense as the cultural conflicts of the early and mid-1920s.

Americans in the 1920s were the first to wear ready-made, exact-size clothing. They were the first to play electric phonographs, to use electric vacuum cleaners, to listen to commercial radio broadcasts, and to drink fresh orange juice year round. In countless ways, large and small, American life was transformed during the 1920s, at least in urban areas. Cigarettes, cosmetics, and synthetic fabrics such as rayon became staples of American life. Newspaper gossip columns, illuminated billboards, and commercial airplane flights were novelties during the 1920s. The United States became a consumer society.

Two automotive titans, Henry Ford and Alfred Sloan, symbolized the profound transformations that took place in American industry during the 1910s and 1920s. In 1913, the 50-year-old Ford had revolutionized American manufacturing by introducing the automated assembly line. By using conveyor belts to bring automobile parts to workers, he reduced the assembly time for a Ford car from 12 ½ hours in 1912 to just 1 ½ hours in 1914. Declining production costs allowed Ford to cut automobile prices six times between 1921 and 1925. The cost of a new Ford was reduced to just $290. This amount was less than three months wages for an average American worker. It made cars affordable for the average family. To lower employee turnover and raise productivity, Ford introduced a minimum wage of $5 in 1914 (twice what most workers earned) and shortened the workday from nine hours to eight hours. Twelve years later, Ford reduced his work week from six days to five days. Ford demonstrated the dynamic logic of mass production: that expanded production allows manufacturers to reduce costs, and therefore, increases the number of products sold; and that higher wages allow workers to buy more products.

Alfred Sloan, the president of General Motors from 1923 to 1941, built his company into the world's largest automaker, not by refining the production process, but by adopting new approaches to advertising and marketing. Sloan summed up his philosophy with these blunt words: "The primary object of the corporation was to make money, not just to make cars." Unlike Ford, a farmer's son who wanted to produce an inexpensive, functional vehicle with few frills (Ford said that his customers could have any color that they wanted as long as it was black), Sloan was convinced that Americans were willing to pay extra for luxury and prestige. He advertised his cars as symbols of wealth and status. In 1927, he introduced the yearly model change to convince motorists to trade in old models for newer ones with flashier styling. He also developed a series of automobile divisions, differentiated by status, price, and level of luxury. Hence, Chevrolets were less expensive than Buicks or Cadillacs. He set up the nation's first national consumer credit agency in 1919 to make his cars affordable. If Henry Ford demonstrated the efficacy of mass production, Sloan revealed the importance of merchandising in a modern consumer society.

The automobile industry provided an enormous stimulus for the national economy. By 1929, the industry produced 12.7 percent of all manufacturing output, and employed one out of every 12 workers. Automobiles, in turn, stimulated the growth of steel, glass, and rubber industries, along with the gasoline stations, motor

(See ***CONSUMER ECONOMY*** P. 3)

Airline's New Plus-Size Traveler Policy

Southwest Airlines will soon require travelers who can't fit within the armrests of their seat to pay for an extra one in advance, part of a string of recent changes the carrier is making.

The new rule goes into effect Jan. 27, the same day Southwest starts assigning seats.

Currently, plus-size passengers can either pay for an extra seat in advance with the option of getting that money back later, or they can request a free extra seat at the airport. Under the carrier's new policy, a refund is still possible but no longer guaranteed.

In a statement Monday, Southwest said it is updating some of its policies as it prepares for assigned seating next year.

"To ensure space, we are communicating to Customers who have previously used the extra seat policy that they should purchase it at booking," the statement said.

It marks the latest change at Southwest, which had long been known for letting its passengers pick their own seats after boarding the plane, and for letting their bags fly for free, which ended in May. Those perks were key to differentiating the budget carrier from its rivals.

Southwest says it will still refund a second ticket under its new policy for extra seating if there is at least one open seat on the flight when it departs, and if both of the passenger's tickets were purchased in the same booking class. The passenger also needs to request the refund within 90 days of the flight.

The airline has struggled recently and is under pressure from activist investors to boost profits and revenue. The airline also said last year that it would charge customers extra for more legroom and offer red-eye flights.

A New Wave Of African Pride Is Rising

BBC—Augustine Ogbu works as a doctor, treating patients in clinics across the striking Caribbean island of St Lucia.

When he returns to his home in the coastal town of Rodney Bay, he clocks in for his second job - as the owner and solo chef of a Nigerian takeaway.

"Egusi soup and fufu, that's more popular... they love jollof rice too," Dr Ogbu says, reeling off a list of his customers' favourite dishes.

The 29-year-old hails from Nigeria - population 230 million - but crossed the Atlantic for St Lucia - population 180,000 - to train as a doctor in 2016.

He set up his home-based takeaway, named Africana Chops, in 2022, after being incessantly asked by his St Lucian friends for Nigerian fare.

The takeaway is now thriving, Dr Ogbu tells the BBC, and not just because his island customers think the food is tasty.

"They know that we all have the same ancestral origin. So most of the time, they want to get in touch with that," Dr Ogbu explains, adding that interest in African culture has grown "tremendously" since he arrived almost a decade ago.

St Lucia is not alone in this phenomenon.

Across the Caribbean, the desire to reconnect with the population's African heritage appears to have strengthened over the past few years. People across the Caribbean have been expressing African pride through cultural means, such as food, clothing and travel, while gov-

Trinidad and Tobago pays tribute to the nation's Afro-descendant community on Emancipation Day, which marks the ending of slavery throughout the British Empire

(See ***AFRICAN PRIDE*** P. 9)

Will States Take On More FEMA Duties?

WASHINGTON — The Federal Emergency Management Agency could look significantly different by next year's hurricane season, with state and local governments shouldering more of the responsibility for natural disaster response and recovery.

Members of both political parties have long criticized FEMA, but a bipartisan bill moving along in Congress combined with President Donald Trump's disdain for the agency may provide momentum for a big shift in emergency management.

Trump has said repeatedly he doesn't support FEMA's current structure and wants to see a special review council he put together propose a complete overhaul of the agency, possibly eliminating it entirely. That's provoked deep concern among some local and state officials who don't see how they would have the funding or background to handle a sudden natural disaster.

"We want to wean off of FEMA and we want to bring it down to the state level," Trump said in June. "We're moving it back to the states so the governors can handle it. That's why they're governors. Now, if they can't handle it, they shouldn't be governor."

Trump's FEMA Review Council, a 12-member board led by Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem and Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, has until mid-November to write a report detailing its recommendations for the president.

But, as Noem has noted several times during the group's two public meetings, Congress holds authority over FEMA and would need to sign off on any major changes.

Lawmakers, some of whom have spent years working on federal emergency management issues, aren't waiting for the review council's report to get started.

House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chairman Sam Graves, R-Mo., ranking member Rick Larsen, D-Wash., Florida Republican Rep. Daniel Webster and Arizona Democratic Rep. Greg Stanton released their bill in late July, before the review council held its second meeting. It does not aim to eliminate FEMA.

"FEMA is in need of serious re-

(See ***WILL STATES FUND*** P. 2)

STATE NEWS BRIEFS

TO REQUIRE FULL SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS TO REGISTER TO VOTE, NC WOULD NEED TO HURDLE A FEDERAL LAW

NC Newsline – Requiring people who register to vote to reveal their full Social Security numbers, as North Carolina legislators have proposed, would violate a 50-year-old federal law, election and privacy experts told NC Newsline.

The requirement that voter applicants supply all nine digits of Social Security numbers to register is in the latest version of House bill 958, a sweeping bill on election changes moving through the House.

The federal Privacy Act of 1974 "makes it unlawful for any local or state government or the federal government to deny a right, privilege, or benefit because a person refuses to provide his or her Social Security number," according to a 2023 report on Congress prepared by the Congressional Research Service. Under this federal law, North Carolina cannot deny voting rights to people who do not supply the full number.

North Carolina "can't carve out a new exception for itself in 2025," John Davisson, senior counsel and director of litigation at the Electronic Privacy Information Center, or EPIC, said in an email. He continued: "That's for good reason: States have other ways to verify a voter's identity that are far less hazardous to privacy, including driver's license numbers and the last four digits of a registrant's Social Security number."

Existing law requires applicants supply one of those identifiers.

At a July committee meeting on the bill, Rep. Pricey Harrison (D-Guilford) warned that the Social Security provision violated federal privacy law.

In response, Rep. Hugh Blackwell (R-Burke) and Rep. Sarah Stevens (R-Surry), the bill's sponsors, mentioned that the applicants for social welfare programs supply full Social Security numbers and the DMV requires them.

(See ***SOCIAL SECUTIRY NUMBERS*** P. 2)

NC'S LARGEST SCHOOL DISTRICT HOPES RECRUITMENT PAYS OFF WITH 90,000 STUDENTS NEEDING TRANSPORTATION

NC Newsline–The first test of the new school year rolls out on Monday as thousands of students wait anxiously for their designated school bus to pick them up and transport them to school on time. It's such a routine event, few students or parents truly appreciate the carefully choreographed work that has happened behind the scenes leading up to the first run on the opening week.

The Wake County Public School System (WCPSS) has been working throughout the summer to recruit and fill its pipeline of bus driver candidates. North Carolina's largest school district has 605 drivers ready to get behind the wheel for the opening of school, with 22 bus driver candidates who signed up for training as recently as early August.

Bob Snidemiller, senior director of transportation for WCPSS, said they are continuing to market the positions.

"We're advertising via TV, radio, social media. We do have a dedicated HR recruitment person which I think has been very helpful in staying on top of those who make contact with us to become our candidates, who then attend class and become bus drivers," Snidemiller said at a recent work session.

The extra recruitment push comes as state legislators passed a stopgap budget this summer that did not included raises for teachers, support staff, or state employees.

Wake County, working from the county budget, is offering every bus driver the opportunity to earn up to $4,000 a year in bonuses.

Drivers who ended the last school year in good standing and come back to

(See ***90,000 STUDENTS NEED TRANSPORTATION*** P. 2)

J.W. LIGON BUILDING ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETS

The J.W. Ligon Building Advisory Council held its first meeting at the Middle School, located at 706 East Lenoir St., on Aug. 18th. According to Desmond Dunn, Community Engagement Consultant, 3-4 Ligon Alumni, 2-Middle School parents, 1-Middle School student, and 2-faculty members were present.

The meeting got underway with background being provided on the project: where the funding is coming from, the origin of the project, as well as the history of the building, how and when it was built. A discussion was also held about the building's history in the community.

The discussion then turned to what would be the next step. If renovation was to be considered, the Council wanted to go through the entire process as far as cost was concerned. The discussion continued with J.W. Ligon Alums wanting to know what parts of the building would incorporate the building's history.

In two weeks the Council will take a tour of the building, and have the discussion about the next steps to be taken. Would it be redevelopment or renovation? The Community Engagement Consultant told us that a cost benefit analysis had been done, and that based on the numbers redevelopment was the option. However, the Council is going to see if renovation project numbers make sense, or not. The discussion turned quickly to what redevelopment or renovation would look like.

The discussion went on to how do we want the building honored with its historical past, and that we want the project to be sustainable for 50-years. Also in the discussion were innovative ways to pay homage to J.W. Ligon Sr. High's history. A Historic Marker was part of that discussion. The Council will reconvene in two-weeks.

As Your Electric Bills Rise, Evidence Mounts That Data Centers Share The Blame – States Feel Pressure To Act

HARRISBURG, Pa. (AP) — Amid rising electric bills, states are under pressure to insulate regular household and business ratepayers from the costs of feeding Big Tech's energy-hungry data centers.

It's not clear that any state has a solution and the actual effect of data centers on electricity bills is difficult to pin down. Some critics question whether states have the spine to take a hard line against tech behemoths like Microsoft, Google, Amazon and Meta.

But more than a dozen states have begun taking steps as data centers drive a rapid build-out of power plants and transmission lines.

That has meant pressuring the nation's biggest power grid operator to clamp down on price increases, studying the effect of data centers on electricity bills or pushing data center owners to pay a larger share of local transmission costs.

Rising power bills are "something legislators have been hearing a lot about. It's something we've been hearing a lot about. More people are speaking out at the public utility commission in the past year than I've ever seen before," said Charlotte Shuff of the Oregon Citizens' Utility Board, a consumer advocacy group.

"There's a massive outcry."

Not the typical electric customer

Some data centers could require more electricity than cities the size of Pittsburgh, Cleveland or New Orleans, and make huge factories look tiny by comparison. That's pushing policymakers to rethink a system that, historically, has spread transmission costs among classes of consumers that are proportional to electricity use.

"A lot of this infrastructure, billions of dollars of it, is being built just for a few customers and a few facilities and these happen to be the wealthiest companies in the world," said Ari Peskoe, who directs the Electricity Law Initiative at Harvard University. "I think some of the fundamental assumptions behind all this just kind of breaks down."

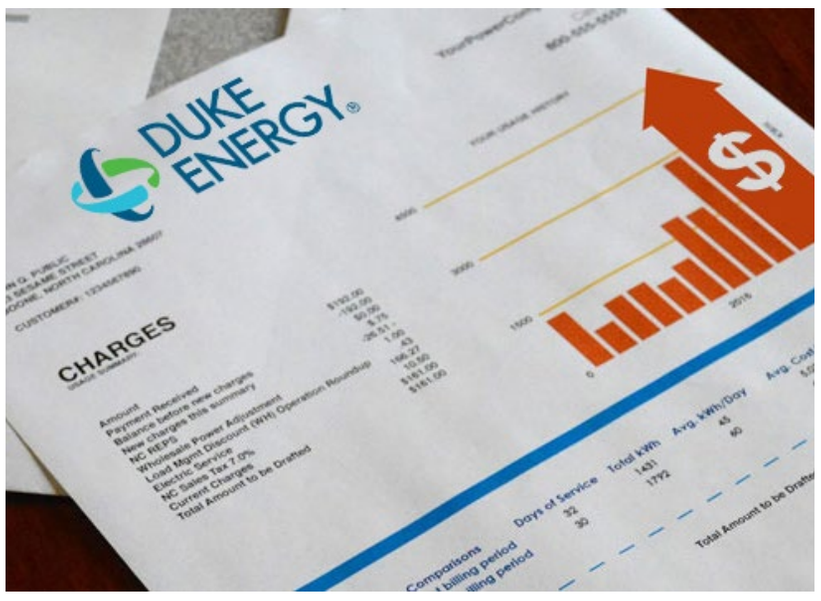
A fix, Peskoe said, is a "can of worms" that pits ratepayer classes against one another.

Some officials downplay the role of data centers in pushing up electric bills.

Tricia Pridemore, who sits on Georgia's Public Service Commission and is president of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners, pointed to an already tightened electricity supply and increasing costs for power lines, utility poles, transformers and generators as utilities replace aging equipment or harden it against extreme weather.

The data centers needed to accommodate the artificial intelligence boom are still in the regulatory planning stages, Pridemore said, and the Data Center Coalition, which represents Big Tech firms and data center developers, has said its members are committed to paying their fair share.

But growing evidence suggests that the electricity bills of some Americans are rising to subsidize the massive energy needs of Big Tech as the U.S. competes in a race against



China for artificial intelligence superiority.

Data and analytics firm Wood Mackenzie published a report in recent weeks that suggested 20 proposed or effective specialized rates for data centers in 16 states it studied aren't nearly enough to cover the cost of a new natural gas power plant.

In other words, unless utilities negotiate higher specialized rates, other ratepayer classes — residential, commercial and industrial — are likely paying for data center power needs.

Meanwhile, Monitoring Analytics, the independent market watchdog for the mid-Atlantic grid, produced research in June showing that 70% — or $9.3 billion — of last year's increased electricity cost was the result of data center demand.

States are responding

Last year, five governors led by Pennsylvania's Josh Shapiro began pushing back against power prices set by the mid-Atlantic grid operator, PJM Interconnection, after that amount spiked nearly sevenfold. They warned of customers "paying billions more than is necessary."

PJM has yet to propose ways to guarantee that data centers pay their freight, but Monitoring Analytics is floating the idea that data centers should be required to procure their own power.

In a filing last month, it said that would avoid a "massive wealth transfer" from average people to tech companies.

At least a dozen states are eyeing ways to make data centers pay higher local transmission costs.

In Oregon, a data center hot spot, lawmakers passed legislation in June ordering state utility regulators to develop new — presumably higher — power rates for data centers.

The Oregon Citizens' Utility Board says there is clear evidence that costs to serve data centers are being spread across all customers — at a time when some electric bills there are up 50% over the past four years and utilities are disconnecting more people than ever.

New Jersey's governor signed legislation last month commissioning state utility regulators to study whether ratepayers are being hit with "unreasonable rate increases" to connect data centers and to develop a specialized rate to charge data centers.

In some other states, like Texas and Utah, governors and lawmakers are trying to avoid a supply-and-demand crisis that leaves ratepayers on the hook — or in the dark.

Doubts about states protecting ratepayers

In Indiana, state utility regulators approved a settlement between Indiana Michigan Power Co., Amazon, Google, Microsoft and consumer advocates that set parameters for data center payments for service.

Kerwin Olsen, of the Citizens Action Council of Indiana, a consumer advocacy group, signed the settlement and called it a "pretty good deal" that contained more consumer protections than what state lawmakers passed.

But, he said, state law doesn't force large power users like data centers to publicly reveal their electric usage, so pinning down whether they're paying their fair share of transmission costs "will be a challenge."

In a March report, the Environmental and Energy Law Program at Harvard University questioned the motivation of utilities and regulators to shield ratepayers from footing the cost of electricity for data centers.

Both utilities and states have incentives to attract big customers like data centers, it said.

To do it, utilities — which must get their rates approved by regulators — can offer "special deals to favored customers" like a data center and effectively shift the costs of those discounts to regular ratepayers, the authors wrote. Many state laws can shield disclosure of those rates, they said.

In Pennsylvania, an emerging data center hot spot, the state utility commission is drafting a model rate structure for utilities to consider adopting. An overarching goal is to get data center developers to put their money where their mouth is.

"We're talking about real transmission upgrades, potentially hundreds of millions of dollars," commission chairman Stephen DeFrank said. "And that's what you don't want the ratepayer to get stuck paying for."

90,000 STUDENTS NEED TRANSPORTATION

Continued from page 1

Wake County for the beginning of this traditional calendar school year will see a $1,000 retention bonus in their September pay. The district is also offering drivers a $2,000 "perfect attendance" bonus that's paid at $200 per month.

