

BusinessP. 3
 HealthP. 5
 ArtsP. 6
 CommunityP. 7
 ChurchP. 8
 Classifieds P. 10-11

The Carolinian



N.C.'s Twice-Weekly African-American Owned Newspaper

\$1.00



Dedicated to the Spirit and Service of God

RALEIGH, N.C.

THURSDAY DECEMBER 11 - DECEMBER 17, 2025

VOL. 86, NO. 7

Steward's Vision For STEM City USA Is Rooted In His Belief That Technology Can Be Used To Bridge Gaps

USBE—David Steward, the founder and chairman of World Wide Technology (WWT), is often recognized as the richest Black man in America, with a personal fortune valued in the billions. His journey from humble beginnings to creating one of the largest and most successful technology companies in the world is a testament to his business acumen and visionary leadership. But those who know him understand that Steward's true wealth doesn't reside in his financial success. It lies in his faith, his love for people, and his unwavering commitment to giving back. His impact stretches far beyond the business world, touching the lives of countless individuals through his philanthropy, leadership, and dedication to causes close to his heart—especially in the field of technology and education.

From Humble Beginnings to Building a Global Tech Giant
 David Steward's story is one of perseverance and faith. Born in 1951 in Clinton, Missouri, during the segregation era, Steward faced significant challenges early in life. Despite these obstacles, he graduated from Central Missouri State University with a degree in Business in 1973 and built a successful career in sales and management with companies like Federal Express and Missouri Pacific Railroad. However,

(See STEM CITY P. 4)



The Fight To Govern Artificial Intelligence

By Jordan Meadows

Staff Writer

As artificial intelligence rapidly reshapes the U.S. economy, lawmakers, state attorneys general, and the White House are accelerating efforts to advance competing visions for national oversight.

With Congress unable to pass comprehensive AI legislation, the policy vacuum has driven state leaders and federal officials to craft their own approaches—culminating this week in two major developments: a bipartisan state-led AI Task Force and President Donald Trump's announcement of a sweeping executive order aimed at creating a single national standard for AI.

On Monday, President Trump declared that he will sign what he calls a "ONE RULE Executive Order", designed to override the growing patchwork of state-level AI regulations. Trump argued on Truth Social that U.S. companies "cannot get 50 approvals every time they want to do something," insisting that national uniformity is essential for the United States to stay competitive with China. Reuters previously reported that the order may attempt to preempt state laws by authorizing federal lawsuits and withholding federal funding from states that enact independent AI rules—an approach strongly supported by major technology companies, including OpenAI, Google, and Meta.

Governors and attorneys general—who have passed laws to combat deepfakes, protect children, and regulate high-risk AI systems—argue they must retain the authority to protect their residents.

Florida Governor Ron DeSantis recently proposed an "AI Bill of Rights" emphasizing privacy and parental controls, and California now requires AI developers to document catastrophic-risk mitigation plans.

Amid this battle, North Carolina Attorney General Jeff Jackson, a Democrat, and Utah Attorney General Derek Brown, a Republican, have launched a nationwide bipartisan AI Task Force. The initiative, created in partnership with OpenAI, Microsoft, and the Attorney General Alliance,

represents the most coordinated state-led effort to date to govern AI in the absence of congressional action.

Jackson and Brown have emphasized that their mission is not only reactive enforcement but "forward-looking coordination" that protects the public—especially children—from AI-related harms.

The new Task Force has three primary responsibilities: work with law enforcement, researchers, and industry to identify emerging AI issues and ensure attorneys general are equipped to respond to rapidly evolving risks. It will draft "basic safeguards" for AI developers, estab-

(See GOVERN AI, P. 2)



Data Center In Person County: Microsofts Make Major Move

By Jheri Hardaway

Staff Writer

Woodsdale Township, NC - Person County is set to become the newest home for a Microsoft data center, a development expected to significantly boost the local economy. According to county property records and local press, Microsoft recently paid \$26.85 million for a site spanning over 1,300 acres in Woodsdale Township.

"Microsoft's presence in Person County will boost our local economy through direct and indirect means, leading to job creation, sustaining a low tax base, and enhancing housing opportunities, among other benefits," Brandy Lynch, Person County's economic development director, told WRAL News. Lynch added that the deal has been in the works for approximately 18 months.

The announcement comes as a continuation of Microsoft's investment in North Carolina's digital infrastructure. Data Center Dynamics previously reported that Microsoft is developing multiple data center sites across the state. In November 2022, the company announced plans to invest at least \$1 billion in building four data centers in Catawba County, located about 50 miles northwest of Charlotte. Since then, the company has broken ground on three sites in that county.

The expansion highlights the growing importance of data centers globally. According to Cloudsense, there are over 12,000 data centers worldwide, with half of them located in the United States. These facilities, which act as warehouses for computer services, utilize massive amounts of energy for both power and cooling.