If that seems excessive, consider the plight the school district found itself in just two years ago.

The vacancy rate was so high that Wake County had to ask parents in the public schools to arrange for their own transportation for their children.

While some families were forced to get up earlier and drive their children to school or coordinate an impromptu neighborhood carpool, there's little doubt the hiccup caused some students to miss classes or show up late.

This fall Wake County will be managing 564 bus routes with seven additional routes tacked on to support four new schools in the district.

That amounts to nearly 90,000 registered riders that the bus drivers are expected to get safely from their bus stop to school and back again. Snidemiller said about 70% of those students actually ride daily. Others may arrange alternate transportation if they are staying after the school day ends to participate in sports or extracurricular events.

Drivers on average make more than six runs per bus.

"We are using our buses very, very efficiently again this year. That means our buses will arrive at [more than] six campuses every morning and every afternoon. We have 159 riders on average assigned to each bus," said Snidemiller.

The school district has also contracted with six vendors to transport a projected 3,600 students within the county who fall into the category of special needs, pre-K, or who are experiencing homelessness.

Keeping all those vehicles running is another issue unto itself.

All buses start the new school year having gone through a preventative maintenance program, with 95% of the fleet operable.

Snidemiller says it's "typical" to have about five percent of the buses are in need of repair at any given time.

This year the county will be operating 15 propane buses in an on-going program to reduce fuel costs with a cleaner operating engine.

Wake County has a vacancy rate of 25% of fleet mechanics. Last year, the vacancy rate topped 30%.

"It's slow, but at least it's moving in the right direction," Snidemiller told school board members last week.

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Will States Fund FEMA — *CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1*

form, and the goal of the FEMA Act of 2025 is to fix it," Graves wrote in a statement. "This bill does more than any recent reforms to cut through the bureaucracy, streamline programs, provide flexibility, and return FEMA to its core purpose of empowering the states to lead and coordinating the federal response when it's needed."

Separately, a U.S. House spending committee is recommending a substantial boost in FEMA funding for the next fiscal year.

Make FEMA a Cabinet-level agency?

Stanton said during an interview with States Newsroom on Wednesday the Transportation Committee's bill "recognizes the challenges we have learned from past disasters; that sometimes the rules and regulations in place make it very difficult for victims of natural disasters to get the help that they need, whether it be housing or even financial assistance."

The legislation, he said, focuses on four broad improvements:

- Making FEMA a Cabinet-level agency instead of housing it within the Department of Homeland Security;
- Emphasizing mitigation projects that lessen the impact of natural disasters;
- Streamlining processes that have become too complex over the years; and
- Adding flexibility so states can choose the type of housing or other support that best helps their residents following a natural disaster.

Stanton does not support Trump's inclination to eliminate FEMA, arguing the federal government should help when local and state governments are overwhelmed by the scale of a natural disaster.

"That's the whole point of it, that Americans help our fellow Americans at their point of greatest need," he said.

But Stanton added he's willing to read through the FEMA Review Council's report once it's released and work with its members to improve the agency.

"I'm open-minded," Stanton said. "If they have good ideas that actually will strengthen FEMA, I'm all ears."

The bill, while a sign of bipartisan progress in an increasingly polarized Congress, still has several steps to go before reaching Trump's desk. To gain his signature, lawmakers may need to blend in some of the review council's recommendations later this year.

A handful of outside groups, including the National Emergency Management Association, sent the committee a letter applauding the bipartisan group for its work so far but hinting they expect changes in the coming months.

"We recognize and appreciate that the legislation is part of an ongoing effort to modernize FEMA and ensure its programs reflect current and emerging challenges," the four organizations wrote. "In that spirit, we also await the work of the FEMA Review Council and understand that its recommendations may inform refinements to the legislation."

'We're going to have to turn to our own resources'

The review council's two public meetings so far haven't included much debate. The members have mostly shared general statements about grievances with FEMA and issued some warnings for state governments that rely heavily on the federal government.

Phil Bryant, former Republican governor of Mississippi, said that states should prepare to begin spending much more on natural disasters.

"We're going to have to turn to our own resources," Bryant said. "States are going to have to develop that emergency response fund, take some of their rainy day funds or funds that they may want to use for musical events and put it into disaster recovery."

Larger states or those with strong economies may be able to absorb some of the cost that the federal government has carried for years, but other members of the council have cautioned their colleagues against going too far.

Virginia Gov. Glenn Youngkin said the committee will need to clearly explain what costs state and local governments will be responsible for and which will be covered by the federal government.

He also highlighted the challenges of completely reshaping FEMA while it's in the middle of responding to natural disasters ranging from hurricanes to wildfires to tornadoes.

"We're going to be changing the tires on this car while this car is barreling 100 miles an hour," Youngkin said.

Jane Castor, mayor of Tampa, Florida, signaled the panel's recommendations should take into consideration that many small or rural areas won't be able to raise the amount of funds they've received from FEMA.

"The locals should be prepared to respond to these incidents in the immediate aftermath," Castor said. "But as was stated before, there are some — London, Kentucky, and Asheville, North Carolina — (where) this is probably the first time that they've probably experienced anything like this. And so we have to be there to help them through the worst of their time."

Noem has been blunt in her assessment of FEMA, calling the agency "disastrous" and "incompetent."

She's also been clear that Trump doesn't expect incremental changes but an entirely new approach to how the federal government responds to natural disasters.

Social Security No. — *CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1*

A federal law from 1976 allows state and local tax agencies, social welfare offices, and DMVs to require Social Security numbers.

In an interview last week, Blackwell would not offer a reason why full Social Security should be required of people registering to vote.

Blackwell called the bill "a work in progress" and said the best time for him to offer a justification is when legislators have a "finished product."

More research is going into determining "if there are federal, constitutional, or other issues we need to factor into the decision," he said.

The bill has moved through two House committees and is next slated for a hearing in the House Rules Committee. No date has been set for that meeting.

Five states are allowed to ask for full Social Security numbers because they were grandfathered in before 1974, Lata Nott, director of Voting Rights Policy at the Campaign Legal Center said in an interview.

However, only two of those five — Virginia and Tennessee — make supplying the full number a registration requirement.

South Carolina makes it optional. New Mexico is permitted to ask for the full number, but doesn't.

Kentucky requires it, but that state's registration instructions say, "No person shall be denied the right to register because of failure to include social security number."

Two Georgia voters won a federal lawsuit against Georgia filed in 2000 over the requirement that they provide their Social Security numbers as part of their voter registration. Georgia makes providing the full number optional.

If North Carolina legislators push forward with seeking full Social Security numbers, the state would need to have the Election Assistance Commission, which develops the national voter registration form, change the state-specific instructions for North Carolina, said Sean Morales-Doyle, director of the voting rights program at the Brennan Center for Justice.

Legal hurdles to requesting Social Security numbers are in place to make sure states don't collect the numbers unless they need them and to ensure "they have the infrastructure to make sure it's done right," he said.

Republican legislators' interest in securing full Social Security numbers on voter forms comes as the Trump administration has dialed back its support for election security. The Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency ended support for election security and a partnership states had relied on, Votebeat has reported.

Last week, Arizona's two U.S. Senators sent a letter to Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem asking what security help the agency would provide in light of the hacking attack into that state's election website that changed candidate profile pictures to one of Iranian Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, Votebeat reported.

At the last North Carolina House committee meeting on the bill, voters protested the Social Security number requirement, saying it would create another potential source for leaks of private data.

"While the clean voter rolls is a policy interest, so is keeping this very personal information secure, Nott said.

The executive director of You Can Vote, a nonprofit organization that sponsors voter registration drives, told the committee that potential voters would be reluctant to put their full Social Security numbers on forms they would then hand to people they don't know.

Common Cause of North Carolina opposes the provision requiring full Social Security numbers, said Bob Phillips, the organization's executive director.

"It is a huge identity theft risk," he said in an interview. "There seems to be no valid reason to do it other than to put up another barrier" to voter registration.

"North Carolina has a sad legacy of making voting and registration harder," he said.

Phillips said he was encouraged that Blackwell indicated that committee members were willing to listen to concerns about the bill.

"I hope this is not set in stone, that they actually will listen to reason," Phillips said. "I don't think it provides any additional security."

Business & Finance

InvestFest 2025: Education, Empowerment, and Inspiration

By Ms. Jheri Worldwide
Staff Writer

Atlanta, GA - InvestFest 2025, produced by Earn Your Leisure, once again powerfully demonstrated the strength of the Black community uniting, sharing ideas, resources, and inspiring one another. The crowd was thicker than ever in my three years of attending this event, drawing people from all corners of the globe. The vendor marketplace showcased a plethora of products and services, while engaging and informative speakers from around the world shared their insights. From real estate investing in Africa and the United Arab Emirates to mindful healing as a tool for community empowerment, InvestFest delivered education and inspiration on a grand scale at the Georgia World Congress Center in the heart of downtown Atlanta.

One of the most beautiful additions this particular year, marking the fifth anniversary of the event, was a dedicated children's area within the vendor marketplace. Here, children from across the country showcased and sold a variety of products alongside their families, from customized flavored lip glosses to books and t-shirts. I was also incredibly excited to hear from prominent thought and cultural leaders John Hope Bryant, Rizza Islam, Issa Rae, 19 Keys, Caleb Silver, and hundreds of others. As an audience, we had the privilege of praying with Earvin "Magic" Johnson, who instructed us to pace ourselves with our goals, embracing his three-year principle. During the Revolutionary Entrepreneurship Panel, Rizza Islam spoke at length on consumerism: "You are losing if you don't invest in yourself." He elaborated on the rising cost of consumer goods, "For example, going to the grocery store versus eating fast food. We have to invest in ourselves and look at how to budget."

The Dubai Real Estate Panel hosted by Matthew Garland, featuring Danyel King and Sandrella Sims, highlighted several key aspects of the region's property market, including the presence of 6,700 millionaires and the importance of relationships in business. They emphasized that maintaining existing connections is easier and more fruitful than seeking new ones. A significant development is the introduction of gambling in the United Arab Emirates, with the Wynn Brand building a resort two hours from Dubai, featuring 1,542 rooms and welcoming investments as low as $200,000 by January 2027. The construction of a $35 billion airport in Dubai South underscores a new focus on villas and townhomes in efforts to attract families. Dubai is also actively creating more land by building on water, with construction operating 24 hours a day. The real estate market operates as a cash-driven economy, with transactions sometimes 50% cash and 50% mortgages, mostly all cash. Notably, cryptocurrency can be used to buy and sell properties. This was a highly informative panel.

The event offered a wealth of opportunities for excitement and unlimited networking. I was thrilled to reunite with individuals I had met at previous InvestFests, and hearing of their progress in investments was truly inspiring. Catching up on our past conversations and witnessing their personal progress was as motivating to me as the powerful conversations between speakers like Steve Harvey and Charlamagne tha God, as well as other well-known figures who discussed the media landscape, highlighting the disparity between online discourse and in-person/podcast conversations.

I remain a staunch champion for Earn Your Leisure. What Michael McDonald, Troy Millings, and Rashad Bilal have built with their team is truly something difficult to express in words; it must be experienced firsthand. The resources and information provided by major financial institutions like Fidelity Investments and Invesco QQQ were instrumental in closing gaps in my understanding of my personal investment allocations and aiding decisions regarding my immediate next steps. During the festival, I was able to book a one-on-one session with a Fidelity advisor who looked like me. What was scheduled as a 15-minute meeting extended to 45 minutes. Not only was I inspired by her journey, but I now feel a newfound confidence because I have a real person to call on when it comes to portfolio management with Fidelity. I now have a transparent financial advisor on my side who speaks my language and understands the tools available to me.

Another significant meeting I had was with Vincent "Bam" MacDonald, the merchandise director for Earn Your Leisure, whom I met last year at InvestFest after creating an outfit utilizing their merchandise. Well ahead of the festival, he graciously sent me several pieces from their collection, which I proudly wore over the weekend. Many people inquired about my black embroidered shirt-dress, and I was able to direct them to the EYL merch store in the vendor marketplace. Being able to connect with people directly involved with the organization hosting this major event made me feel even more welcomed and truly a part of this powerful movement that has provided me with insights and resources that have tangibly changed my life and improved my financial standing for the better. One of the panelists, Cedrick Nash, mentioned that "Your courage has to be greater than your doubt and fear," and those words I will take with me and hold on to until InvestFest 2026!

Consumer Economy — *CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1*

lodges, campgrounds, and hot dog stands that dotted the nation's roadways.

Alongside the automobile, the telephone and electricity also became emblems of the consumer economy. By 1930, two-thirds of all American households had electricity, and half of American households had telephones. As more and more of America's homes received electricity, new appliances followed: refrigerators, washing machines, vacuum cleaners, and toasters quickly took hold. Advertisers claimed that "labor saving" appliances would ease the sheer physical drudgery of housework, but they did not shorten the average housewife's work week. Women had to do more because standards of cleanliness kept rising. Sheets had to be changed weekly. The house had to be vacuumed daily. In short, social pressure expanded household chores to keep pace with the new technology. Far from liberating women, appliances imposed new standards of cleanliness.

Ready-to-wear clothing was another important innovation in America's expanding consumer economy. During World War I, the federal government defined standard clothing sizes to help the nation's garment industry meet the demand for military uniforms. Standard sizes meant that it was now possible to mass produce ready-to-wear clothing. Since there was no copyright on clothing designs until the 1950s, garment manufacturers could pirate European fashions and reproduce them using less expensive fabrics.

Even the public's eating habits underwent far-reaching shifts. Americans began to consume fewer starches (like bread and potatoes) and to consume more fruit and sugar. But the most striking development was the shift toward processed foods. Instead of preparing food from scratch at home (plucking chickens, roasting nuts, or grinding coffee beans), an increasing number of Americans purchased foods that were ready-to-cook. Important innovations in food processing occurred during World War I as manufacturers learned how to efficiently produce canned and frozen foods. Processed foods saved homemakers enormous amounts of time in peeling, grinding, and cutting.

Accompanying the rise of new consumer-oriented businesses were profound shifts in the ways that businesses operated. To stimulate sales and increase profits, businesses expanded advertising, offered installment credit, and created the nation's first regional and national chains.

The nation's first million-dollar advertising campaign (Uneeda Biscuits in a waterproof box) demonstrated advertising's power. Before the 1920s, most advertisements consisted of vast expanses of print. Absent were brand names, pictures, or catch phrases. During the 1920s, advertising agencies hired psychologists (including John B. Watson, the founder of behaviorism, and Edward Bernays, Sigmund Freud's nephew) to design the first campaigns. They touted products by building-up name brand identification, creating memorable slogans, manipulating endorsements by doctors or celebrities, and appealing to consumers' hunger for prestige and status. By 1929, American companies spent $3 billion annually to advertise their products--five times more than the amount spent on advertising in 1914.

Installment credit soared during the 1920s. Banks offered the country's first home mortgages. Manufacturers of everything--from cars to irons--allowed consumers to pay "on time." About 60 percent of all furniture and 75 percent of all radios were purchased on installment plans. In contrast to a Victorian society that had placed a high premium on thrift and saving, the new consumer society emphasized spending and borrowing.

A fundamental shift took place in the American economy during the 1920s. The nation's families spent a declining proportion of their income on necessities (food, clothing, and utilities) and an increasing share on appliances, recreation, and a host of new consumer products. As a result, older industries, such as textiles, railroads, and steel, declined, while newer industries, such as appliances, automobiles, aviation, chemicals, entertainment, and processed foods, surged ahead rapidly.

During the 1920s, the chain store movement revolutionized retailing. Chains of stores multiplied across the country, like Woolworth's, the five-and-dime chain. The largest grocery chain, A&P, had 17,500 stores by 1928. Alongside drugstore and cigar store chains, there were also interlocking networks of banks and utility companies. These banks and utilities played a critical role in promoting the financial speculation of the late 1920s, which would be one of the causes for the Great Depression.

Many of the defining features of modern American culture emerged during the 1920s. The record chart, the book club, the radio, the talking picture, and spectator sports all became popular forms of mass entertainment. But the 1920s primarily stand out as one of the most important periods in American cultural history because the decade produced a generation of artists, musicians, and writers who were among the most innovative and creative in the country's history.

Why It Is Important To Know Your Economy's History

America used to be what China is today. America produced all of its goods and sold them to countries around the world. And like China, this mass production of goods made America very wealthy.

We are in the infancy of our next great industrial revolution with the emergence of Artificial Intelligence. There will once again be a great shift in the way Americans live, and it has already begun.

Amazon has revolutionized the way we shop for goods. Uber changed the way we travel. FaceBook changed the way we socialize. Google changed the way we research. YouTube made us all TV stars. And Netflix changes how we watch TV forever. All of these platforms are fueled by the computing power of Artificial Intelligence, and all are designed to keep you, the consumer, spending money.

But, we must learn from history. The Great Depression came about because of corporate greed, over extended consumer credit and lack of government oversight. Today, American consumers boast a $1.21 trillion credit card debt, $1.81 trillion in student loan debt, $1.64 trillion in auto debt and $13 trillion in mortgage debt. Household incomes are rising as well, but not proportionally to debt.

Add in stubbornly high interest rates, tariffs and a slowing employment sector and you have a formula for economic disaster based on historical data.

So far the economy is holding up. Trump's tariffs have brought $142 billion in revenue since April. That is a staggering number, but it doesn't tell the whole story. Those tariffs are paid by U.S. companies to import foreign goods. It is a penalty of sorts for choosing to buy from foreign companies instead of American companies.