Proximity to these centers is crucial for speed, meaning businesses, gamers, streamers, and other technology-based operations will benefit from being located near the new Person County facility.

COMPETING GOP PROPOSALS ON ACA POLICY

By Jordan Meadows

Staff Writer

The Senate is barreling toward a major health-care showdown as enhanced Affordable Care Act (ACA) subsidies are set to expire at the end of the year, threatening steep premium hikes for more than 20 million Americans.

Without congressional action, subsidies will revert to their original 2010 levels, driving up out-of-pocket costs and likely pushing many people out of the insurance marketplace. Yet Republicans remain sharply divided over how to respond, making an extension increasingly unlikely in the short term. The leading Republican proposal, from Sens. Mike Crapo of Idaho and Bill Cassidy of Louisiana, would replace the enhanced tax credits with government-funded health savings accounts—\$1,000 for adults under 50 and \$1,500 for those aged 50 to 65, available to people earning up to 700% of the federal poverty level. To access the funds, enrollees would have to purchase plans on the ACA exchanges, which offer lower premiums but carry deductibles averaging around \$7,000. This approach aligns with former President Donald Trump's push for "direct payments" and reflects longstanding GOP arguments that money should flow directly to patients rather than into federal subsidies.

Several competing GOP proposals further underscore the party's disunity. Sens. Susan Collins and Bernie Moreno have introduced a bill to extend the enhanced subsidies for two years while adding income caps and minimum premium payments aimed at curbing fraud. Sen. Roger Marshall wants a one-year extension before shifting to HSA-style accounts, while Sen. Rick Scott has floated "Trump Freedom Accounts," similar to HSAs but usable for insurance premiums.

Republican leaders, however, are reluctant to bring any of these measures to a vote, fearing that doing so would expose internal divisions and fuel

(See GOP ACA POLICY, P. 2)

Fed Funding Changes Could Push Thousands of People Into Homelessness In North Carolina

NC NEWSLINE— Nearly 3,000 North Carolinians could lose housing under changes to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's [HUD] competitive grant program for permanent housing, according to an estimate by the National Alliance to End Homelessness.

The alliance and other advocates are bracing for HUD reforms that will dramatically change the way the federal government funds permanent housing assistance programs.

The changes could cost the state more than \$24 million in funding for programs that house people experiencing homelessness, the organization told N.C. Newsline. Nationally, more than 170,000 people could be at risk of homelessness due to changes to the \$3.9 billion grant program, the alliance said.

"Without that funding, it means services are disrupted, if not stopped altogether," said Marcy Thompson, the alliance's vice president of programs and policy. "If they [service providers] can't continue operating, landlords don't get rent. It creates a lot of distrust within the community."

Grant reapplication required
 At issue are federal Continuum of Care (CoC) grants, which is the largest federal grant program specifically for assisting people experiencing homelessness.

The competitive grants are award-



ed on a two-year cycle, but HUD has required a new competition one year into the funding cycle.

"What we know is, there was originally a two-year promise," said Liz Carbone, project specialist with the North Carolina Coalition to End Homelessness. "That promise has been walked back."

Carbone said the new competition could delay funding until spring for some awardees, leaving nonprofits scrambling to fill funding gaps to pay rent.

"We know that conservatively, best case, we will not see awards in our state until the end of May," Car-

bone said. "The funding delay alone is going to be so deeply painful for our state."

Most communities do not have the resources on hand to fill funding gaps if there are significant delays in grant awards, Carbone said. "If communities feel the need to assume these programs and keep them going, which I think most communities will, that's a cost to the local taxpayer."

Federal money for homeless programs is dispersed through 12 Continuums of Care in North Carolina. Most are focused on larger cities such as Asheville, Charlotte, Dur-

ham, Raleigh and Wilmington.

Program priorities reversed
 The controversial program changes come as HUD breaks from the long-favored "Housing First" approach, which prioritizes providing immediate access to permanent housing without prerequisites. HUD is moving to a transitional housing approach that includes work and sobriety requirements.

"These long-overdue reforms will promote independence and ensure we are supporting means-tested approaches to carry out the President's mandate, connect Americans with the help they need, and make our cities and towns beautiful and safe," HUD Secretary Scott Turner said in a statement announcing the changes.

One of the HUD reforms caps the amount of funding that each Continuum of Care (CoC) can use for permanent housing at no more than 30% of CoC funding. Currently, 87% of CoC-funded projects are for permanent housing or rapid-rehousing.

A new scoring criteria penalizes nonprofits competing for federal grants if they are located in areas that don't, for example, have public camping bans in place. A statewide bill in North Carolina to enact such a ban stalled in the state Senate but some local municipalities have such bans in place.

In July, President Trump issued

(See FEDERAL FUNDING, P. 2)

Check Out The Carolinian's Digital News Broadcast On @thecarolinian

Univ of Alabama Shuttters Black, Female Student Magazines

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (AP) — The University of Alabama has suspended the publication of two student-run magazines — one primarily focused on Black students and another on women's issues — citing recent federal guidance against diversity, equity and inclusion programs on college campuses.

The editors of Nineteen Fifty-Six and Alice magazines were informed Monday that the university was stopping the magazines immediately. A

university official cited July guidance from Attorney General Pamela Bondi on what the Trump administration considered unlawful discrimination at institutions that receive federal funding, according to one of the editors.

The move comes as college campuses across the United States react to President Donald Trump's push to end diversity, equity and inclusion practices on college campuses. The university decision to shutter

the magazines appears based on the fact that the publications had primarily target audiences, although neither magazine limited who could work on staff.

Alice editor-in-chief Gabrielle Gunter said she was shocked and heartbroken about the decision. The magazine had just marked its 10th anniversary.

"It was pretty dumbfounding. I was under the impression that we were protected by freedom of the press and the First Amendment," Gunter said.

Gunter said during the Monday meeting, Steven Hood, vice president for student life, told the editors that the university was withdrawing support because of DEI guidance. Gunter said Hood cited the Bondi memo and said the magazines could be considered "violating federal guidelines on unlawful proxies." The memo defines unlawful proxies as using "ostensibly neutral criteria that function as substitutes for explicit consideration of race, sex, or other protected characteristics."

Gunter said she asked how they violated the guidelines and was told the university believes having a target audience of women violates the guidelines.

The most recent issue of Alice included beauty content, such as dupes for high-end cosmetics, and more



political pieces about misogyny in heavy metal music and an article on the politics of reproductive issues.

Nineteen Fifty-Six is named after the year the first Black student, Atherine Lucy Foster, was allowed to enroll at the university. It's been in publication for the past five years.

"As Editor-In-Chief, I'm devastated but, regrettably, not surprised

by the University of Alabama's decision to suspend Nineteen Fifty-Six based on the current climate of our country. The students who have cultivated this magazine over its five-year lifespan have poured their hearts and souls into their work," magazine editor Kendal Wright said in a statement.

A recent edition included an article on the experiences of international students and another on the importance of "creating camaraderie on campus" amid diversity program rollbacks. The university last year closed dedicated campus spaces for the Black Student Union and LG-BTQ+ resource center to meet, citing the state's new anti-DEI law.

Alex House, a spokesperson for the University of Alabama, said the university remains committed to supporting all students and "in doing so, we must also comply with our legal obligations."

"This requires us to ensure all

members of our community feel welcome to participate in programs that receive University funding from the Office of Student Media," House said. She added that "the First Amendment rights of our students remain fully intact."

House said that the university plans to fund a new student magazine that "has a broader scope."

The Bondi memo gave a sweeping list of examples of what the Justice Department would consider unlawful practices, such as scholarships dedicated to students of a particular race.

Gunter said her staff was at work on next semester's edition when the university delivered the news. Gunter she and others were spending the afternoon handing out their latest edition on campus.

"I'd rather the students get the last copies instead of they get thrown away somewhere when they pack up our office," Gunter said.

Classifieds

RE-ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS CDBG PROJECT

Town of Magnolia
P.O. Box 459
Magnolia, NC 28453

Separate sealed BIDS for the construction of 2023 CDBG-I Sanitary Sewer Project Contract No. 1 - Sun Valley MHP Sanitary Sewer Improvements will be received by the ENGINEER at Town Hall, 110 East Carroll Street, Magnolia, NC 28453 until 2:00 PM Eastern Standard Time, December 16, 2025, and then at said office publicly opened and read aloud.

The CONTRACT DOCUMENTS may be examined at the following locations:

Magnolia Town Hall, 110 East Carroll Street, Magnolia, NC 28453

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 \$102.00 for each set.

This project is being funded in whole or in part by the Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG). All Federal CDBG requirements will apply to the contract: BIDDERS on this work will be required to comply with Section 109 and E.O. 11246 which prohibits discrimination in employment regarding race, creed, color, sex, or national origin. BIDDERS must comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Davis Bacon Act, Anti-Kickback Act, and Contract Work Hours and Safety Standards Act. The Town of Magnolia is committed to and supportive of efforts to effectively maintain and/or increase the use of Small and Minority/Women-Owned Business, Veteran-Owned Business, and Historically Underutilized Businesses (HUB) contract participation for Construction Projects, services (including professional and consulting services) and commodities purchases, AND increase contract participation to offer employment, training and contracting opportunities in accordance with Section 3 of the Housing and Urban Development Act of 1968 (24 C.F.R. Part 135).