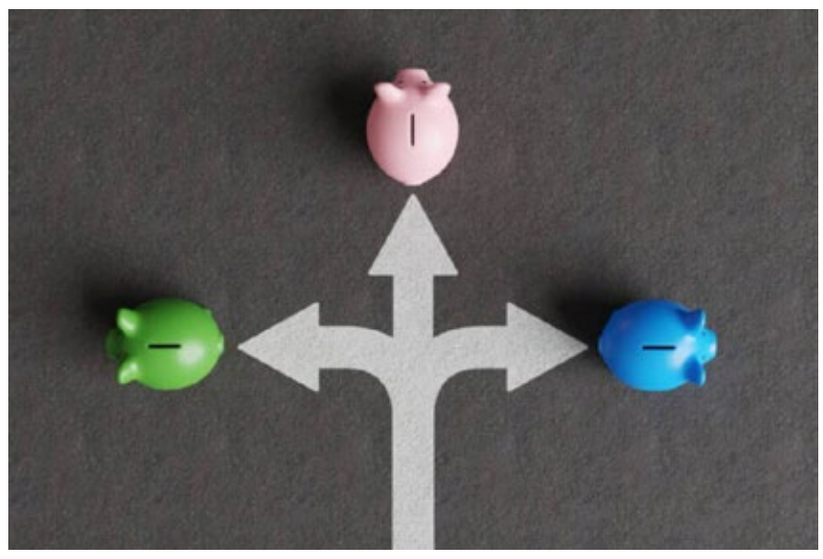
This strategy is not new. It is actually almost as old as the Constitutional America. George Washington imposed tariffs on imported goods to help America establish its financial footing. Imported British products were cheaper to purchase than American made products. To level the playing field, and give the new America and its industries a chance to survive, Washington imposed tariffs on imported goods. It worked.

With America no longer being the world leader in manufacturing goods, the government must make ways to sustain the country and its economy. As wages flatten and consumer spending slows, revenue must be found elsewhere to keep this economic engine running.

As an assist to consumers, gas prices have remained low thus far for the entirety of 2025. Pressure is being levied on the Federal Reserve to lower interest rates to give consumers some relief. The idea of another wave of stimulus checks is being floated around Washington.

Despite the cultural shifts that are taking place in America today, the economy is being prioritized for the benefit of all Americans.

History provided by University of Houston's Digital History department



These 3 Fund Families Control 74% Of The Equity ETF Market

By Wayne Duggan
US News

The larger American corporations grow and the more the U.S. government and its budget expands, the more conspiracy theories arise that a handful of the most powerful people and influential entities are running the economy and the country as a whole. It's easy to dismiss these concerns as crackpot theories, but there's no question there is a certain amount of crony capitalism and government corruption out there.

One of the most common accusations circulating on social media in recent years is that three powerful investment firms, BlackRock Inc. (ticker: BLK), Vanguard and State Street Corp. (STT), own a staggeringly high amount of the U.S. stock market. The idea that three corporate entities own the majority of Wall Street is understandably troubling for many Americans. But while there may be some legitimate concerns about the power and influence of these big three fund managers, the truth is they don't actually own as much of the market as it may seem.

What Do Fund Managers Do?

If you have a personal brokerage account, a 401(k), an individual retirement account (IRA) or any other investment account, there's a good chance a large portion of your money is invested in index mutual funds or exchange-traded funds (ETFs). These investment funds are collections of stock holdings designed to leverage the power of diversification and mirror the returns of popular equity market indexes, such as the S&P 500 or the Nasdaq-100 index.

Because the weightings and constituents of these equity market indexes change periodically, fund managers are responsible for making corresponding adjustments to the holdings of their ETFs and mutual funds by buying and selling shares of stock.

Funds can either be actively or passively managed. Active fund managers typically attempt to outperform the overall stock market by implementing some form of unique trading strategy. Passive fund managers aren't trying to outperform the market and are instead aiming simply to replicate its performance. Passive investing funds typically charge lower fees than active funds.

Unfortunately, the majority of active equity funds have consistently underperformed the S&P 500, a phenomenon which has driven more and more investors to passive funds.

The kings of passive investing are – you guessed it – Vanguard, BlackRock and State Street. More than likely, most retirement accounts are filled with funds managed by these three asset managers.

A quick check of the top investors in Apple Inc. (AAPL), Nvidia Corp. (NVDA), Alphabet Inc. (GOOG, GOOGL) or any other trillion-dollar U.S. stock would yield similar results. However, the key to understanding the difference between legitimate concerns about the influence of the big three fund managers and the conspiratorial aspect of their critics lies with the use of the word "ownership."

As asset managers, Vanguard, BlackRock and State Street buy stocks on behalf of their funds' investors, not themselves. BlackRock may be the one buying all the Microsoft stock, but the company doesn't actually own most of those shares. It simply manages them.

This subtle but important difference is highlighted in the wide disparity between BlackRock's assets under management (AUM) and its market capitalization. As of the first quarter of 2024, BlackRock's AUM, the total market value of the investments it manages, was a mind-boggling $10.5 trillion. At the same time, BlackRock is a public company itself with stock that trades on the New York Stock Exchange. BlackRock's market cap, or the total dollar amount of all the company's stock, is about $118 billion. While that's certainly a large number, it's nowhere close to the $10.5 trillion in investor-owned stock that it manages but does not own.

Fund managers profit from the management fees they charge investors who buy and hold their mutual funds and ETFs in their investing and retirement accounts. When Microsoft's stock price goes up, BlackRock doesn't benefit directly from those gains because BlackRock doesn't actually own most of the Microsoft stock it manages.

What Are BlackRock, State Street and Vanguard's Popular Funds?

The big three fund managers may not "own" the majority of the American economy, but they certainly "control" the vast majority of the passive fund market. As of February 2024, ETF.com estimates Vanguard funds represent 30.1% of the total equity ETF market while BlackRock accounts for another 29.4%. State Street is a distant third, with a 14.8% share. In other words, the big three's funds account for a combined 74.3% of the entire equity ETF market.

Efforts to Curb Fund Manager Control

Just because BlackRock, Vanguard and State Street don't actually own the majority of the assets in their funds doesn't mean concerns over their market influence should automatically be dismissed.

The big three fund managers may not own their investors' stocks, but they do vote on behalf of their investors on corporate governance issues. As a result, the fund managers have drawn criticism from both the right and left ends of the political spectrum. Progressive Senator Bernie Sanders has called the concentration of assets held by the big three "obscene."

Dr. Allanté Whitmore on the Road Ahead: Demystifying Autonomous Vehicles

Atlanta, GA—The sight of a vehicle driving itself, with a passenger in the back and an empty driver's seat, might seem like a scene from a science-fiction movie. But for many, this is becoming a daily reality. The question is, are we ready for this shift? The Carolinian sat down with autonomous vehicle expert Allanté V. Whitmore, PhD, Executive Board Vice President for PAVE (Partners for AV Education), to discuss the future of the technology, its safety, and how it's shaping our world.

Dr. Whitmore, who has a background in the autonomous vehicle industry and has personally ridden in Waymo vehicles, addressed the initial fear that many people feel. "First, they wouldn't be on the road if they weren't safe," she said, speaking from a place of deep knowledge and personal experience. She emphasized that the autonomous vehicles we are now seeing are the culmination of years of research and development, stretching back to the DARPA Grand Challenge in 2007. The DARPA Grand Challenge, funded by the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency is a prize competition for American autonomous vehicles, the most prominent research organization of the United States Department of Defense. "It's been around for almost 20 years, people have been trying to figure this out," she added.

One of the most significant points of confusion for the public is the distinction between different levels of autonomous driving. Dr. Whitmore explained the six-level system established by the Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE), ranging from Level 0 to Level 5.

Level 0 (No Driving Automation): A human driver is in full control, though the car may have basic safety features like blind spot warnings or automatic emergency braking.

Level 1 (Driver Assistance): The vehicle can assist with either steering or acceleration/deceleration, such as with adaptive cruise control.

Level 2 (Partial Driving Automation): The vehicle can control both steering and acceleration/deceleration simultaneously. However, the driver must remain engaged and be ready to take over at any time. Tesla's "Full Self-Driving" is an example of a Level 2 system.

Level 3 (Conditional Driving Automation): The vehicle can handle all driving functions under specific conditions, but the human driver must be ready to intervene when prompted by the system.

Level 4 (High Driving Automation): The vehicle can operate completely autonomously within a specific area or under certain conditions, and no human intervention is required within that "operational design domain" (ODD). Waymo vehicles are a prime example of a Level 4 system.

Level 5 (Full Driving Automation): The vehicle can drive itself anywhere and under any conditions that a human could, and no driver is needed at all. This is the ultimate goal, but as Dr. Whitmore notes, "that's just not where we're at yet."

The key takeaway, Dr. Whitmore stressed, is the distinction between systems that assist the driver (Levels 1-3) and those that are truly automated (Levels 4-5). "Your Tesla is meant for you to pay attention at all times," she stated, correcting the common misconception that the car can be left to its own devices. This is a critical point for safety, as many consumer vehicles with autonomous features still rely on human supervision.

I inquired about safety on the road, specifically in North Carolina. With massive population growth in NC, especially in the Research Triangle Park area, roads are more congested than ever. The addition of

(See ***DR. ALLANTÉ WHITMORE*** P. 9)

The Power of the Black Dollar: A Century of Economic Boycotts

By Jordan Meadows
Staff Writer

Throughout the last century, Black Americans have made their voices heard not only through marches, speeches, and sit-ins, but also through a lesser-remembered yet equally powerful form of protest: the economic boycott.

These boycotts were not merely refusals to spend; they were declarations of self-worth. Black communities organizing economic resistance—refusing to support businesses that refused to hire, respect, or serve them with fairness—was vital to Black resistance.

During the Great Depression, economic desperation was felt across America, but for Black communities, it was compounded by racial discrimination that kept them jobless even as they spent their limited dollars in white-owned stores.

In cities like Chicago, Cleveland, and Pittsburgh, Black activists launched the "Don't Buy Where You Can't Work"campaigns. These protests pushed the message that businesses profiting from Black dollars must reciprocate by hiring Black workers.

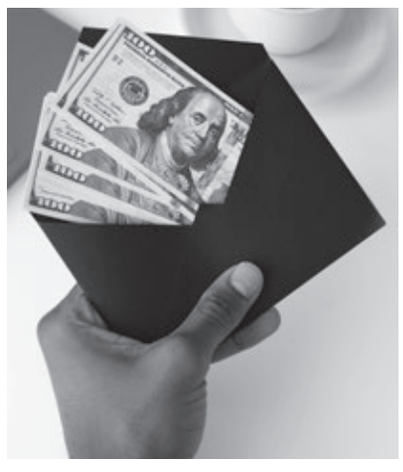
Activists picketed with signs stating the obvious yet radical demand: "Do Not Buy Where You Will Not Be Hired."

Black consumers were encouraged, sometimes pressured, to shop only where their economic power was respected. Despite legal injunctions and police interference, these boycotts yielded real gains—hundreds, even thousands, of jobs for Black workers in cities that had long shut them out of economic opportunity.

In 1968, the civil rights strategy of economic protest took a powerful local form in Durham, North Carolina, when the Black Solidarity Committee for Community Improvement launched a boycott against the city's white business establishment. It began with a bold gesture: organizing a second Christmas parade, not on Main Street, but on Fayetteville Street, symbolizing a parallel economic and cultural world built by Black Durham.

The committee, representing a coalition of unions, fraternities and sororities, neighborhood councils, business organizations, and religious leaders, delivered a comprehensive list of grievances and demands to the local Chamber of Commerce and Durham Merchants Association. Before negotiations could begin in earnest, the committee launched a boycott of Northgate Shopping Center, expanding over time to include nearly 30 businesses.

The heart of the campaign was about justice in welfare, housing, employment, and Black representation in decision-making bodies. The movement reached a crescendo during the "Black Christmas" of 1968,



when Black Durham collectively withdrew their holiday spending from white-owned downtown businesses.

It worked. By February 1969, negotiations led to the formation of six joint committees to address the issues at hand. The boycott ended, but its legacy remained.

Photographs and documents from the early 1960s—like those found in attorney Floyd McKissick's papers—show everyday people standing in front of businesses with quiet signs and loud messages: "Do Not Buy Where You Will Not Be Hired."

These weren't mass marches; they were small, determined acts of resistance. Outside an A&P Supermarket in Durham, for example, Black protesters picketed to alert fellow shoppers that the store refused to hire Black workers. These actions rarely made national headlines, but they were part of a disciplined strategy for community change.

Fast forward to 2025, and the strategy has reemerged.

When Target, once a vocal supporter of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), began to scale back its DEI initiatives, many Black consumers saw it as a betrayal. The company had pledged $2 billion to support Black-owned businesses after the murder of George Floyd. But under mounting political pressure, the company reversed course—and Black communities took notice.

Dr. Jamal Bryant, a prominent Atlanta pastor, called for a boycott of Target, which soon gained national traction. The results were immediate and measurable: sales plummeted and income dropped by 21%. News of the CEO's resignation came on August 20th, less than seven months after the boycotts began. In contrast, companies like Costco, which stood firm on their DEI commitments, saw increased customer loyalty and rising sales.

From the Depression-era picket lines to Black Christmas in Durham to the aisles of Target stores in 2025, the message is the same: Black dollars matter. Boycotts—especially when focused, organized, and sustained—have created jobs, forced negotiations, and brought billion-dollar corporate giants to their knees.

Health and Wellness

Fathers Forever Celebrates Major Campus Expansion

By Jordan Meadows
Staff Writer

A wave of optimism swept through Raleigh as Fathers Forever, a local nonprofit dedicated to empowering fathers, hosted a Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony at its newly expanded campus on Stony Brook Road.

The event on Thursday drew a crowd of supporters, community leaders, and program participants to witness a new chapter in the organization's journey.

The ceremony's keynote speaker was First Lady Anna Stein, who shared her personal and professional commitment to supporting rehabilitation and reentry efforts in North Carolina.

"This work has informed two of my top priorities as First Lady, which are to reduce stigma against people with substance use of mental health disorder into approved rehabilitation and reentering incarcerated people," said Stein. "We are all more than what we've done on our worst days. I believe in second chances."

Founded in 2008, Fathers Forever has become a means of transformation for men seeking a path back to family, purpose, and stability.

Thursday's ribbon cutting marked the unveiling of new facilities designed to broaden the organization's impact, including additional program space, a food pantry, a new barbershop, and expanded transitional housing services.

"This expansion represents our commitment to providing fathers with the resources and support they need to build strong, healthy families," said Dr. Glen Warren, Founder and Executive Director of Fathers Forever. "With the addition of these new spaces, we can offer more programs and services to better serve our community."

Warren, a father of three and a former Wake County Mental Health Crisis Counselor, has dedicated over 25 years to empowering men. He retired with over two decades of service in crisis counseling for individuals struggling with depression, suicidal thoughts, and substance abuse.

"I understand the power and necessity of fathers being a contributing, positive presence in the lives of their children," Warren shared.

At the heart of Fathers Forever's work is Fathers Forever University (FFU)—a comprehensive 12-week educational program that teaches responsible fatherhood, healthy relationships, financial literacy, personal development, and job readiness. The course includes 12 webinars, homework assignments from the organization's textbook "I Am a Father Forever", and offers personal coaching and a certificate upon completion. Participants are given 18 weeks to finish the 12-week curriculum to accommodate life's demands.

Other cornerstone programs include Transitional Housing, which currently operates five homes named after Dr. Warren's family members. These homes provide safe, supportive environments for men as they transition back into their communities.

The Simply Suits Store helps participants feel confident and job-ready by offering affordable professional attire, and the new on-site barbershop gives fathers a fresh haircut before they suit up for interviews or work. The food pantry remains a vital resource for families in need, providing consistent access to essential groceries.

Fathers Forever's impact continues to grow. As of August 2025, 1,195 men have been housed and supported with wraparound services since 2017. Since February 2025 alone, 60 men working to overcome Opioid Use Disorder have been served. Hundreds of fathers have completed the soon-to-be evidence-informed fatherhood curriculum. Notably, 7 of the organization's 22 staff members are justice-impacted individuals who now serve as leaders and mentors, exemplifying the power of second chances.

The U.S. has the highest rate of fatherlessness in the world. Around 90% of homeless and runaway children are from fatherless homes, and 60% of youth suicides involve fatherless children. In one study, 70% of youth in state-run facilities came from homes without fathers.

Children in single-parent homes are statistically twice as likely to experience mental health and behavioral challenges. Academic performance is also affected—children with engaged fathers are 33% less likely to repeat a grade and 43% more likely to earn A's in school. With approximately 80% of single-parent homes being led by mothers, the need for father-focused programs has never been greater.

Guests at the event enjoyed desserts from Sweet & Savory by Chef Tandra, a beloved bakery from downtown Louisburg. Attendees were treated as they toured the newly expanded campus and connected with Fathers Forever staff, alumni, and community supporters.

Fathers Forever's reach continues to expand as it works closely with Wake County Child Support Court, offering court-approved programming and mentoring since 2010. In recognition of its impact, Fathers Forever was honored with the Triangle NC Cares Award in June 2022.

"We can't do this alone," said Dr. Warren. "But together, we can restore families, strengthen communities, and give men the tools to succeed—not just as individuals, but as fathers forever."

THE GOLDEN YEARS

By Judykay Jefferson

WE WERE THERE

Being born in 1953, I've seen the world change, and have had to change with it. My earliest memories of the world outside my neighborhood began with the assassination of President John F. Kennedy in 1963. Watching the news reports from Dallas on the black and white television with my class at Bennett Elementary School, I cried because although I didn't understand all of what was happening, I knew that something horrific had happened to our beloved first family and our nation. This was a unifying tragedy, an attack not only on our leader but on our way of life.

Back then we received our national news from CBS, NBC, and ABC broadcasted live from New York. There were occasionally grainy images "from the field" to provide glimpses of war and tragedy. If you missed the nightly news at 5 p.m. and 6 p.m., you had another shot at it at 10 p.m., right before the Tonight Show with Johnny Carson. Those were the days. Little did we know what the future held.

The 1960's big news for our communities was all about The Movement.

- 1963: March on Washington — Dr. King delivers "I Have a Dream" to 250,000 people.
- 1964: Civil Rights Act Passed — Outlaws segregation in public places and bans employment discrimination.
- 1965: Voting Rights Act — Ends literacy tests and other barriers to Black voting.
- 1967: Thurgood Marshall Appointed — First Black Supreme Court Justice.
- Rise of Soul Music — Motown becomes the soundtrack of resistance and pride.

The 1960s were also the Dawn of Modern Convenience

- Color Television — Became commercially viable, changing how families experienced entertainment.
- Push-Button Telephones — Replaced rotary dials, speeding up communication.
- Microwave Oven — First introduced for home use, revolutionizing cooking speed.
- Fax Machines — Early models began transmitting documents electronically.
- ATM Machines — First installed in 1969, offering 24/7 banking access.

In the 1970s, as our access to power resulted in greater representation, we experienced many firsts.