No contract may be awarded to any contractor that is debarred, suspended or otherwise ineligible to participate in Federally assisted contracts or programs. Any contract awarded to a prime contractor or subcontractor that is found to be ineligible for award must be terminated immediately. Prior to contract award, prime contractors are to be actively registered, with no exclusions, with SAM.gov and not on NC Debarred Vendors list, to determine eligibility/debarment status.

The total CDBG program is funded with \$1,488,700.00 in CDBG funds which represent 100% of the total CDBG program costs. The total CDBG funding amount of \$1,488,700.00 is a governmental disclosure required by the CDBG program and not the proposed construction cost for contracts referenced by this advertisement.

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, veteran-owned, Historically Underutilized Business (HUB), and Section 3 (low income) 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.

This information is available in Spanish or any other language upon request. Please contact Sonia Jaimes at (910) 289-3205 - Extension 5 or at 110 East Carroll Street, Magnolia, NC 28453 for accommodations for this request.

Esta información está disponible en español o en cualquier otro idioma bajo petición. Por favor, póngase en contacto con Sonia Jaimes al (910) 289-3205 - Extension 5 o en 110 East Carroll Street, Magnolia, NC 28453 de alojamiento para esta solicitud.

The Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination in housing based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, family status, and disability.

The OWNER is an EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER.

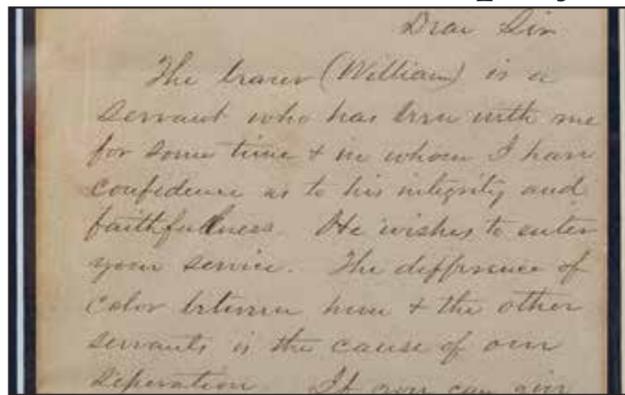
December 6, 2025

Dawn R. Ward

Mayor

Town of Magnolia

Abraham Lincoln Letter Seeking Job For A Black "Friend" Is On Display



SPRINGFIELD, Ill. (AP) — The short, handwritten note is a typical letter of reference for a man seeking a job.

But the author is the president of the United States.

It is also 1861, and the job seeker is a Black man.

Abraham Lincoln penned the entreaty on behalf of his young friend, William Johnson, because ironically, his dark complexion caused freed Black White House staffers with lighter skin to shun him.

"The difference of color between him and the other servants is the cause of our separation," Lincoln wrote in the March 16, 1861, letter that private collector Peter Tuite donated in August to the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, where it is now on public display. The letter's recipient, Navy Secretary Gideon Welles, reported he had no position available.

For a president in the mid-19th century to show such personal concern for a Black man's welfare is astounding. But consider that Lincoln was fewer than two weeks removed from his inauguration, taking over a country rent by secession, on the brink of a bloody Civil War.

The brief missive "contains layer upon layer" of revelations about Lincoln's presidential debut, said Christina Shutt, executive director of the library and museum.

"We see him trying to help a friend. We see that even the new president cannot casually hand out jobs," Shutt said. "We see issues of class and color within the White House."

Little is known about Johnson before he started work in 1859 as a valet and driver for Lincoln in Springfield. He traveled to Washington with the president-elect.



(ISSN 00455873)
1504 New Bern Ave, Raleigh, North Carolina 27610
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 25308
Raleigh, North Carolina 27611
Periodical Postage Paid at Raleigh North Carolina 27611
Warrenton Address: P.O. Box 536
Warrenton, NC 27589
Rocky Mount Address: 120 N Franklin St
Rocky Mount, NC 27804
Postmaster
Send all address changes to:
The Carolinian
1504 New Bern Avenue
Raleigh, NC 27610
PUBLISHED SIX TIMES MONTHLY
SUBSCRIPTION RATES

One Year \$45.00
Payable in advance. Address all communications and make all checks and money orders payable to **The Carolinian**.
Founded by P.R. Jervay, Sr. in 1940
The Carolinian Newspaper, Inc. of Raleigh

Publisher **Adria Jervay**
Sales Consultant **Paul R. Jervay, Jr.**
Circulation Manager **Andrew Alston**
Jervay Agency, National Advertising Representative
www.TheJervayAgency.com
Member:
North Carolina Black Publishers Association
National Newspaper Publishers Association
HUB Certified MWBE

The Publisher is not responsible for the return of unsolicited news, pictures or advertising copy unless necessary postage accompanies the copy. Opinions expressed by columnists in this newspaper do not necessarily represent the policy of the newspaper.
Phone: 919-834-5558
e-mail: info@caro.news
www.caro.news
Facebook: [TheCaroNews](https://www.facebook.com/TheCaroNews)
Twitter: [@TheCaroNews](https://twitter.com/TheCaroNews)

To SUBSCRIBE To The Carolinian
call us at

919-834-5558
or visit us online at
www.CARO.news



GOVERN AI

Continued from page 1

lishing baseline expectations for transparency, youth protection, and harm-reduction across the industry. And it will serve as a standing national forum that monitors AI developments and coordinates multi-state action when new challenges emerge.

Earlier this year, Jackson and Brown pushed for stronger protections against deepfake sexual imagery, urged financial and tech companies to disrupt monetization of nonconsensual AI-generated content, and successfully opposed federal budget language that would have imposed a decade-long moratorium on enforcing AI-related laws.

Meanwhile, Congress continues to explore broad federal policies through efforts like the 2024 Bipartisan House Task Force on Artificial Intelligence, which recently released a detailed report outlining the federal government's path toward responsible AI adoption. The report highlights the transformative potential of AI for federal agencies but warns of serious risks tied to algorithmic decision-making, uneven workforce readiness, cybersecurity vulnerabilities, and unclear governance structures. Its recommendations call for flexible federal oversight frameworks, standardized notification requirements when AI is used in government functions, stronger data governance, support for NIST's AI guidelines, improved cybersecurity, and skills-based hiring initiatives to address gaps in federal AI expertise.

Yet even as congressional committees outline frameworks and the White House moves toward a single national rulebook, the bipartisan Task Force formed by Jackson and Brown underscores the states' determination to maintain a central role in shaping AI policy. With the White House preparing to challenge state authority and Congress still negotiating its own approach, the nation is entering a volatile period of overlapping initiatives that may ultimately define how AI is governed for decades.

GOP ACA POLICY

Continued from page 1

Democratic attacks that the GOP lacks a coherent plan to address health-care affordability. Some Republicans, including Sen. Tommy Tuberville, warn that failing to present a unified proposal could leave the party "on the wrong side of public opinion," especially given that affordability consistently ranks as a top voter concern.

Democrats, by contrast, are unified behind their push to extend the subsidies for three years with no policy changes. They secured a vote on their plan as a condition for reopening the government after the recent record-long shutdown, although the bill is expected to fail without Republican support. Still, Democrats see strategic value in holding the vote, reinforcing public messaging on health-care affordability.

Even if the subsidies expire on January 1, the battle likely won't end there. The next government funding deadline arrives January 30, and Democrats are signaling they may again withhold votes on a spending bill that fails to address the subsidy cliff—mirroring the strategy that helped trigger the October 1 shutdown. With Republicans historically opposed to bolstering the ACA, and internal GOP disagreements over fiscal 2026 spending levels still unresolved, the January deadline could become another pressure point with shutdown risks attached.

Public polling consistently shows strong support for maintaining the ACA subsidies and widespread anxiety about rising health-care costs, dynamics that give Democrats political leverage and intensify pressure on Republicans to avoid being blamed for premium spikes.

FEDERAL FUNDING

Continued from page 1

an executive order that directed the HUD secretary and other cabinet secretaries to "determine whether priority" for grants may be given to grantees in states and municipalities that actively enforce prohibitions on urban camping and loitering, open illicit drug use and urban squatting.

The policy changes also penalize nonprofits for promoting diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) or "gender ideology extremism," and for the alleged "misuse of and abuse of taxpayers dollars on illegal aliens."

"Some of the things that HUD is essentially penalizing organizations and communities for are things that were required of them in the last administration," said Marcy Thompson at the National Alliance to End Homelessness. "There's no community, no organization that is not at risk of being impacted here."

Twenty congressional Republicans have asked HUD Secretary Scott Turner to renew grants expiring in 2026 for an additional year.

"This extension is essential to prevent service disruptions for individuals and families experiencing homelessness, sustain continuity of care for vulnerable populations, and allow HUD adequate time to implement its next generation of homelessness policy reforms," the Republicans said in a letter to Turner.

While none of North Carolina's congressional Republicans signed the letter, Carbone said advocates have had "super productive conversations" with several GOP U.S. House members and Republican U.S. Sens. Ted Budd and Thom Tillis.

"They see the impacts that this is going to have, not just in the cities, but in the rural communities, and what this is going to do to North Carolina's ability to keep the most vulnerable people in our state housed," Carbone said.

"Regardless of your political affiliation ... we all care about seniors, we all care about families with young kids and we all care about veterans," Carbone said.