- 1972: Shirley Chisholm Runs for President — First Black woman to seek major party nomination.
- 1971: Congressional Black Caucus Formed — Black lawmakers unite for collective power.
- 1977: "Roots" Airs on TV — Alex Haley's saga sparks national reckoning with slavery.
- Rise of Black Mayors — Maynard Jackson (Atlanta), Coleman Young (Detroit), Tom Bradley (LA).
- Afrocentric Fashion & Natural Hair Movement — Cultural pride becomes political.

Also happening, home tech takes off

- VCRs (Betamax & VHS) — Allowed families to record and replay TV shows and movies.
- Cordless Phones — Freed users from wall-bound conversations.
- Answering Machines — Became common, changing how people managed missed calls.
- Floppy Disks — Introduced by IBM, enabling portable digital storage.
- Cable Television — Expanded channel options and brought niche programming into homes.

In the 1980s, there was an explosion of arts and culture amidst lingering reminders that although we had come a long way, the fight continued.

- 1983: Guion Bluford Goes to Space — First African American astronaut.
- 1985: MOVE Bombing in Philly — Police drop explosives on Black liberation group.
- Hip-Hop Emerges — Public Enemy, Run-DMC, and NWA challenge racism through music.
- Rise of the "Buppie" — Black urban professionals redefine success and style.
- Spike Lee's Films Begin — "She's Gotta Have It" (1986) kicks off a new Black cinematic voice.

Additionally, in the 1980s personal computers became household items, with Apple and IBM leading the way.

- CDs & CD Players replaced vinyl and cassette tapes with digital sound.
- Laser Printers improved office productivity and home printing quality.
- Cell Phones (Brick Phones), the first mobile phones, hit the market, though bulky and expensive.

By the 1990s, it was painfully obvious that the American South held no exclusivity on racism and violence. The Rodney King beating — Videotaped police brutality shocks the nation.

- 1992: LA Riots — Erupt after officers are acquitted in King's case.
- 1995: Million Man March — Hundreds of thousands gather in DC for unity and healing.
- 1996: Oprah Launches OWN Network — Black media mogul builds her empire.
- Hip-Hop Goes Mainstream — Tupac, Biggie, Lauryn Hill become cultural icons.

And the Internet Era Begins

- Dial-Up Internet & Email — Connected homes to the World Wide Web.
- Flat-Screen TVs — Started replacing bulky CRTs.
- DVDs — Replaced VHS tapes with better quality and durability.
- Caller ID & Call Waiting — Enhanced phone communication.
- Digital Cameras — Began to replace film photography.

This is part 1 of a 2-part look at where we've been and what we've seen. Change is inevitable, often uncontrollable, and constant. We have no choice but to evolve and adapt or get left behind. Next week we will review the first 25 years of the 21st century.

Sports

Women Are Flocking To DC For Historic Baseball Tryout

AP NEWS–Hundreds of women will flock to Washington on Friday to take their first swings at turning pro baseball dreams into reality.

Some at the historic tryout will be seasoned veterans and trailblazers in the women's game. Plenty others are beginners chasing a shot at the pros.

They'll meet on the same field in a camp organized by the Women's Pro Baseball League. Set to debut next year, the league is holding the first pro women's baseball tryouts in more than 80 years this weekend in partnership with Major League Baseball's Washington Nationals. The U.S. hasn't had a pro women's league since the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League — the one immortalized in "A League of Their Own" — dissolved in 1954.

Players will take part in drill-focused sessions, athletic performance testing and player evaluations at the Nationals' Youth Baseball Academy over the first three days, and the showcase will culminate in a live game at Nationals Park on Aug. 25. In the end, 150 players will advance to the league's inaugural draft in October.

For co-founder Justine Siegal, the tryouts mark a crucial step in creating a true arena for female baseball players to compete against one another, which was the driving force behind her vision for the league.

"I didn't get to grow up and play girls baseball. I had to play baseball with the boys," said Siegal, the first woman to coach for an MLB team with the Oakland Athletics in 2015. "We have players who have been waiting a lifetime for an opportunity not to just have a chance to try out for a professional women's baseball league, but to be seen and to be given a chance.

"It's very important to us that women know that we see them."

More than 600 players registered for the four-day camp.

Here are five notable competitors to keep an eye on:

Hampton infielder Mo'ne Davis (3) fields a ground ball during an NCAA game (AP Photo/Mike Caudill)

Mo'ne Davis: right-handed pitcher, outfielder

At 13, Davis became the first girl to earn a win — and pitch a shutout — in the Little League World Series. She drew national attention and became an instant celebrity, gracing the cover of Sports Illustrated and earning AP Female Athlete of the Year honors in 2014.

Davis later played softball at Hampton University, where she last played competitively in 2020 before graduating in 2023. With few professional baseball avenues available, she sometimes wondered if her baseball career had ended.

"A lot of times I've talked to people in school," Davis told The Associated Press, "and ... they just kind of assume that I have everything planned out in life, which isn't true at all."

Davis, now 24, has provided commentary on ESPN for Little League games but recently has explored other career options, including flag football, basketball and content creation.

She hopes the next chapter of her career begins with the WPBL, where she will try out as a pitcher, shortstop and center fielder.

"I'm excited to get out there with all the women," Davis said. "Very excited just to play with each other, to share the field, to bring our love to each other and also to the fans watching."

Kelsie Whitmore: pitcher, outfielder

Whitmore became the first female player in an MLB-partnered league when she suited up for the Staten Island FerryHawks in the Atlantic League in 2022. She first played on the U.S. women's national baseball team as a 14-year-old, helping earn a silver medal at the 2014 World Baseball Softball Confederation (WBSC) Women's World Cup and gold at the 2015 Pan American games.

The 27-year-old's pursuit of a pro baseball career has largely meant finding opportunities to compete alongside men. In 2016, she and Stacy Piagno played for the Sonoma Stompers of the independent Pacific Association, and last year, she became the first woman to play for the Pioneer League with the Oakland Ballers.

Whitmore debuted with the barnstorming squad Savannah Bananas earlier this month.

Ayami Sato, right-handed pitcher

Sato, 35, has led the Japan national team to six women's baseball World Cup championships and is widely considered one of the best female pitchers ever, with a nearly 80 mph fastball and a precise curveball.

A three-time MVP, Sato earlier this year debuted for the Toronto Maple Leafs in Canada's Intercounty Baseball League (IBL) as the first woman to play professional men's baseball in Canada.

Sato also grew up playing baseball alongside or against boys — but longed for a career on the mound even when she played girls basketball in middle school.

Now, she's a special advisor to the WPBL and was featured in the baseball documentary "See Her Be Her," which chronicled the paths of seven female baseball players from around the world.

Alli Schroder, right-handed pitcher

Schroder, a right-handed pitcher, has played for Canada's national team since 2018. She debuted for the team at 16, helping Canada win bronze in the 2018 World Cup.

In 2021, Schroder became the first woman to play in the Canadian Collegiate Baseball Conference at Vancouver Island University.

She also works grueling two-week stretches fighting major wildfires. From her career as a firefighter, she deals with chronically sore shoulders and knees that could shorten her playing career, and the fingers on her non-throwing, left hand were injured to the point that she once worried whether she could even swing a bat.

"There's a lot more at stake on the fire line than there is in a big game," Schroder told the AP last year, "and I think that's something that I've really been able to use to calm myself down on the baseball field in big situations."

Kylee Lahners, third base

Lahners played softball at the University of Washington from 2012 to 2015, helping the Huskies reach third place in the 2013 Women's College World Series and finishing her college career fourth in school history in home runs and walks.

Now 32, Lahners has played third base for the U.S. national team since 2018 and was a part of the squad's silver-medal run in the World Cup last year.

Bigotry Crushed An All-Black Little League's Dreams

By Chris Lamb

The Conversation

John Rivers, John Bailey, David Middleton, Leroy Major and Buck Godfrey – all teammates from the 1955 Cannon Street YMCA Little League All-Star team – left Charleston, South Carolina, on a bus on Aug. 18, 2025.

After a stop at the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York, for a couple days – where their story is included in an exhibit on Black baseball that opened in 2024 – they headed to Williamsport, Pennsylvania.

There, they were recognized before the Little League World Series championship game on August 24, 2025 – 70 years after the players, then 11 and 12 years old, watched the championship game from the bleachers, wondering why they weren't on the field living out their own dreams instead of watching other boys live out theirs.

When the Cannon Street team registered for a baseball tournament in Charleston in July 1955, it put the team and the forces of integration on a collision course with segregation, bigotry and the Southern way of life.

White teams refused to take the field with the Cannon Street team, who represented the first Black Little League in South Carolina. The team won two tournaments by forfeit. They were supposed to then go to a regional tournament in Rome, Georgia, where, if they won, they'd advance to the Little League World Series.

But Little League officials ruled the team ineligible for the regional tournament because it had advanced by winning on forfeit and not on the field, as the rules stipulated.

A 4-team Black league is born

The Civil Rights Movement is often told in terms of court decisions, bus boycotts and racist demagogues. It's rarely told from the point of view of children, who suffered in ways that left physical and emotional scars.

When I was a journalism professor at the College of Charleston, I learned how the presence of a single Black all-star team was enough to cause one of the biggest crises in Little League history. In 2022, I wrote the book "Stolen Dreams: The 1955 Cannon Street All-Stars and Little League Baseball's Civil War."

The team's story begins in 1953. Robert Morrison, president of the Cannon Street YMCA, petitioned Little League Baseball to create a league for Black teams, and Little League Baseball granted the charter. Dozens of Black 11- and 12-year-old boys were selected for the four-team league before the 1954 season.

They played on a diamond of grass and gravel at Harmon Field in Charleston, a city with a long history of racial strife. In 1861, the Civil War began in Charleston harbor, where hundreds of thousands of slaves had been brought to the U.S. from the 1600s to the 1800s. The field also wasn't far from Emanuel AME church, where nine Black parishioners were murdered during a prayer meeting in 2015.

Little League Baseball barred first-year leagues from the postseason tournaments. At some point during the 1955 season, the best players were selected for the league's All-Star team. Cannon Street YMCA officials then registered the team for the Charleston city tournament, which included all-star teams from the city's all-white leagues.

Little League Baseball officially prohibited racial discrimination. But in South Carolina, racial discrimination was still legal.

Dixie fights back

The U.S. Supreme Court had ruled a year earlier that segregation in schools was unconstitutional in the landmark Brown v. Board of Education decision, paving the way for racial integration.

Few states resisted integration as fiercely as South Carolina, and no politician fought harder against racial equality than the state's junior U.S. senator, Strom Thurmond.

So when the Cannon Street YMCA All-Stars registered for Charleston's citywide tournament in July 1955, all the white teams withdrew. The Cannon Street team won by forfeit and advanced to the state tournament.

Danny Jones, the state's director of Little League Baseball, petitioned the organization to create a segregated state tournament. Little League Baseball's president, Peter McGovern, denied Jones' request. He said that any team that refused to play the Cannon Street team would be banned from the organization.

Thurmond let it be known to Jones that an integrated tournament could not be permitted. In the end, Jones urged all the white teams to withdraw from the state tournament. He then resigned from Little League Baseball, created the Little Boys League and wrote the league's charter, which prohibited Black players.

The Little Boys League – which was rebranded as Dixie Youth Baseball – soon replaced Little League in other Southern states; within six years, there were 390 such leagues spanning most of the former Confederacy. It would be decades before Little League Baseball returned to South Carolina.

Having won the South Carolina tournament by forfeit, the Cannon Street YMCA All-Stars prepared for the regional tournament in Rome, Georgia, where the state's governor, Marvin Griffin, objected to integration. If youth baseball could be integrated, so, too, could schools, swimming pools and municipal parks, he said.

Let them play!

Little League rules said that teams could advance only by playing and winning, so the Cannon Street's state championship was ruled invalid because it had come by forfeit.

McGovern decided against making an exception for the Cannon Street YMCA All-Stars.

Most white-owned newspapers, whether in the South or North, had long stayed silent on the topic of racial discrimination. But the story of the Cannon Street All-Stars broke through. Editors and reporters may have wanted to avoid the topic of racism, but boys being denied the opportunity to play in a baseball tournament was too objectionable to ignore.

On July 31, 1955, New York Daily News columnist Dick Young asked Brooklyn Dodgers star Jackie Robinson, who had broken Major League Baseball's color barrier eight years earlier, about the white teams that had quit the tournament rather than play against a Black team.

"How stupid can they be?" Robinson said. "I had to laugh when I read the story."

Perhaps pressured by criticism, McGovern, Little League's president, invited the team to be Little League's guests for the championship game. So the team boarded a bus for Williamsport. They arrived the night before the championship game, which pitted Morrisville, Pennsylvania, against Delaware Township, New Jersey, an integrated team.

The Cannon Street YMCA All-Stars and their coaches were introduced before the game, and the players recall hearing a loud voice from the bleachers.

"Let them play!" it boomed.

Others in the crowd joined in, the players said.

"Let them play! Let them play!"

John Rivers, who played second base for the team, told me he can still "hear it now."

After their brief moment on the field, the Cannon Street All-Stars returned to their seats and watched other boys live out their dreams. A photograph of the team in the stands reveals the disappointment on their faces.

Annie Wealthy Holland To Be Featured On NC Highway Sign

An influential North Carolina educator soon will be recognized with a North Carolina Highway Historical Marker. The N.C. Historical Marker Program is part of the N.C. Department of Natural and Cultural Resources.

The marker commemorating the life and accomplishments of Annie Wealthy Holland will be unveiled Saturday, Sept. 6 at 1 p.m., at the T.S. Cooper Elementary School (237 NC Highway 32, Sunbury, N.C.)

Holland, born in Virginia in 1871 and who attended Hampton Institute, was licensed as a teacher. She became a Jeanes Fund instructor in Gates County in 1911, supported by the Negro Rural School Fund of the Anna T. Jeanes Foundation. Holland supervised education in 22 rural Gates County schools and helped establish agriculture clubs in those communities.

ANNIE WEALTHY HOLLAND

North Carolina had more Jeanes teachers than any other state in 1915 and it was then that Holland became the Jeanes Fund's state demonstration agent. In that role, she was essentially the state supervisor of the elementary schools for African American students. When North Carolina established the Division of Negro Education in 1921, Holland became the division's State Supervisor of Negro Elementary Schools.

Holland founded the first parent-teacher association for African Americans which held its first meeting in Raleigh at Shaw University in 1928. The association came to be known as the North Carolina Congress of Colored Parents and Teachers.

She died in 1934 during a speaking engagement to a group of teachers in Louisburg, N.C., and was buried in Franklin, Va. At the 10th annual meeting of the North Carolina Congress of Colored Parents and Teachers, attendees planted a tree at Shaw University in her memory.

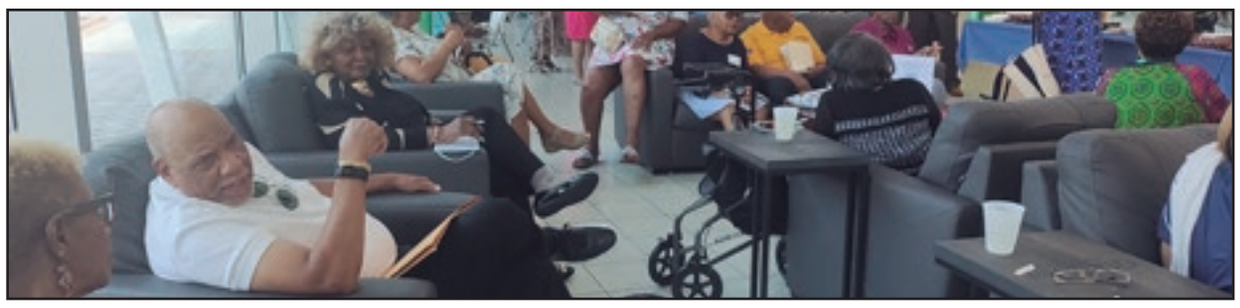
St. Monica's School Social Held By Alumni

The St. Monica's School Social held Sunday, Aug. 24th from 2:00-4:00 p.m. at Cardinal gibbons High School saw nearly 70 schoolmates turn out share school memorabilia that can help start an archive. Marion Jervay, Susan Leigh, and Hazel Sanders coordinated the event, which also featured an enjoyable fellowship session for schoolmates.

The Catholic Diocese of Raleigh built St. Monica's for African American students in 1930, when all city schools were still segregated. The building, which still stands at the 15 N. Tarboro Street, housed eight elementary grades in four classrooms. The school thrived, as many saw St. Monica's as a better educational option that the public schools for African Americans. In the 1950s, the Diocese integrated its facilities and African American students could attend Sacred Heart Cathedral.

Although St. Monica's closed its doors in 1967, the turnout on Sunday indicated that interest and support of its legacy is alive and well. Ms. Vicki Hewitt, who is the coordinator of the next St. Monica School Social set for Aug. 30, 2026 at St. Joseph Parish, called for volunteers to keep the rich legacy of St. Monica's School, and its attendees going strong. She can be emailed at: toriew61@gmail.com.

Marion Jervay gets the program underway at the recent St. Monica School Social. The event was well attended, and organizers are already looking forward to next year.



AN EVENING TO REMEMBER— Nearly 200 guests filled the ballroom at the North Raleigh HIlton on Saturday, Aug. 23rd for the gala celebration of Barbara adn Lemuel Hinton's 45th Wedding Anniversary and Day Party. *Photos By Staff & Tony Ferrell*

Community

Raleigh Breaks Ground On Affordable Housing Community

By Jordan Meadows
Staff Writer

On Monday, the Raleigh Area Land Trust (RALT), in partnership with Raleigh Raised Development and the City of Raleigh, officially broke ground on the Cottages of Idlewild, the city's first permanently affordable cottage court community. Located in the historically Black neighborhood of Idlewild—the first area in Raleigh where formerly enslaved people could own land—the project will offer 18 homes to individuals and families earning between 30% to 80% of the area's median income.

The driving force behind this landmark development is LeVelle Moton, co-founder of Raleigh Raised Development and head men's basketball coach at North Carolina Central University.

"This is more personal for me than it is business," Moton said. "The thing I always wanted to do is just make it out here to come back and give back and provide opportunities because I know there are challenging situations."

He grew up in Idlewild, raised by his grandmother in a neighborhood plagued by poverty and drugs in the 1980s. Across the street from the new development is LeVelle Moton Park, a place he wasn't even allowed to go as a child due to safety concerns.