Business & Finance

Here Is How to Freeze Your Credit—And Why It Matters

Charles Schwab—You may have gotten that dreaded letter in the mail saying your information has been stolen in a data breach. It's happened to me, and will probably happen again, as more and more identity thieves get access to our information. There were 2,850 data breaches involving more than one billion victims in 2024, according to a report by the Identity Theft Resource Center. And scammers stole over \$1 trillion dollars globally in 2024, according to a report by the Global Anti-Scam Alliance.

So, when you get that letter or email about a data breach, don't ignore it. Take it seriously—and take action. One of the first things you should do to protect yourself is freeze your credit.

Freezing your credit is easy. And there's really no downside except that you have to unfreeze it to apply for a new loan like a mortgage or credit card. But that's easy too. I've frozen my credit a couple of times, and it was no problem to reverse it when I needed to.

Of course, cybercriminals are hoping you won't do it. Which is why I encourage you to read on to learn more about what a credit freeze is, why it's important, and how to do it.

What is a credit freeze?

A credit freeze blocks access to your credit report so fraudsters can't open new credit accounts in your name. If a scammer gains access to your personal information and tries to open a credit card or get a loan in your name, the credit freeze blocks the lender from accessing your credit report. Without the credit report, the lender can't get the information needed to approve the application.

A credit freeze is one of the strongest preventative measures against identity theft and fraud. Plus it's free. All three major credit bureaus (Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion) offer it as a service and make it easy to do—and undo when you want to apply for new credit. Beyond the big three credit bureaus, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau published this list of additional reporting agencies including employment and tenant screening, medical, utilities and more.

Should I freeze my credit?

In this era of scams and data hacks, being diligent before something happens just makes sense. So why not protect yourself?

Checking your credit report annually is a smart move, but freezing your credit is one of the most effective ways to prevent identity theft because it essentially locks down your credit file, preventing unauthorized access. It's kind of like locking your front door at night.

Consider freezing your credit if:

- You want to take preventive action to protect yourself against identity theft and you aren't actively applying for new credit.
- You've been notified by a company that your data has been part of a breach, or you suspect your information has been compromised.
- You've set up fraud alerts on your credit report and been notified about a new credit card account.
- It can be a smart, protective move in any circumstance. Plus, freezing your credit won't negatively affect your credit history or credit score.

How to freeze your credit

The fastest and easiest way to freeze your credit is online, where you can create an account and manage your freeze. If you prefer, you can also do it by phone or by mail.

To completely freeze your credit, you must contact each of the credit reporting agencies separately. There's no way to do all agencies at once. While the process is similar for each credit bureau, there are slight differences.

You can find complete instructions on how to freeze your credit at each credit bureau's official website, but here's the basic information you need to freeze your credit with the three main agencies. For other credit agencies, the process will be similar.

How to freeze your credit on EQUIFAX

- Online: Go to www.equifax.com to set up a password protected "myEquifax" account. You'll need to provide your name, address, Social Security number, and other identifying information.
- By Phone: Call 888-298-0045. You'll have to answer some security questions to verify your identity.
- By Mail: Complete a security freeze request form, which is available at equifax.com. You'll need to include your full name, including any suffixes, your address, Social Security number, and date of birth. Equifax also asks that you include copies of documents that

verify your identity and address. Acceptable documents include a valid driver's license or state ID, tax documents, a pay stub, and utility bills.

Send the completed form and documents to:

Equifax Information Services LLC
P.O. Box 105788

Atlanta, GA 30348-5788

How to freeze your credit on EXPERIAN

- Online: Go to www.experian.com to sign up for a free Experian account. To get started you'll have to provide the last 4 digits of your Social Security number and your contact information.

- By Phone: Call 888-397-3742. You'll be asked to provide personal information, such as your

Social Security number.

- By Mail: Send a credit freeze request letter to Experian. Your request should include your full name, Social Security number, complete addresses for the past two years, date of birth, a copy of a government issued identification card such as a driver's license, and a copy of a utility bill or bank statement.

Send your request letter and documents to:

Experian Security Freeze
P.O. Box 9554

Allen, TX 75013

How to freeze your credit on TRANSUNION

- Online: Go to www.transunion.com and set up a free account through the TransUnion Service Center.

You'll need to provide your name, address, Social Security number, and other identifying information.

- By Phone: Call 800-916-8800. Basic information like address, birthday, and Social Security number will be required. You may also have to answer some identity questions.

- Mail: Send a written request that includes your name, address, and Social Security number. You'll also need to include photocopies of one proof of your Social Security number and two proofs of your current address.

Social Security documentation can include your Social Security card or Military ID, Medicaid or Medicare cards if they include your Social Secu-

urity number. Address documentation can include things like your driver's license, a utility bill, bank statement, or canceled check. All your documents should reflect your current name and be unexpired.