The Cottages of Idlewild is built on 1.7 acres of city-owned land on East Lane Street. The project includes 14 homeownership units priced around $145,000, and 4 rental apartments with rents starting as low as $519/month. The project is expected to take 16 months to complete.

It's being developed under the Community Land Trust model, which ensures permanent affordability by allowing homeowners to purchase the structure while leasing the land through a renewable, inheritable 99-year lease. This model reduces both upfront and long-term costs. Property taxes are assessed only on the home, and resale prices are restricted to preserve affordability for future generations.

"People can gain and profit equity in these homes," said Moton. "If they move, they can take some of the equity out and create generational wealth for their families in the same capacity that it's been created for people that didn't look like us or people who weren't from these communities."

Raleigh is currently facing what city leaders describe as an "urgent housing affordability and homelessness crisis." Wake County alone has an estimated shortage of 66,000 affordable units. The median home price in Wake County was $489,450 in July, making the $145,000 homes in Idlewild significantly more accessible to working-class families.

Raleigh Mayor Janet Cowell applauded the effort and pointed to the development as a potential blueprint for future projects.

LeVelle Moton (center) turns dirt on site of future Cottages of Idlewild. (Photo by Greg Childress/NC Newsline)

"This is an innovative approach," she said. "I respect this is a blueprint and maybe now we can roll faster now that we've done one, but for me it's the challenge of saying how do we do this more efficiently for more units."

For Moton, the project is the embodiment of his life's mission—to honor the people who helped him survive, to provide a future for children growing up like he did, and to challenge what it means to succeed. The Cottages of Idlewild is part of a broader vision to keep longtime residents in their neighborhoods as gentrification drives prices up and families out.

"It's 18 units ... It's certainly just the tip of the iceberg, and in no way is this savior of the Raleigh community," Moton said. "Instead of them having to be displaced and go to Knightdale or Wake Forest or surrounding areas, they can remain in the neighborhood that they grew up in."

The project is the result of years of effort. After the city agreed in 2021 to dedicate 1.2 acres of land for affordable housing, RALT and Raleigh Raised Development, alongside Haven Design Build, secured $8.3 million in funding. The groups will partner with DHIC Homeownership Center to help identify first-time homebuyers, ensuring that the homes go to those who need them most.

RALT, founded in 2019, plans to have 40 homes under its land trust model by next year and reach 100 by 2028.

NEAR MISS AT CARLIE C'S IGA: A CALL FOR RESPONSIBLE GUN OWNERSHIP

Dunn, NC – A recent incident at a local grocery store has ignited concerns about the implications of North Carolina's permitless carry law and the importance of responsible firearm handling. On Sunday, August 16th, at approximately 12:15PM, a startling event unfolded at the Carlie C's grocery store at the East Cumberland location in Dunn, North Carolina.

According to a witness, a loud bang sound echoed through the store, described as "a sledgehammer hitting the ground." Both the witness and the store manager turned to see a 6-foot-2, 250-pound white male retrieving a gun from the floor near the cash register, his groceries clutched in his other hand. The man quickly checked out and left the store.

This incident, while seemingly minor, has resonated deeply within the community. As the witness, who wished to remain anonymous, stated, "The reason I thought it was necessary to tell the story is because North Carolina's General Assembly has passed a bill that allows for a permitless carry in the state of North Carolina." The new law, which removes the requirement for a permit to carry a concealed handgun, has been a subject of ongoing debate. Proponents argue it upholds Second Amendment rights, while opponents raise concerns about public safety and the potential for increased accidental discharges or misuse of firearms.

The witness emphasized the distinction between responsible gun owners and those who demonstrate a lack of caution: "This is important because there are people handling firearms that are not demonstrating the capability of responsibility for such dangerous weapons. There are plenty of people carrying firearms in our state who handle them with care, responsibility, and the respect that a gun deserves."

The witness drew a clear line regarding the recent incident: "A person who is dropping a firearm on the ground as if it were a bag of chips is not responsible enough to handle a firearm, especially not in public." The discomfort caused by the incident was palpable among shoppers. "Many people in the store were disturbed by this incident," the witness recounted. Discussions in other parts of the community further confirm the impact and discomfort felt by many, beyond just the immediate observers.

School Supply Drive Gives Wake Teachers Some Relief From Rising Cost

By Ahmed Jallow
NC Newsline

Justin Lane teaches agriculture electives at Carnage Magnet Middle School in Wake County, where students plant, measure and diagram their own gardens. That means his classroom needs a diverse toolkit. Scissors to trim plants, construction paper to draw plants, identifying rulers to measure growth, and a lot of sharpies because they get lost easily.

On Thursday afternoon, Lane was among almost a dozen teachers attending the Wake Ed Partnership's "Tools4Schools" supply drive to stock up on school supplies.

"Instead of having parents do a wish list and putting extra weight on families, this is just a super sweet gift for both the teachers and the kids," Lane said. "This is a treasure."

The Wake Ed Partnership, a Wake County nonprofit which advocates for improving public education, has distributed $1.6 million worth of supplies over the past two and a half years through its "Tools4Schools" program. It has more than 100 collection points, including Staples stores and YMCAs and also uses Amazon wish lists to collect donations.

Teachers at a WakeEd Partnership event Aug. 21, 2025: (Photo by Ahmed Jallow/NCNewsline)

In North Carolina, teachers now spend an average of $1,632 a year out of pocket on classroom supplies — the second-highest figure in the nation, according to a recent survey. That's well above the national average of $1,021.

And it's an amount that could increase this year as inflation and tariffs are driving up the prices of school supplies. An analysis by Groundwork Collaborative and The Century Foundation found that typical first-day school supplies are up 7.3%, nearly three times the rate of inflation. Individual items such as index cards have surged by more than 40%, while binders and folders are up by about 13%.

Tariffs on goods from China, which is a major source of school supplies, are a primary reason behind the spike. The added costs are putting pressure not just on teachers but also on families doing back-to-school shopping.

"If teachers don't have what they need, they can't teach, and students don't have what they need," said Keith Poston, president of WakeEd Partnership. "Anything we can do to provide them with tangible things is also a way of saying thank you. It's an appreciation thing."

Poston said that while the effort helps in the short term, it doesn't replace the need for public funding. "We recognize that the private sector and nonprofits can't take the place of sustained, significant investment," he said. "Our public schools have been underfunded for decades, and things are only getting worse."

This school year marks Jess Holloway's fifth year teaching at East Millbrook Magnet Middle School. Holloway said teachers paying for classroom supplies has become so routine that it's simply expected.

"I feel like it's so normalized that most people don't throw a fuss about it, because that's just been the standard," Holloway said. "Teachers buy their own supplies. Teachers work outside of our contracted work hours." She said this was her first time attending a supply drive, describing it as a critical resource with her next paycheck still weeks away.

"It does feel good to walk in and have what I need. It shows the community values what we do," she said.

City and state leaders joined federal officials at the ribbon-cutting ceremony for Rocky Mount's new Fire Station 2.

NORTH CAROLINIANS ARE FINDING OUT THEY ARE NO LONGER IN DEBT TO HOSPITALS

RALEIGH, N.C. – SECU Foundation recently announced a $300,000 grant to Legal Aid of NC (LANC). The funding will support the software development and statewide implementation of its Innovation Lab, helping to bridge the rural-urban divide for access to legal services in rural North Carolina communities.

Since 2001, LANC has provided free, high-quality legal services to low-income individuals in civil matters. According to LANC, one-third of North Carolina counties are considered legal deserts, or having fewer than one attorney per 1,000 residents. In 2023, LANC managed over 25,000 cases and assisted more than 65,000 individuals in understanding their legal rights.

With the Innovation Lab, LANC will collaborate with community partners, law schools, and tech experts to improve access to justice for rural North Carolinians. LANC will use rural hubs and mobile units to help individuals overcome barriers to legal resources. The first rural hub will serve Robeson, Hoke, Scotland, and Bladen counties. The shift to more virtual legal assistance is expected to impact up to 30,000 low-income individuals.

"We are so pleased to support Legal Aid of NC as they connect people with integral legal services they may not have access to otherwise," said SECU Foundation Board Vice Chair Mona Moon. "For over 20 years, LANC has worked tirelessly to expand legal access to North Carolina communities, specifically for people without the means to pursue these services. Like SECU Foundation, LANC is grounded in the philosophy of People Helping People®."

"Thanks to the SECU Foundation's visionary support, Legal Aid of North Carolina's Innovation Lab is reaching further into rural communities and harnessing technology to make legal help more accessible than ever," said LANC Chief Innovation Officer Scheree Gilchrist. "We are grateful for this investment in creating sustainable, equitable solutions that ensure that our neighbors facing a difficult hardship in housing, safety, employment, and other basic needs have access to an attorney, regardless of their circumstances."

Ribbon Cut On Garner VA Clinic, Now Largest Outpatient Facility

By Jordan Meadows
Staff Writer

Veterans, and community members gathered on August 20th at a ribbon cutting event in Garner where the Durham Veterans Affairs Health Care System officially opened its newest and largest outpatient facility—the Garner VA Clinic, a state-of-the-art center located on Benson Road.

The new facility is set to serve more than 30,000 veterans across 27 counties in Central and Eastern North Carolina, including Wake County—home to one of the state's highest veteran populations—and Johnston County, one of the fastest-growing counties in North Carolina.

Ground was broken on the project in March 2023, and just over two years later, the facility is preparing to welcome its first patients on Tuesday, July 29, 2025.

"This facility here is over 240,000 square feet," said Anthony Avery,

Wake County Outpatient Clinic Administrator for the Durham VA Health Care System. "It will have various clinics here—about 23 different types of services. In our area, we already have smaller clinics, and their capacities are pretty full."

Currently, the Durham VA Health Care System maintains a 70% penetration rate, meaning that 30% of eligible veterans are not yet enrolled in VA services. Officials hope this new facility will significantly reduce barriers to care.

The Garner VA Clinic will initially offer Primary Care, Mental Health services, and limited outpatient lab services, with plans for expanded services as the facility becomes fully operational. For enrolled veterans, eligibility to receive care at the new clinic is automatic. Additionally, VA transportation services may be available based on individual eligibility criteria.

The event drew a notable roster of attendees from government and military affairs, including Congressman Brad Knott NC-13, Congresswoman Deborah Ross, NC-2, Secretary Jocelyn Mitnaul Mallette of the North Carolina Department of Military & Veterans Affairs, and Mayor of Garner Buddy Gupton.

North Carolina is home to over 600,000 veterans, a number that continues to grow—especially in the central and eastern parts of the state. Wake County, already the fastest-growing county in the Durham VA's service area, underscores the urgency for expanded care infrastructure.

Church

Some Conservative Christians Argue Empathy Can Lead To Sin

WASHINGTON (AP) — Empathy is usually regarded as a virtue, a key to human decency and kindness. And yet, with increasing momentum, voices on the Christian right are preaching that it has become a vice.

For them, empathy is a cudgel for the left: It can manipulate caring people into accepting all manner of sins according to a conservative Christian perspective, including abortion access, LGBTQ+ rights, illegal immigration and certain views on social and racial justice.

"Empathy becomes toxic when it encourages you to affirm sin, validate lies or support destructive policies," said Allie Beth Stuckey, author of "Toxic Empathy: How Progressives Exploit Christian Compassion."

Stuckey, host of the popular podcast "Relatable," is one of two evangelicals who published books within the past year making Christian arguments against some forms of empathy.

The other is Joe Rigney, a professor and pastor who wrote "The Sin of Empathy: Compassion and its Counterfeits." It was published by Canon Press, an affiliate of Rigney's conservative denomination, which counts Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth among its members.

These anti-empathy arguments gained traction in the early months of President Donald Trump's second term, with his flurry of executive orders that critics denounced as lacking empathy.

As foreign aid stopped and more deportations began, Trump's then-adviser Elon Musk told podcaster Joe Rogan: "The fundamental weakness of Western civilization is empathy."

Even Vice President JD Vance, a Catholic convert, framed the idea in his own religious terms, invoking the concept of ordo amoris, or order of love. Within concentric circles of importance, he argued the immediate family comes first and the wider world last — an interpretation that then-Pope Francis rejected.

While their anti-empathy arguments have differences, Stuckey and Rigney have audiences that are firmly among Trump's Christian base.

"Could someone use my arguments to justify callous indifference to human suffering? Of course," Rigney said, countering that he still supports measured Christ-like compassion. "I think I've put enough qualifications."

Historian Susan Lanzoni traced a century of empathy's uses and definitions in her 2018 book "Empathy: A History." Though it's had its critics, she has never seen the aspirational term so derided as it is now.

It's been particularly jarring to watch Christians take down empathy, said Lanzoni, a graduate of Harvard Divinity School.

"That's the whole message of Jesus, right?"

Arguing empathy can be good — and bad

The word empathy appeared in English for the first time in 1908, taken from a German word, meaning "in-feeling."

Though the word is relatively new to English, the impulse behind it — to feel for or with another — is much older. It forms a core precept across many religions. "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you," reads a common version of the Golden Rule.

Stuckey admits Jesus is an empathetic figure. In her book, the Southern Baptist from Texas writes, "In a way, Jesus embodied empathy when he took on flesh, suffered the human experience, and bore the burden of our sins by enduring a gruesome death."

She's clear that empathy can be good. But she writes it has been co-opted "to convince people that the progressive position is exclusively the one of kindness and morality."

"If you really care about women, you'll support their right to choose," she writes of this progressive line of thinking. "If you really respect people, you'll use preferred pronouns. ... If you're really compassionate, you'll welcome the immigrant."

Rigney doesn't think empathy is inherently wrong, either. He finds fault with excessive or "untethered empathy" that's not tied to conservative biblical interpretations.

He has been talking publicly about these ideas since at least 2018, when he discussed the sin of empathy on camera with conservative Pastor Doug Wilson. Since 2023, Rigney has worked at Wilson's Idaho church and seminary, affiliated with the Communion of Reformed Evangelical Churches.

Rigney said initially he experienced pushback from "certain corners of evangelicalism, that at the time were very dialed into questions of the #MeToo movement and abuse or critical race theory, social justice kind of stuff."

This debate over empathy often devolves into arguments over word choices or semantics. Rigney prefers older terms like compassion, sympathy or even pity.

The Rev. Albert Mohler leads the flagship seminary of the Southern Baptist Convention, the largest U.S. Protestant denomination. He featured Rigney and Stuckey on his podcast this year and agrees with their empathy critiques.

Mohler prefers the word sympathy over empathy.

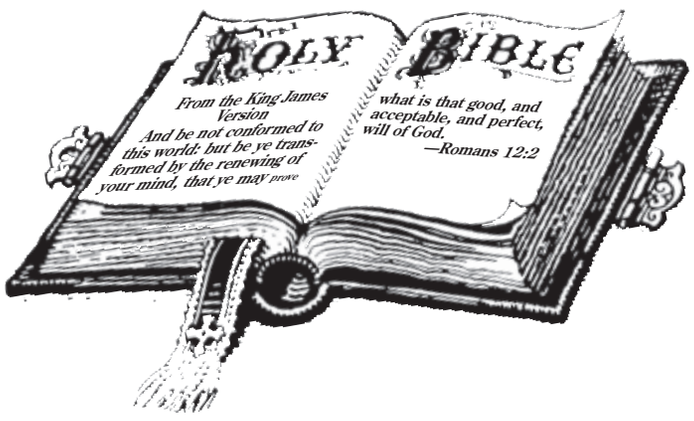
"There's no market so far as I know for empathy cards," he said. "There is a long-standing market for sympathy cards."

The role of race and gender in anti-empathy arguments

In 2014, Mohler did encourage his audience to have empathy. His words came after a white police of-

(See *EMPATHY* P. 9)

SERMON of the WEEK



"A SUREFIRE SOLUTION FOR SEEMINGLY UNSOLVABLE PROBLEMS"

Sermon by Pastor William Eli Ratcliff

The following is a sermon delivered at the 4th Ward Gospel Extravaganza at the A. J. Fletcher Opera Theatre downtown on August 24. Pastor "Billy" William Eli Ratcliff, accompanied by the Lincoln Park Male Chorus, represented one of the four churches in the 4th Ward.

First, I thank God, acknowledge this podium, and thank Octavia and the planning committee for honoring my grandfather, Bishop Eli Ratcliff, Sr. He may have been a janitor at Washington School in 4th Ward, but more importantly, he was the founder of the Lincoln Park Holiness Church—starting with just 4 or 5 faithful members.

Today, I want to share what he had—and what he passed on, and that was: "A Surefire Solution for Seemingly-Unsolvable Problems"

No. 1 - He Put God First, as shown in the documentary I executive-produced, "From the Sin of Slavery to Winning Souls for Christ," which was released in 2022 and produced by my friend and awesome Journalist Cash Michaels. Mother Clemetine Alston said my grandfather was "a big person and we Ratcliffs should be proud because we come from a great man." Others remembered that little wooden church—no paint, no piano, no drums—just hands, feet, and tambourines!!!

As a boy, I saw saints shouting so hard that dust filled the room. The church didn't have a vacuum cleaner, so back then, the Deacons had to sprinkle water on the carpet before they swept the floor to keep the dust down. (Some of y'all don't know anything about that.) One night, the dust was so thick around the altar that you could hardly see the people shouting. I can imagine that if Nebuchadnezzar had walked in, he might've said, "Behold, I see another one—and HE looks like the Son of God!"

My dad said that when he was a young boy, living in the 4th Ward, one night a preacher came to my grandfather's door, stepped in, and announced, "Some Deacons and I got together, and I'm going to be the Pastor of Lincoln Park." My dad said that my grandfather calmly sent the kids to their rooms, told his wife Ophelia to go to the bedroom and seconds later, he came out with that old shotgun, and said, "If you ever come to me again and tell me that you or anybody else is going to take over Lincoln Park, you're going to have to deal with me and this shotgun." My dad said that preacher left and they never saw him again!

Do I have any pastors here this evening? If you face a problem that seems unsolvable—don't try that! The statute of limitations has run out on my grandfather, and besides, he's in a better place. But I'm sure if you try what he did, Rico will pick you up, and Willie will house you. And that goes for me too. Talk about some affordable housing....

Despite facing numerous significant challenges as a Pastor at Lincoln Park and a janitor at Washington High School in the 4th Ward, he still left a lasting legacy!