Send your request and documents to:

TransUnion
P.O. Box 160

Woodlyn, PA 19094

Make it easy on yourself by collecting all necessary documentation before you get started. And if you're doing it by mail, consider sending your request and documents by certified mail so you know they've been received. Keep in mind that if you request a freeze or unfreeze by mail, it may take a few business days to process.

NC Board of Education Focuses On Teacher Pay Amid Competing Funding Priorities

NC NEWSLINE – The North Carolina State Board of Education on Wednesday focused on increasing pay for teachers and other school staff as it discussed its legislative priorities for the upcoming 2026 short session.

Geoff Coltrane, senior director of government affairs at the Department of Public Instruction, warned that he expects "very limited revenue" in the year ahead and that legislators in Raleigh may not even pass a full budget for the 2026-2027 fiscal year. He urged members to narrow their requests for a better chance of success.

"Our plan is, when possible, to really prioritize our budget legislative request based on the new strategic plan and those sort of critical must-have items," Coltrane said, "so that we're taking to the General Assembly a very narrow, tailored and strategic list of items that we hope to get across the finish line."

Rachel Candaso, the 2025 North Carolina Teacher of the Year, said she worked two extra jobs in 2023-24 to supplement her income. Jason Johnson, the 2025 Principal of the Year, said some of his teachers also work nights at stores like Walmart, Costco, and Old Navy.



"Teacher pay has to be a focus, because as a school leader, I need teachers planning and I need teachers giving feedback to students," Johnson said.

North Carolina currently ranks 43rd in the nation for average public school teacher pay, according to the latest data from the National Education Association. North Carolina's average salary of about \$58,292 is nearly \$14,000 below

the national average of \$72,030.

The General Assembly adjourned in late July without a two-year spending plan, passing a resolution to meet just one day each month until the 2026 short session begins in April.

The governor's 2025-26 budget proposed a 10.6% raise for teachers and 6% for principals, while legislative versions ranged from 2.3% to 8.7% for teachers. But with no final

budget passed into law, educators received no across-the-board raises — only salary step increases.

Candaso also noted the \$13 billion needed for school repairs and renovations. "Students need to attend schools that are equipped for 21st-century learning and provide heat, air conditioning, and other basic needs," she said.

Candaso said she teaches at a school built in the 1970s that will cost half a billion dollars to renovate. "I can only imagine what it's like across the rest of the state, especially in schools built before the 1970s," she added.

Johnson called for more mental health staff, noting social workers and nurses are often the first adults students confide in. "I cannot imagine running a school without a social worker or a nurse. Students sometimes come to school just to see them."

Other board members called for more funding for support staff, statewide telehealth networks, and literacy programs.

Coltrane said DPI will bring a proposal to the board early next year in anticipation of the short legislative session, which begins in April.

IT'S TIME FOR BUSINESS.

You created the perfect business cards and you have more orders than you can handle, so what's next? As your business banking partner, we're here to find solutions that will work for you.

Business Banking

Business Loans | Free Business Checking* | Remote Deposit Capture
Treasury Management | Credit Cards



BankWithUnited.com | Member FDIC



*\$100 to open. No minimum balance requirement.
No monthly maintenance fee but other fees can apply.
Please refer to the Fee Schedule.



Vision For STEM City USA—CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Steward always had a bigger dream: to start his own business and provide comprehensive technology solutions for businesses in need.

In 1990, with little capital but a lot of faith, Steward founded World Wide Technology (WWT) in St. Louis, Missouri. The early years were tough, and there were times when WWT struggled financially, barely able to make payroll. But Steward's vision, perseverance, and commitment to treating customers like partners helped WWT grow steadily. Initially a reseller of technology products, WWT soon expanded into offering full-scale technology solutions—ranging from cloud computing and data analytics to cybersecurity and digital transformation services.

WWT's big break came when the company secured contracts with government agencies and Fortune 500 companies, positioning it as a trusted technology partner. Today, WWT is a global leader in IT services, with over 8,000 employees and annual revenues surpassing \$14 billion. But despite the company's mas-

sive success, Steward has remained grounded in his faith and committed to using his wealth and influence to serve others.

Faith, Family, and a Legacy of Giving Back

David Steward's greatest wealth, however, is not found in his financial achievements but in his deep-rooted faith and his commitment to his family and community. Together with his wife, Thelma, Steward has raised two children, Kimberly and David II, both of whom have followed in their father's footsteps, embracing values of integrity, hard work, and service. Kimberly is an Oscar-nominated film producer, and David II leads Lion Forge Animation, a media company dedicated to diverse storytelling.