No. 2 - He Put Faith into Action

William Arthur Ward said it best: "Believe while others are doubting. Plan while others are playing. Study while others are sleeping. Decide while others are delaying. Prepare while others are daydreaming. Begin while others are procrastinating. Work while others are wishing. Save while others are wasting. Listen while others are talking. Smile while others are frowning. Commend while others are criticizing. Persist while others are quitting." And let me add, Pray, while some are despitefully misusing you!

Assuredly, my friends, if we want to solve the unsolvable, I recommend that we follow the "boys in the hood"— and I'm not talking about men like LL Cool J, but men like M.M.L.J...Matthew...Mark...Luke... and John!

When people asked, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" God's answer was Jesus! And if God could bring good out of Nazareth, He can bring good out of 4th Ward, Walnut Terrace, or any so-called hood in Raleigh.

Is there anybody here who can say, "If it had not been for the Lord on my side, where would I be?" Don't be ashamed of where you came from—be grateful. If God brought you out, He can bring somebody else out. I'm glad I still have some hood in me because it won't let me forget where I came from. So, don't worry about what people think or say.

In this present world today, many are worrying about woke policies that are trying to wipe out the black history that tells the TRUE STORY; and yes, we really do need to fight those actions, but I say, do it in the Name of the Lord.

Furthermore, my grandfather had his own woke policies, practices, and procedures too: like, "I WOKE UP this morning with my mind stayed on Jesus.

How many here today from the 4th Ward can say, this morning when I rose, I didn't have any doubt? The Lord, not the president, but the Lord will take care of me. God is not like man that he should tell a lie, but God always keeps His PROMISES!

God took care of my grandfather, my grandmother, my Daddy, and He's still taking care of my Mama and my family and church family—and He will take care of you! So, let's face all of our seemingly unsolvable problems with faith, put God first, and leave a legacy worth passing down. And as we press on, no matter who you are or where you come from, you can still say, "If I can help somebody as I travel along, if I can cheer somebody with a word or song, THEN MY LIVING SHALL NOT and WILL NOT BE IN vain!"

Please visit Lincoln Park's website at https://www.lincolnparkchurch.com/ for sermons and other information regarding our ministry and community service.

Practical Biblical Principles

ONE MORE NIGHT WITH THE FROGS

Read: Exodus 8:1-7

By John L. Caldwell, Pastor

New Jerusalem Baptist Cathedral

The full-time work of the enemy is to harden the hearts of God's people. This becomes easy work for the devil when individuals cling to their own worldly agenda. When one is self-centered and believes he/she doesn't have to be accountable to anyone. Like in communism there is no fear of God. Hard hearted people do not fear the God of heaven. Yet the Scripture teaches," the Fear of God is the beginning of wisdom (Psalm 111:10; Proverbs 1:7).

Moses under God's instruction was trying to persuade Pharaoh to set His people free from Egyptian slavery. For more than 400 hundred years God's future nation was enslaved under the task masters of Egypt making mud bricks and building great buildings for the Pharaoh. Thus, Pharaoh built his Egyptian kingdom on the backs of the Jewish slaves and had no desire to stop.

God finally heard the cry from His enslaved people after four hundred years. In God's time this is less than a half of day. We, as God's children, must never get frustrated at God's timeline which is not the same as our own. If you were to stand back and look at the situation you will be able to see God gathering all of His children into one place, even though enslaved. This story of the Exodus is Israel's birth certificate detailing the birth of a nation, God's chosen people. This all happened as God was beginning to fulfill His promised to His servant, Abraham (Genesis 17:1-2).

We move forward now to that sacred moment when God called Moses from the burning bush in the middle of the Midian desert in Saudi Arabia. Having been away from Egypt for more than forty years having murdered one of the Pharaoh's main men. Moses is now under God's orders to confront the Pharaoh about keeping His people in slavery. "Let My people Go!" was Moses' call to Pharaoh. Pharaoh refused to do so because the Hebrews were like gold in his hands and he, Pharaoh, was not about to let God's people go.

It is true today, as it has always been, that is when we have latched on to some worldly good, treasure, or habit which gives us great joy and pleasure, and which makes our ego stand up and advertise we are the greatest, we are not about to readily give up these pleasures to please anybody.

Egypt worshipped as many as 80 different gods, Pharaoh considered himself above all of them. This is one of the major factors which hardened Pharaoh's heart against Moses and his God. Pharaoh hardened his own heart. God hardened Pharaoh's heart as well. When a man sets himself against God, even God's mercies result in further hardening. Church, do you have anything in your life which will cause you to harden your heart against the God of heaven? Do you not know that our arms are too short to box with God according to James Weldon Johnson's book of poems called "God's Trombone." Yet there are many who would dare box with Almighty God. This is not being smart, but foolish.

The frog was a goddess worshipped in Egypt. Her name was Heka (Heqet) who is connected to childbirth. God did not challenge all of Egypt's major gods in this confrontation. God could have plagued Egypt with lions, or bears, or wolves, or birds of prey, but He chose to do it with these despicable creatures, the frog. God initially used the small pesty insects from the river to pester Pharaoh. Being that Pharaoh went down to the Nile, not to drink, but to worship and pay homage to the river god. Being that the frog goddess, Heka, represented childbirth, God is toying with Pharaoh about his order to kill any male child of the Hebrews.

The frog plague was the second plague put on Pharaoh. The first plague was that of blood which tainted the river Nile. Here we may see blood as representing the death of the Hebrew's male child which were slain.

Now comes the plague of the slimy, muddy frogs which covered every item in the Egyptian household because of Pharaoh refusal to let God's people go (Exodus 8:3). Can you imagine frogs in your home, bed, stove, bathroom, in your food and even upon you. Can you imagine yourself sleeping with frogs? All of Egypt, with the exception of the Hebrews, were plagued with frogs all over. While no one wants to kiss a frog but under selfish and controlling circumstances one will choose to sleep with frogs.

What is it in your life which will give you cause, to sleep with slimy frogs' night after night, rather than give in to God? We see this "sleeping with the frogs" being played out today in Washinton, DC. The majority of today's congress prefers the discomfort of sleeping with the slimy frogs, so to speak. This they are willing to do as long as they can, in order to hold onto political power which is not sustainable. This is what Pharaoh was aiming to do in his day.

What is it in this world which will cause one to go against God, but instead find it more preferable, or advantageous to sleep with frogs. The old folks would call this "Cutting of one's nose to spite one's face." This has to be one of the worse experiences in one's life, sleeping with the frogs, that is. We speak here, of the physical and spiritual aspect of one's life. The slimy and muddy frog represents one ego as it goes against God.

Under no circumstances are we to assume God is mad at Pharaoh. God was only trying to impress upon Pharaoh that He is the "only" God. God knows that Pharaoh, or anybody for that matter, could never defeat Him. It is easier on one's soul when one gives in to God and be accountable to Him. Pharaoh continued to believe that he was greater than the frog goddess and continued to harden his own heart. Pharaoh gave in for a little while but changed his mind and went back sleeping with the frogs when he saw what he was about to lose, if he did let the Hebrews go. Will you do the same?

Editorial Policy

Unsigned editorials in this space are the opinion of the newspaper. All other opinion pieces, including those from regular columnists, are the opinion of the writers themselves. The Carolinian strives to provide provocative commentary that is likely to spur thoughtful debate, regardless of whether we agree with it.

Editorials

America, the Smithsonian, and Slavery

Exhibits discussing slavery and the Founding Fathers' owning slaves are seen at the President's House on August 9, 2025 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. MATTHEW HATCHER

By Kevin Powell

Langston Hughes, my favorite writer, wrote a poem in 1926, when he was 25 years old. It declared, with a mix of substantial sadness and delicate defiance, "I, too, am America."

Born in the long twilight of American slavery, Hughes produced this piece because he lived through lynchings of Black bodies, racial segregation, the destruction of Black communities in places like Tulsa, Oklahoma, and the erasure of Black history, Black culture, and the souls of Black folks, except as horrific stereotypes, in every aspect of American society.

I am a direct beneficiary of the American civil rights movements of the 1950s and 1960s, and was able to attend schools and live in neighborhoods with individuals of various identities—something my mother, born during the same chapters of Jim Crow as Langston, could never have imagined. Even as a straight-A student from kindergarten through 12th grade, all I learned about our nation's past was war tales, explorations, and a few innovations.

As for the enslavement of my African ancestors, who literally built the economic infrastructure of America with forced, free labor, from 1619 to 1865—246 years—this section of the American journey was reduced to mere paragraphs. Nor was it ever referred to as the grave, global miscarriage of justice that it was, but simply "the peculiar institution."

I knew I wanted to be a writer since I was a child, because I had discovered Ernest Hemingway in a library my single mother made me visit, though she neither read nor owned any books herself, save the Bible.

But I had no clue of Langston Hughes, of any Black writers, of any meaningful account of the American experiment that included Blacks, until a civil rights-era program, created by a wealthy White Republican state assemblyman named Tom Kean, made it possible for me to attend Rutgers University, despite being the heir to generations of poverty, dating back, yes, to slavery.

It was at Rutgers, because of its Africana Studies Department, and later because of major cultural institutions, like the Schomburg in Harlem, like the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C., that a different world was presented to me. I was finally able to see, feel, and hear myself, in that history. I would argue that that new education saved my life. And it is the reason I became a writer, like Langston.

That is why I say, no, it is no shame to share the whole chronicle of America, inclusive of everyone, and each critical moment. Shame is when we claim to be a democracy, ignoring the truth of our shared history. The story of African Americans is not a perpetual sorrow song. It is the story of a miracle people, a hopeful people who, in spite of slavery and then another 100 years of legalized racism, managed to serve in every single war this country has fought, performed gallantly in multiple Olympics, and has gifted America everything from music to food to language to dance to sports to countless inventions to freedom marches for all. Notwithstanding our being the descendants of enslaved people.

Because, in point of fact, my ancestors were stripped of their names, cultures, and languages; told they were ugly, inferior, and subhuman; and were subjected to a plethora of cruelties on those plantations, like rapes and mutilations, both in my mother's home state of South Carolina and my home state of New Jersey. That we survived; that I come from a mother with an eighth-grade education and a grandmother who could not read or write; that we are a people who inherited centuries of traumas, which still manifest today in how we even talk about ourselves, our hair, our skin color; says, plainly, how devastating slavery was to my people, to my nation. Because I, too, sing America.

My wife and I first visited the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture a couple years back. We marveled at how the museum does not begin with slavery but instead ancient Africa, who we were before being stolen and brought to the Americas, be it what is now the United States, the West Indies, or Latin America. It is a study in resiliency, and how, regardless of what we've endured, we have rarely treated others as we have been treated. As a matter of fact, there are few Americans as patriotic and loyal as Black people on these shores, in spite of how we've been continually wounded, from slavery to Selma, from Emmett Till to Breonna Taylor.

Attempting to minimize or eliminate conversations about slavery also minimizes the poetry, music, food, language, and customs of Black people in America. This comes as no surprise to those of us who are Black in this first quarter of the 21st century. We have seen bans on Black books, attacks on Black-elected officials, Black history sidelined at schools, and, yes, Black people like George Floyd scream for their mothers and breathe their final breath, only because of who they are.

This is not just about displays in the Smithsonian. America will never move forward, nor heal, as a society of diverse people with diverse stories, if any of its people are being silenced, ignored, purely because some with power are hateful of whole truths.

Kevin Powell is a Grammy-nominated poet, filmmaker, and author of 16 books.

DONALD AGAINST BLACK WOMEN

I've heard it said: If you pray, don't worry, and if you worry, don't pray. I have a slightly different take on it. I say for sure, if you pray, don't worry, but I also believe that if you worry, still pray. It sounds contradictory, doesn't it? I live with many contradictions, so bear with me as I explain.

I don't worry because I've learned not to. Yes, I have concerns, but not worry. For me, there's a difference. If you live in this world and have no concerns, you must be superhuman or totally divine. Maybe I'm not. I'm a divine soul encased in an imperfect body living in an imperfect world with other imperfect people and that makes me concerned. How else can I recognize what is right if I don't also see what is wrong?

If you know me, shoot me a text. I promise I'll listen. When I read or hear of someone taking the lives of others or themselves, I am concerned. When I hear that someone has received a terminal diagnosis or faces a long struggle toward restored health, I am concerned. It makes me think and question what I can do to help create a world where people have peace of mind and hope.

To me, worry is different. Someone once said worrying is like rocking in a rocking chair and thinking that if you rock hard or fast enough, you'll get somewhere. The analogy is perfect. You can think over something bothering you again and again, twist it around in your head until you have a headache, imagine the worst, and all you end up with is a stomachache or backache. There is a body-mind connection; stress and depression hurt, and your body listens to the voice of fear. Worry says, "Okay, you want a problem? I'll give you one."

For this reason, I know worrying doesn't solve problems, it causes them. Praying solves problems either by giving you awareness, solutions, or by placing the problem in the hands of the man who walked on water, the God who created this world. That's why you keep praying no matter what. If the one true God isn't sitting on His throne shaking His head in worry, why should you? Do not forget who the God in you is, and do not try to replicate a God who isn't worried.

This week there's been another attack on women, especially Black women. While some claim Black women love certain leaders, we know better. Maybe a few have called and thanked him for what he's doing in D.C., but we know the truth. We have fathers, brothers, uncles, and sons. We don't want anyone spreading violence into our streets, endangering our husbands, boyfriends, and neighbors. We are loyal to our race and our people, and only a few misguided melanated individuals fall for those lies. We know he doesn't respect Black people, and he certainly does not respect Black women.

We are concerned about what he's doing, but we are not worried or afraid. We've been on this imperfect planet too long to turn back now. We've experienced the past, not just read about it, and we've taught it to those coming behind us. You may know some Black woman who is attracted to or admires him, but they are few and far between and they are misled. We are the DNA of the first woman created, and she was a warrior, a truth teller, and a lover of family, community, and the world.

She has survived and still exists in all spheres. She is as radiant as the night that covers her and has an incomparable soul. She is Rosa Parks sitting. She is Fannie Lou Hamer standing. She is Harriet Tubman freeing slaves and spying. She is Sojourner Truth speaking out. She is Barbara Jordan in Texas passing the baton to Nicole Collier. She is Marlee Evans passing survival skills to Coretta Scott King and Betty Shabazz, and then on to Rev. Bernice King. She is Maxine Waters speaking through Jasmine Crockett and Kamala Harris. She is Kathleen Cleaver and Winnie Mandela. She is Michelle Obama and Maya Angelou.

She is my daughter, my mother, my grandmothers, my teachers, my friends. She is me, and she is you. She is the embodiment of all women who know they have a divine purpose for being here.

So dear brother Trump, know this: we see what you're doing. We see Sister James in New York. We see how you tried to weasel out from under the thumb of Sister Willis and tried to destroy her character. But remember, we are the mothers of the Civil Rights Movement. It was our children, the Trayvon Martins, the Martin Luther Kings, the Medgar Evers, the Breonna Taylors, whose lives were stolen by rhetoric like yours. We are concerned, but we are not worried. God is on our side, and you will not overcome. You don't want to mess with an army of Black women.

AFRICAN PRIDE

Continued from page 1

ernments and institutions from both sides of the Atlantic have been meeting to forge economic ties.

Africa has had a long presence in the Caribbean.

A significant part of the islands' population descended from enslaved West and Central Africans, who were forcibly transported to the Caribbean by European merchants in the 17th and 18th Centuries.

Slavery was abolished in much of the Caribbean during the 1800s, while independence from European powers came the following century.

The descendants of enslaved people retained some African customs, but largely developed their own standalone cultures, which differ from island to island.

In the past, there have been major campaigns to encourage African pride, as Dorbrene O'Marde, who runs the Antigua and Barbuda Reparations Support Commission, says.

"It was particularly strong in the 1930s or so, and then again in the 1960s - we saw a major outpouring in sync with the [American] black power movement during that period," he says, talking to the BBC on the island of Antigua.

Mr O'Marde believes the Caribbean is witnessing a renewed, more promising version of such "pan-Africanism" (a term used to describe the idea that people of African descent should be unified).

"It has widened beyond psychological and cultural themes and we are now talking in broader economic terms, such as stronger transportation links between the Caribbean and Africa," he says.

"We are in a different phase now of pan-Africanism – one that's not going to wane like before."

One thing that separates this wave of African pride from the ones that came before is social media.

Dennis Howard, an entertainment and cultural enterprise lecturer at the University of the West Indies, says a "significant" amount of Jamaicans are connecting with Africa through platforms such as TikTok.

"People are learning more about black history beyond slavery," he tells the BBC from his home in the Jamaican capital, Kingston.

Mr Howard also points to the global rise of Afrobeats, a musical genre from Nigeria and Ghana.

EMPATHY

Continued from page 8

ficer killed Michael Brown, a Black teenager in Ferguson, Missouri.

"I look back at that statement now, and I would say it's nowhere near as morally significant as I intended it to be at the time," Mohler said. Though expressing empathy for hurting people appeared to be "close to the right thing to do," he sees it as less helpful now.

Stuckey traces her own anti-empathy awakening to the summer of 2020, when racial justice protests roiled the nation. She saw other Christians posting about racism out of an empathy she found misguided.

"I reject the idea that America is a systemically racist country," she said.

When she said as much in the months after George Floyd's murder, her audience grew.

Rigney echoes this critique of systemic racism but reserves most of his ire for feminism, which he blames for many of empathy's ills. Because women are the more empathetic sex, he argues, they often take empathy too far.

He found an encapsulation of this theory at Trump's inaugural prayer service, where a woman preached from the pulpit. During a sermon that went viral, Episcopal Bishop Mariann Budde pleaded with the Republican president to "have mercy" on immigrants and LGBTQ+ people, prompting a conservative backlash.

"Budde's attempt to 'speak truth to power' is a reminder that feminism is a cancer that enables the politics of empathetic manipulation," Rigney wrote for the evangelical World magazine.

Progressive Christian leaders respond

"Empathy is not toxic. Nor is it a sin," said the Rev. Canon Dana Colley Corsello in a sermon at Washington National Cathedral, two months after Budde's plea from that sanctuary.

"The arguments about toxic empathy are finding open ears because far-right-wing, white evangelicals are looking for a moral framework around which they can justify President Trump's executive orders and policies," Corsello preached.

"Empathy is at the heart of Jesus' life and ministry," Corsello wrote in a recent email exchange about the sermon.

She added, "It's so troubling that this is even up for debate."

In New York, the Rev. Micah Bucey first noticed Christian anti-empathy messages after Budde's sermon. In response, he proposed changing the outdoor sign at Judson Memorial Church, the historic congregation he serves in Manhattan.

"If empathy is a sin, sin boldly," he proposed it say, a catchphrase that borrows its last clause from the Protestant reformer Martin Luther.

A photo of the resulting church sign was shared thousands of times on social media.

"Our entire spirituality and theology at Judson are built around curiosity and empathy," Bucey said. "We've always considered that our superpower."

DR. ALLANTÉ WHITMORE ON THE ROAD AHEAD

Continued from page 3

autonomous vehicles can seem like a recipe for disaster. However, Dr. Whitmore provided a surprising counterpoint: "There is research that is third-party validated that autonomous vehicles reduce crashes," she said. Data from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) indicates that vehicles with automated driving systems (ADS) have a higher crash rate per million miles driven than human-driven vehicles. However, it is also noted that the number of crashes involving Waymo vehicles in California, Arizona, and Texas has resulted in an 88% reduction in property damage claims and a 92% reduction in bodily injury claims when compared to human-driven benchmarks in the same areas. This suggests that while more crashes may occur, they are often less severe and less likely to cause injuries.

Dr. Whitmore believes autonomous vehicles can actually "provide some traffic calming properties," because they are inherently more cautious drivers. She also noted that autonomous vehicles could be a solution for congestion, particularly through shared-use services. This vision is not just theoretical—it's already being implemented. The N.C. Department of Transportation has explored autonomous shuttles, including a pilot project in Cary, NC, to connect people to transit and help get more cars off the road.

This conversation with Dr. Allante Whitmore was both timely and relevant after my experience at InvestFest, where there was much conversation about investment in autonomous vehicle technology. These conversations and my follow-up research have not only encouraged me about the future of this technology but also provided the concrete numbers and context needed for me to feel more confident and informed. Take a look at www.nhtsa.gov, their page about Automated Vehicle Safety truly demystifies a topic that can often feel intimidating, making the road ahead seem less daunting and more exciting. We will continue to follow updates in this emerging industry.

Classifieds

CHATHAM COUNTY

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
CHATHAM COUNTY
NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION
In the General Court of Justice
District Court Division
File Number 25CV000554-180
To: DARWIN JOSE YEPEZ TORREALBA, Defendant.

Take notice that a pleading seeking relief against you has been filed in the above-entitled action. The nature of the relief being sought is for child custody. You are required to make defense to such pleading no later than September 23, 2025 said date being at least forty (40) days from the first publication of this Notice, and upon your failure to do so, the Plaintiff, FRANCIS FABIOLA VERDU OCHOA, will apply to the court located at 40 E Chatham St, Pittsboro, NC 27312 for the relief sought.

This, the 14th day of August, 2025.
Aneta Paval
Paval Law Offices, PLLC
7404 Chapel Hill Rd, Suite M
Raleigh NC 27607
Telephone: (919) 410-6690
8/14, 8/21, and 8/28/2025

DURHAM COUNTY

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File Number 25E000936-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 1st day of August 2025, as EXECUTOR of the Estate of SHIRLEY VIRGINIA WALKER, Deceased, of Durham County, North Carolina, does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 28th day of November, 2025 or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This, the 28th day of August 2025.
Diane Renae Smith, Executor
2555 Chadwick Place
Durham, NC 27704
8/28, 9/4, 9/11, and 9/18/2025
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File Number 25E001094-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 20th day of August 2025, as EXECUTOR of the Estate of JOHN FRANCIS HEIDLAGE, Deceased, of Durham County, North Carolina, does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 28th day of November, 2025 or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This, the 28th day of August 2025.
Joan Frances Walsh, Executor
2600 Croasdaile Farm Parkway
Apt. A 315
Durham, NC 27705
8/28, 9/4, 9/11, and 9/18/2025
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF DURHAM
NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Having qualified as Administrator of the Estate of DONNA MCFARLAND ADAMS, deceased, this is to notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the Estate of DONNA MCFARLAND ADAMS to present them to the undersigned on or before the 28th day of November, 2025, or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to said Estate, please make immediate payment.

This, the 28th day of August 2025.
EDWARD J. FALCONE
Attorney for the Estate of DONNA MCFARLAND ADAMS
120 E. Parrish Street, Suite 200
Durham, North Carolina 27701
(919)682-9273
8/28, 9/4, 9/11, and 9/18/2025
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
File Number 25E001061-310

ALL PERSONS, firms and corporations having claims against PEGGY W SORRELL, deceased, of Durham County, N.C., are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before (11/27/2025), or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This August 28, 2025.
Deborah A Sorrell
5833 Ridgeview Rd.
Durham, NC 27712
IPL0266388
8/28, 9/4, 9/11, and 9/18/2025
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File Number 24E002600-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 12th day of December 2024, as EXECUTOR of the Estate of DAVID THOMAS PLETCHER, Deceased, of Durham County, North Carolina, does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 28th day of November, 2025 or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This, the 28th day of August 2025.
Ashlee Russeau–Pletcher
Executor
1331 Hamlin Rd.
Durham, NC 27704
8/28, 9/4, 9/11, and 9/18/2025
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File Number 25E001083-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 19th day of August 2025, as CO-EXECUTORS of the Estate of WEN L. BUCHER, Deceased, of Durham County, North Carolina, does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 28th day of November, 2025 or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This, the 28th day of August 2025.
Chingna Shaw, Co-Executor
311 Falls Village Dr.
Durham, NC 27703
George Shaw, Co-Executor
123 Colonial Rd.
Great Neck, NY 11021
8/28, 9/4, 9/11, and 9/18/2025
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File Number 25E001074-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 15th day of August 2025, as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of BETTY ROSE DILLARD FREI, Deceased, of Durham County, North Carolina, does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 28th day of November, 2025 or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This, the 28th day of August 2025.
Elizabeth Anne Frei, Administrator
706 Frasier St.
Durham, NC 27704
8/28, 9/4, 9/11, and 9/18/2025
NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION
In the General Court of Justice
Superior Court Division Before of Clerk
File No. 25SP000622-310

James Hill and Andrew Milton Hill Petitioners, v. Gilbert Branche, Dolores Landry , Hazel Hill, Sidney Womack, Andrea Searcy, Virginia Doe, The Estate of Judith V. Womack, The Estate of Samuel Leroy Bigelow a/k/a Samuel Leroy Mathews Bigelow
Respondents.

To: Gilbert Branche, Dolores Landry, Hazel Hill, Sidney Womack, Andrea Searcy, Virginia Doe, The Estate of Judith V. Womack, The Estate of Samuel Leroy Bigelow a/k/a Samuel Leroy Mathews Bigelow

Take notice that a Petition for Release of Surplus Funds has been filed in the above action. The nature of the relief being sought is as follows: Petitioners are seeking release of surplus funds resulting from foreclosure of the certain property known as 3609 Sugar Tree Place, Durham, NC 27713.

You are required to make a response to such pleading no later than the 7th day of October, 2025, which is 40 days from the first publication of this notice. Upon your failure to file a pleading by the above date, the party seeking service against you will apply the Court for the relief sought.

This the 26th day of August, 2025.
Ruth M. Allen
The Walls Law Group
5511 Capital Center Drive, Suite 180
Raleigh, NC 27606
Phone: 919.647.9599
DATES OF PUBLICATION: 8/28, 9/4, and 9/11/2025
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File Number 25E001058-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 13th day of August 2025, as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of KENNETH DARYL REED, Deceased, of Durham County, North Carolina, does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 21st day of November, 2025 or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This, the 21st day of August 2025.
Erica Mack, Administrator
15 Riverstone Drive
Fuquay-Varina, NC 27526
8/21, 8/28, 9/4, and 9/11/2025
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
File Number 25E000941-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 11th day of August, 2025, as Administrator CTA of the ESTATE OF PETER HAMMONDS, Deceased, of Durham County, North Carolina, does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before November 22, 2025 or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This, the August 21, 2025.
SHIRLEY DIEFENBACH,
ADMINISTRATOR CTA
ESTATE OF PETER HAMMONDS
c/o Shirley M. Diefenbach, Attorney
Walker Lambe, PLLC
Post Office Box 51549
Durham, North Carolina 27717
8/21, 8/28, 9/4, and 9/11/2025
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File Number 25E001045-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 12th day of August 2025, as EXECUTOR of the Estate of PEGGY JOYCE CODY, Deceased, of Durham County, North Carolina, does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 21st day of November, 2025 or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This, the 21st day of August 2025.
Deborah Cody Marsh, Executor
4000 Branchwood Dr.
Durham, NC 27705
8/21, 8/28, 9/4, and 9/11/2025
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
File Number 25E000908-310

Having qualified as Executor of the Estate of LILLIE MAE BURT, deceased, of Durham County, N.C., the undersigned does hereby notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against said estate to exhibit them at the office of the attorney for the estate or before the 21st day of November 2025, or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. Awanya Rene Davis, Executor, c/o David B. Alexander, Attorney for the estate, The Law Firm of David B. Alexander, P.C., 5003 Southpark Drive, Suite 230, Durham, NC 27713.
8/21, 8/28, 9/4, and 9/11/2025
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File Number 25E001020-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 6th day of August 2025, as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of DELORES JOHNSON FORD a/k/a FRANCES DELORES FORD, Deceased, of Durham County, North Carolina, does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 14th day of November, 2025 or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This, the 14th day of August 2025.
Beverly R. J. Harris, Administrator
3020 Sprucewood Dr.
Durham, NC 27707
8/14, 8/21, 8/28, and 9/4/2025
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File Number 25E000834-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 29th day of July 2025, as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of TYSON KEITH CHRISTENSEN, Deceased, of Durham County, North Carolina, does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 14th day of November, 2025 or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This, the 14th day of August 2025.
Darlene M. Christensen,
Administrator
c/o Graham B. Schmidt, Attorney
4141 Parklake Ave. Suite 310
Raleigh, NC 27612
8/14, 8/21, 8/28, and 9/4/2025
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File Number 25E001035-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 8th day of August 2025, as EXECUTOR of the Estate of HILDA JOSEPHINE WALKER EPSTEN, Deceased, of Durham County, North Carolina, does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 14th day of November, 2025 or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This, the 14th day of August 2025.
Teri Epsten, Executor
1010 Monmouth Ave.
Durham, NC 27701
8/14, 8/21, 8/28, and 9/4/2025
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
File Number 25E002030-310

All persons, firms and corporations having claims against RONALD HARRIS, SR., DECEASED, are noticed to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before November 5, 2025, or this notice along with the appropriate general statute will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the deceased are asked to make immediate payment. This the 7th day of August, 2025. All correspondence should be to the Estate of Ronald Harris Sr., c/o Florence A. Bowens, Attorney, P.O. Box 51263, Durham, NC 27717.
8/7, 8/14, 8/21, and 8/28/2025
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File Number 25E000684-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 20th day of May 2025, as EXECUTOR of the Estate of MICHAEL WAYNE GILLMER, Deceased, of Durham County, North Carolina, does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 7th day of November, 2025 or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This, the 7th day of August 2025.
Michael Wayne Gillmer II, Executor
910 Glen Eden Dr.
Raleigh, NC 27612
8/7, 8/14, 8/21, and 8/28/2025
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
File No. 25 E 000852-310

The Administrator of the Estate of ATRAYUS OMAR GOODE, deceased, of DURHAM County NC, notifies all persons or entities having claims against said estate to present them to the Administrator on or before the 7th day of November 2025, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. All indebted to the estate shall make immediate payment to the estate.

This, the 7th day of August 2025.
Rosa Latimer, Administrator, c/o Law Office of Robert Pochapsky PLLC, 3400 Croasdaile Drive, Suite 205, Durham, NC 27705.
8/7, 8/14, 8/21, and 8/28/2025
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
File Number 25E000929-310

The undersigned having qualified as Executor of the Estate of FAYE THOMAS LIVENGOOD, Deceased, late of Durham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against the Estate to Exhibit them to the undersigned at the office of IDOL LAW, PLLC, PO Box 51759, Durham, North Carolina 27717, on or before the 10th day of November, 2025, or this Notice will be in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the Estate will please make immediate payment.

This is the 7th day of August, 2025.
Nicholas McLeod Livengood,
Executor, Estate of Faye Thomas Livengood, Deceased
Robert A. Idol, Esquire
IDOL LAW, PLLC
Attorney at Law
PO Box 51759
Durham, NC 27717
(919)401.5151
8/7, 8/14, 8/21, and 8/28/2025
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File Number 25E000937-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 31st day of July 2025, as CO-EXECUTRIX of the Estate of JAMES KENNETH BELL, SR., Deceased, of Durham County, North Carolina, does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 7th day of November, 2025 or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This, the 7th day of August 2025.
Iris Bell, Co-Executrix
Karen Moore, Co-Executrix
c/o Ethan C. Timmins
Patrick Law, PLLC
3805 University Drive, Suite A
Durham, NC 27707
8/7, 8/14, 8/21, and 8/28/2025
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File Number 25E000995-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 30th day of July 2025, as EXECUTOR of the Estate of ENDELL G. STEWART, Deceased, of Durham County, North Carolina, does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 7th day of November, 2025 or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This, the 7th day of August 2025.
Rhonda Endell Stewart Best
Executor
3761 Raleigh Pkwy W., Unit 1015
Wilson, NC 27896
8/7, 8/14, 8/21, and 8/28/2025

WAKE COUNTY

NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY
NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION
In the General Court of Justice
Superior Court Division
Before The Clerk
FILE NUMBER 25 SP 001372-910

Toynette Page Ogden, et.al, Petitioners, v. Joseph Laster, et.al, Respondents. TO: ERIN WADE: TAKE NOTICE that a partition proceeding has been commenced against you and has been filed in the above-entitled action. The nature of the relief being sought is as follows: partition by sale of the approximate one (1) acre tract of real property in Apex, Wake County, North Carolina which is more particularly described as follows: BEGINNING at a point in the center of Highway #55, between Apex and Holly Springs said point being David E. Page' corner, and runs thence with said Page's line North 87 degrees West 465 feet to a state and pointers; thence with Johnie Mosley's marked line South 2 degrees 15 minutes East 100 feet to a state and pointers; thence with said Johnie Mosley's marked line South 87 degrees East 461 feet to the center of said highway #55; thence with said highway 100 feet to the point of beginning, and containing one acre, more or less and being a part of lands as conveyed by deeds recorded in Book 977, page 243, and book 1020, page 517, Wake County Registry. LESS AND EXCEPT: That portion of the property conveyed in Deed Book 1115, Page 355, Wake County Registry. You are required to make defense to such pleading not later than the 8TH of October, 2025, said date being 40 days from the first publication of this notice, and upon your failure to do so, the party seeking service against you will apply to the court for the relief sought. This the 28th day of August, 2025. THE FRANCIS LAW FIRM, PLLC, Attorneys for Respondents By: Whitney M. Mitchell (State Bar No. 52821) 215 East North Street, Raleigh, North Carolina 27601 Telephone: (919) 828-0801 Facsimile: (919) 828-0804 [The Carolinian]: [August 28, 2025, September 4, 2025, and September 11, 2025]
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY
COMPLAINT TO ENFORCE POSSESSORY LIEN ON MOTOR VEHICLE
In The General Court Of Justice
District Court Division
Small Claims
File No. 25CV027804-910
JACKSON AUTO SALVAGE INC., Plaintiff VS. UNKNOWN VIN: 242676B126062 1966 PONTIAC, Defendant

TO UNKNOWN OWNER: TAKE NOTICE the petitioner has filed with the clerk a petition in proper form indicating that the petitioner has a valid lien against a 1966 PONTIAC, ID No. 242676B126062 and that the petitioner shall have the right to sell to the highest bidder the motor vehicle listed on September 30, 2025 at WCCH, 316 Fayetteville St., 3rd Floor, Raleigh, NC 27601, at 1:30 p.m. You are required to make a defense to such pleading before such date and time.

This the 21st day of August, 2025.
JACKSON AUTO SALVAGE INC.,
Plaintiff
7120 Poole Road.
Raleigh, NC 27610
8/21, 8/28, and 9/4/2025
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY
NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION
In the General Court of Justice,
District Court Division
File 25CV014325-910

[CHILD CUSTODY PROCEEDING], LIZBETH MARIN LOZANO Plaintiff v., RAFAEL CISNEROS BUSTOS, Defendant, Father of LML born on 10/9/12 and MCM born on 9/19/15. TAKE NOTICE that a pleading has been filed in the above-entitled action.

Classifieds

WAKE COUNTY

A hearing date of 10/21/25 has been scheduled. The relief sought is an award of legal custody to Plaintiff. You are required to make defense with the Wake County Clerk of Court no later than 9/30/25. Upon your failure to do so, Plaintiff will apply to the Court for the relief sought. This, the 21st day of August 2025. Katherine Moye, Attorney for Plaintiff, P.O. Box 58058, Raleigh, NC, 27658, 919-794-7511. The Carolinian, 8/21, 8/28, 9/4, 2025.

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION
File No. 25CV010903-910

PATRICK MEDLIN, PLAINTIFF VS AMY MEDLIN, DEFENDENT

TO DEFENDANT: TAKE NOTICE that a pleading seeking relief against you has been filed in the above-entitled action, by the Plaintiff herein, the nature which is as follows: COMPLAINT FOR ABSOLUTE DIVORCE. You are required by law to appear and make defense to such pleading no later than 30 days after the first publication of this notice. If you fail to do so, Plaintiff will seek the relief sought herein, and a Judgment for Absolute Divorce may be entered.

This, the 21st day of August, 2025.

8/21, 8/28, and 9/4/2025

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION
In the General Court of Justice, District Court Division
File No: 25CV002722-910

[CHILD CUSTODY PROCEEDING] HELEN SANCHEZ MONTOYA, Plaintiff v. ISIDORO CARDENAS MORALES, Defendant. To Defendant, father of minor children born to Plaintiff on 1/23/20 and 11/30/22. TAKE NOTICE that a pleading seeking relief against you has been filed in the above-entitled action. A hearing date of 10/7/2025 has been scheduled. The relief sought against you is an award of legal custody to Plaintiff. You are required to make defense with the Wake County Clerk of Court no later than 9/23/2025. Upon your failure to do so, the party seeking relief against you will apply to the Court for the relief sought. This, the 14th day of August 2025. Katherine Moye, Attorney for Plaintiff, P.O. Box 58058, Raleigh, NC, 27658, 919-794-7511, The Carolinian, 8/14, 8/21, 8/28/2025

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION
In the General Court of Justice, District Court Division
File No: 25CV009855-910

[CHILD CUSTODY PROCEEDING] SARAH KONATE & IBRAHIM KHOUROMA, Plaintiffs v. MOHAMED DOUMBIA & FATOUMATA KONE, Defendants. To Defendant KONE, mother of M.D. born on 12/12/2012. TAKE NOTICE that a pleading seeking relief against you has been filed in the above-entitled action. A hearing date of 10/7/2025 has been scheduled. The relief sought against you is an award of legal custody of the child to Plaintiffs. You are required to make defense with the Wake County Clerk of Court no later than 9/23/2025. Upon your failure to do so, the party seeking relief against you will apply to the Court for the relief sought. This, the 14th day of August 2025. Katherine Moye, Attorney for Plaintiff, P.O. Box 58058, Raleigh, NC, 27658, 919/794-7511, The Carolinian, 8/14, 8/21, 8/28

Investors Worry Trump's Intel Deal Kicks Off Era Of US Industrial Policy

Reuters - The U.S. government's new stake in Intel is making some investors nervous that President Donald Trump's deal heralds an era of government meddling in private industry, particularly as the arrangement followed Trump's call for the resignation of the computer chip maker's CEO.

The deal, announced on Friday, converts $11.1 billion in Chips Act grants and other government funding into a 9.9% equity stake in Intel. The company's press release announcing the deal included statements from the CEOs of Microsoft, Dell and other companies praising the move.

Investors said this level of tractability was not usually associated with relations between businesses and Washington. Trump had said on social media that Intel CEO Lip-Bu Tan wanted to keep his job and "ended up giving us $10 billion for the United States."

"It sets a bad precedent if the president can just take 10% of a company by threatening the CEO," said James McRitchie, a private investor and shareholder activist in California who owns Intel shares. The statement, he said, effectively sends the message that "we love Trump, we don't want 10% of our company taken away."

Intel shares closed at $20.41 on August 6, the day before Trump called for Tan's resignation, and trended upward to finish at $24.56 on August 15, the last trading day before Trump's terms surfaced. On Tuesday, Intel closed down 1% at $24.35. The deal does not give the U.S. Commerce Department board seats, according to a securities filing, and it requires Commerce to support the board on director nominees and proposals. But Commerce can vote "as it wishes" on several other matters.

Fitch Ratings said the deal does not improve Intel's BBB credit rating, which sits just above junk status. While it provides more liquidity, it does not fundamentally improve customer demand for Intel chips, Fitch said in a research note Tuesday.

REDUCED VOTING RIGHTS

Intel's filing also states the deal dilutes existing shareholders, reduces their voting rights, and could subject the company to additional regulations or restrictions in other countries. What's more, CEO Tan said Intel did not need the money. SoftBank poured $2 billion into the chipmaker three days before the Trump announcement.

This was the latest extraordinary intervention in a private corporation by Trump's White House, following a military deal for a mining company stake announced in July and influence over U.S. Steel, opens new tab as part of its purchase by Japan's Nippon Steel. On Tuesday U.S. Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick said the Trump administration may take stakes in defense contractors.

Yet the U.S. moves could be seen as business as usual in a number of European and Asian countries whose governments already own chunks of major companies. The German state of Lower Saxony has a 20% stake in Volkswagen, for instance.

"This has been going on for years with the Japanese government, the Korean government, the Taiwanese government, the Singaporean government, the Malaysian government," said Richard Hardegree, vice chairman of technology investment banking at UBS. "In Italy, in France, they've done massive amounts of industrial policy around the semiconductor industry ... for 40 or 50 years, ever since everybody figured out the semiconductor is important."

During the 2008-2009 financial crisis, Washington also took equity positions in several endangered vital companies, but those arrangements were temporary. Pressuring otherwise healthy companies for long-term ownership stakes was unprecedented, and the move has alarmed some investors.

BLURRED LINES

Rich Weiss, senior vice president and chief investment officer of multi-asset strategies for American Century Investments, said future federal investments "will need regulations and guidelines to limit the opportunities for abuses such as insider trading."

"In an unchecked scenario of government direct investing, trading in those companies could be much riskier for investors," he said.

Several investors and representatives cited similar risks such as when boards weigh competing interests on decisions such as where to locate a new plant, whether to lay off workers, or how hard to press into overseas markets.

Company and national goals could easily conflict on such matters, said Robert McCormick, executive director of the Council of Institutional Investors, whose members include state pension funds and other big shareholders.

"A government stake in an otherwise private entity potentially creates a conflict between what's right for the company and what's right for the country," he said.

REQUEST FOR BID

REHAB OF 4221 GREENCASTLE COURT

The City of Raleigh will accept sealed, written bids for the rehabilitation of the property located at 4221 Greencastle Court, Raleigh, NC 27604 until September 26 2025, at 2:00 p.m. (EST). Bids can be submitted at the City of Raleigh's Housing and Community Development Department at 421 Fayetteville St, Suite 1200, Raleigh, NC 27601 at which time and place bids will be publicly opened and read aloud for the construction of the Rehab of 4221 Greencastle Court project.

A non-mandatory on-site pre-bid meeting will be held on September 2, 2025, at 2:00 p.m. (EST) at 4221 Greencastle Court, Raleigh, NC 27604. Information is also posted on the North Carolina Electronic Vendor Portal (eVP): https://www.evp.nc.gov. The City reserves the right to reject all bids.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD
WAKE COUNTY'S 2024 CONSOLIDATED ANNUAL PERFORMANCE AND EVALUATION REPORT (CAPER)
AND 2024 HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES FOR PERSONS WITH AIDS (HOPWA) CAPER

Notice is hereby given that Wake County is preparing its 2024 CAPER and 2024 HOPWA CAPER and invites the public to review and provide comments during a 15-day comment period from August 29 – September 12, 2025.

These annual reports summarize progress made during the final year of the County's five-year Consolidated Plan, as required under the National Housing Act of 1990. These reports are necessary for Wake County to continue receiving federal entitlement funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

The CAPER documents housing and community development accomplishments during program year 2024 (July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025) across Wake County. The HOPWA CAPER outlines how HOPWA funds were used to support eligible households in Wake, Johnston, and Franklin Counties.

Draft copies of both reports can be accessed online at Wake County Housing Plans or in person at the following locations: Wake County Housing (336 Fayetteville Street, Suite 440, Raleigh, NC 27602), Municipal Town Halls, Wake County Regional Centers, Homeless Service Centers, and other Wake County Housing or Human Services locations.

All public feedback will be compiled and reviewed before the reports are finalized. Comments may be submitted through the online web form or by email to housing.info@wakegov.com. For more information, please contact Housing Staff at (919) 856-5689. Speech or hearing-impaired persons may contact 1-800-735-2962 (TT) or 1-800-735-8262 (voice).

WANTED WBE, MBE & DBE BIDS

for the following job:

City of Dunn
Dunn Street Improvement Project 2526

Harnett Co. Bid Date: Sept. 12th

These projects may involve some or all of the following aspects of construction: construction survey, clear and grub, trucking, drainage, milling, paving, incidental concrete, fence and guardrail, signs, structures, traffic control, utilities, signals, pavement marking, erosion control and seeding.
Bids can be emailed to **stw.quotes@stwcorp.com**

Please contact S. T. Wooten at 252-291-5165,

Fax 252-243-0900 no later than 5:00 p.m. the day before the bid date.

The North Carolina Department of Transportation, in accordance with the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (78 Stat. 252, 42, US.C. 2000d to 2000d-4) and the Regulations, hereby notifies all bidders that it will affirmatively ensure that any contract entered into pursuant to the advertisement, disadvantaged business enterprises will be afforded full and fair opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, or national origin in consideration for an award. In accordance with other related nondiscrimination authorities, bidders and contractors will also not be discriminated against on the grounds of sex, age, disability, low-income level, creed/religion, or limited English proficiency in consideration for an award.

Trump Extends Control And Takes Over Union Station

(AP)—Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy announced Wednesday that his department is taking management of Union Station, the main transportation hub in Washington, away from Amtrak, in another example of how the federal government is exerting its power over the nation's capital.

The secretary said Union Station, located within walking distance of the U.S. Capitol, had "fallen into disrepair" when it should be a "point of pride" for the city.

President Donald Trump said last week he wants $2 billion from Congress to beautify Washington as part of his crackdown on the city. The Republican president has sent thousands of National Guard troops and federal law enforcement officials into Washington in a bid to fight violent crime he claimed had strangled the city.

A pair of senior Washington, D.C., police commanders acknowledged Tuesday that the ongoing federal law enforcement surge in the nation's capital is alienating the population and damaging community relationships that will have to be mended in the future.

"What relationships do we have to repair once this surge is over? I'm prepared to do that. I'm prepared to have those long, tough conversations. But I know it's going to be tough," said Sixth District Commander Jaron Hickman. "We are getting some violent people off the streets — but in the long run, at what cost?"

Elsewhere in the city, students started to settle into the start of a new school year, which was shadowed by anxieties over increased immigration enforcement. Volunteers in some neighborhoods helped walk children to school as social media was abuzz with reports of sightings of federal officers.

WANTED WBE, MBE & DBE BIDS

for the following job:

NCDOT Division 6 Letting
DF00526 Columbus Co. Bid Date: Sept. 3rd

NCDOT Division 4 Letting
DD00476 Edgecombe Co. Bid Date: Sept. 9th

NCDOT Central Letting
C204971 Guilford Co. Bid Date: Sept. 16th
C205033 Bertie Co. Bid Date: Sept. 16th

NCDOT Design Build Letting
C205123 Buncombe Co Bid Date: Sept. 16th

These projects may involve some or all of the following aspects of construction: construction survey, clear and grub, trucking, drainage, milling, paving, incidental concrete, fence and guardrail, signs, structures, traffic control, utilities, signals, pavement marking, erosion control and seeding.
Bids can be emailed to **stw.quotes@stwcorp.com**

Please contact S. T. Wooten at 252-291-5165,

Fax 252-243-0900 no later than 5:00 p.m. the day before the bid date.

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ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

Town of Whitakers
P.O. Box 727
Whitakers, NC 27891

Separate sealed BIDS for the construction of 2019 Sanitary Sewer Improvements Contract No. 3 - Sewer Collection System Rehabilitation will be received by the ENGINEER at Whitakers Town Hall, 302 N.W. Railroad Street, Whitakers, NC 27891 until 2:00 PM, September 23, 2025, and then at said office publicly opened and read aloud.

The CONTRACT DOCUMENTS may be examined at the following locations:

Whitakers Town Hall, 302 N.W. Railroad Street, Whitakers, NC 27891
McDavid Associates, Inc., 3714 North Main Street, Farmville, NC 27828-049
Dodge Data and Analytics, 2860 South State Highway 161, Suite 160, #501, Grand Prairie, TX 750527361 (View online at www.construction.com)
ConstructConnect, Attn: DPC, 30 Technology Parkway South, Suite 100, Norcross, GA 30092 (View online at www.constructconnect.com)
Construction Journal, 400 SW 7th Street, Stuart, FL 34994 (View online at www.ConstructionJournal.com)
Builders & Contractors Exchange, Inc., 1118 Azalea Garden Road, Norfolk, VA 235025612 (View online at www.bceva.com)

Copies of the CONTRACT DOCUMENTS may be obtained at the office of McDavid Associates, Inc. located at 3714 North Main Street, Farmville, NC 27828-0049 upon a nonrefundable payment of $100.00 for each set.

The OWNER reserves the right to reject any and all BIDS.

BIDDER shall be properly licensed under Chapter 87, General Statutes of North Carolina. Small, minority, women's, and disadvantaged businesses and labor surplus area firms are encouraged to submit BIDS.

This PROJECT is subject to the good faith efforts and goals for participation by minority businesses required by G.S. 143-128.2. The OWNER has adopted a verifiable ten percent (10%) goal for participation by minority businesses in the total value of the WORK.

BIDDERS shall, within the time frames specified in the BID documents, submit all required affidavits and documentation demonstrating that the BIDDER made the required good faith effort in compliance with G.S. 143-128.2. Failure to file all required affidavits and documentation within the required time frames is grounds for rejection of the BID.

Prospective BIDDERS who have been found guilty of discrimination within the last two (2) years are debarred from bidding.

A pre-Bid conference will be held at 2:00 PM on September 11, 2025 in the Whitakers Town Hall, 302 N.W. Railroad Street, Whitakers, NC 27891. Prospective BIDDERS are encouraged to attend this pre-bid conference as part of their good faith efforts.

August 23, 2025

Sammy Hopkins
Mayor

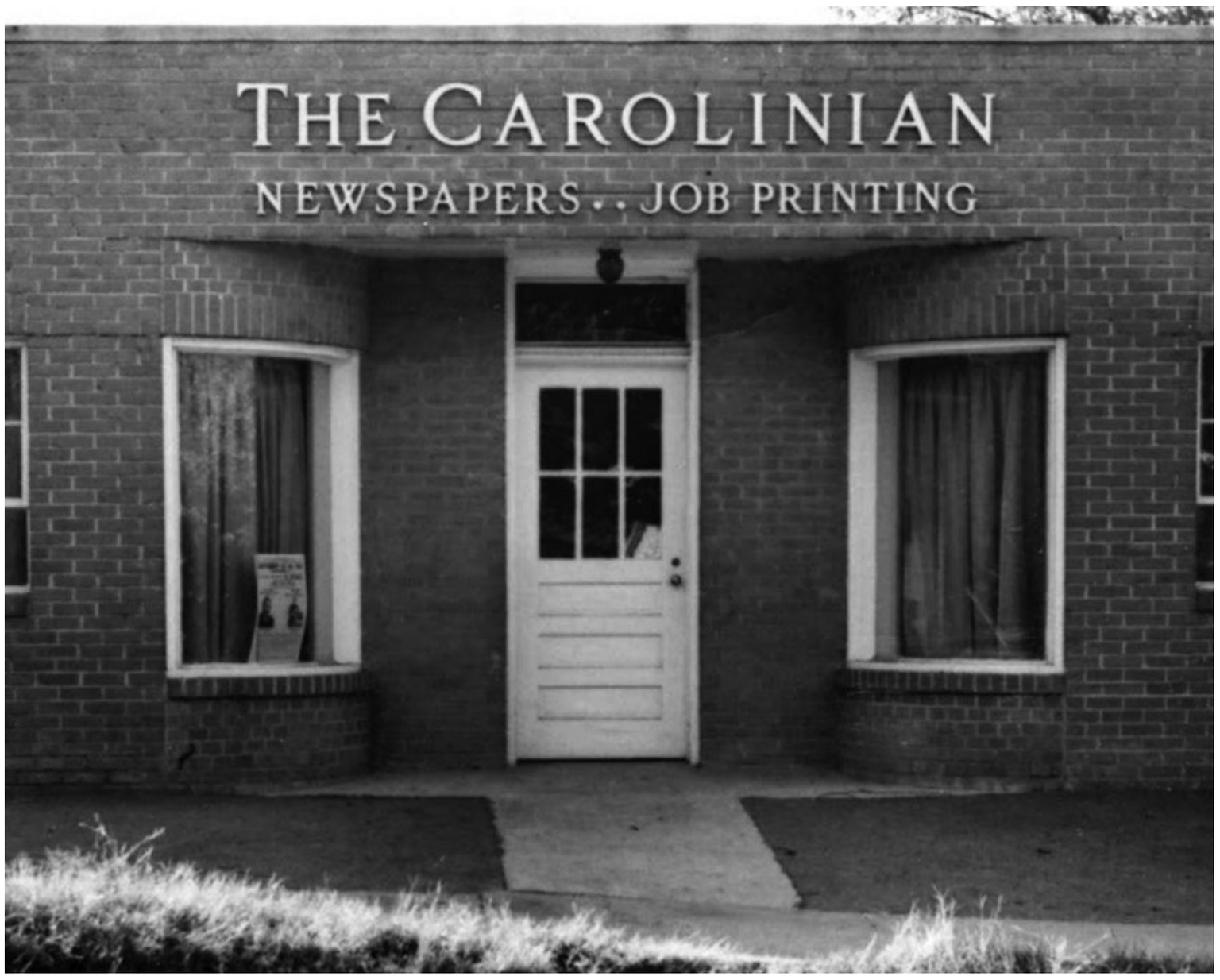
Town of Whitakers

What is the Carolinian Legacy Project?

From the 1950s through the 1980s, The Carolinian newspaper was the hub of the community in Raleigh. It was where all of the spokes met to form a well oiled, spinning wheel of progress for the Black community. It was the library, the business center and the community cork board. Rich and poor, faithful and fractured, everyone knew where they could go in a time of need.

The strength of The Carolinian was its independence. The fearless, unbiased reporting of a generation that saw their enslaved grandparents as well as their college educated children. The Carolinian never had to ask permission to tell the truth. That is the legacy that we are striving to preserve for the next generation. That is the purpose of the Carolinian Legacy Project.

Today we spend our time online, on platforms that we don't own. We give our attention, and data to companies that know us only as another nickel in their pocket. The digital cow herding of social media has robbed our community of common sense and free thinking. That is why the Carolinian Legacy Project is so important. We must save the art of discovery. It is paramount that we know what is going on in our community without having to ask an algorithm for permission.



The original Carolinian building was located at 518 E Martin St, Raleigh. It was positioned on a 2 acre parcel of land just two blocks from what is now Moore Square. Ownership of this property was taken over by the city through urban renewal.

The Carolinian wants to return to a time when the community was a community. We want to give you communal security, freedom and familiarity again. The Carolinian was never just a newspaper, it was always a gathering place. People may have gone to different churches, shopped at different grocery stores and worked in different industries, but they all came to The Carolinian to share their accomplishments, voice their injustices and find resources to improve their lives. We must keep this avenue open, and the Carolinian Legacy Project is how we do it.

The first piece of the puzzle is the Legacy Wall, which is currently in process. This wall will stand as symbol of strength, unity and resilience. Please join us in persevering Black history and supporting progress. Your purchase of a brick in our Legacy Wall will help build our library, buy supplies, educate generations and solidify you as a recorded piece of North Carolina's history.

Please visit https://caro.news/legacy-project/ to make a difference. Join us in being a part of the solution.