For Steward, family and faith are inseparable from his professional life. His strong Christian faith guides every decision he makes, both in business and in his personal life. He views his success as a gift from God and believes it is his responsibility to use that success to bless others. Steward's philanthropy is expansive,



and through the David and Thelma Steward Family Foundation, he has provided millions in donations to causes related to education, youth development, military families, and underserved communities. One of his most cherished efforts is supporting military families, providing scholarships, and helping veterans transition into civilian life.

Education is another major focus for Steward. He believes deeply in the power of education to transform lives, and he has funded count-

less scholarships and mentoring programs for students from underserved communities. Steward's philanthropic efforts are not limited to financial contributions—he is personally involved in many of the initiatives he supports, providing guidance and mentorship to young people who are just beginning their careers.

A Vision for the Future: Founder of STEM City USA

One of the most significant contributions David Steward has made in

recent years is his role as a founder and supporter of STEM City USA. This innovative platform, developed in partnership with Career Communications Group (CCG), is designed to provide access to educational and career resources in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields, particularly for underserved communities. The virtual city serves as a hub for education, training, and career development, offering students, professionals, and educators a digital space to learn, collaborate, and build their futures.

Steward's vision for STEM City USA is rooted in his belief that technology can and should be used to bridge gaps in education and opportunity. In a world where digital access and technological literacy are critical for success, STEM City USA provides a solution to help close the digital divide. Through virtual conferences, career expos, mentorship programs, and immersive learning experiences, STEM City USA offers participants the tools they need to succeed in the tech-driven economy of the future.

But STEM City USA isn't just about education—it's about creating opportunities for those who have historically been left out of the tech boom. Black and underrepresented communities have often lacked access to the resources and networks needed to thrive in STEM careers, and Steward has made it his mission to change that. By supporting STEM City USA, Steward is helping to build a pipeline of diverse talent that can shape the future of technology and innovation.

WWT's involvement with the platform further strengthens Steward's commitment to advancing diversity in STEM. As a leader in the technology industry, WWT has partnered with STEM City USA to provide mentorship, internships, and career pathways for students and professionals across the country. Steward envisions STEM City USA as a vehicle for real, lasting change—a platform that will inspire the next generation of engineers, technologists, and innovators, especially those from underrepresented communities.



Support Small & Local Businesses

Replace your job and earn money at home!

Login at www.jointonyallen.com or call (919) 252-3147 for details to get started.

Lea Funeral Home
 2500 Poole Road
 Raleigh, NC 27610
 (919) 231-1000

"Professional Service With Personal Care"

Call or Visit Us. We also offer Cremation Services & Pre-need Arrangements. You can reserve Our State-of-the-Art Banquet Facilities for your next event

Residential and Commercial Lawn Care

YONSCAPES
 Meticulous Lawn Care, Exceptional Results.

Patrick Yon, Owner
 Mobile 984-268-0457

919-346-3337
yonscapes@gmail.com
www.yonscapes.com

BOX ELECTRIC

Wiring North Carolina One Box At A Time

Website: [HTTPS://Box-Electric.com](https://Box-Electric.com)

Accident & Injury Law

BECTION
 THE BECTION LAW GROUP, PLLC

Automobile Accidents • Truck & Motorcycle Accidents
 Wrongful Death • Slip and Falls
 Real Estate Loan Closings

Eliwood Becton *Marcus Becton* *Dekisha Becton Rozier* *Taurus Becton*

919.856.0414 www.bectonlaw.com

We Only Build Garages and Out-Buildings

Carolina Custom Builders

Stu Daugherty
 Owner

Visit us at the:
 HOME IMPROVEMENT CENTER

4005 Departure Dr.
 Raleigh, N.C. 27616
 (919) 790-1234
 FAX (919) 790-1010
www.carolinacustombuilders.com
carolinacustom@hotmail.com

SERVICES OFFER

Residential and Commercial

Product / Service Description

Burglar alarm
 Camera system

- homes
- business
- farms
- school and daycare

ask us about temporary camera system for construction site.

Thank you for your time.

Rouge3 Communication llc
 PO BOX 132
 Rougemont, NC 27572
 Enquiry for service

ADE JONES
 Attorney at Law

3401 Wendell Boulevard
 Wendell, N.C. 27591

919-817-2714 (office) 919-817-2711 (cell)
legallaffairs@abejoneslaw.com
 Fax: 919-366-6770

LAW OFFICES OF ADE JONES



Jack's Seafood & Soul Food

LOCALLY OWNED SINCE 1976

Two Locations

1516 New Bern Ave
 Raleigh, NC 27610
 919-755-1551

5416 Rock Quarry Rd
 Raleigh, NC 27610
 919-329-8125

C.F. Smith Memorial Cares

Your Loved One Deserves The Very Best

NO INSURANCE, NO PROBLEM

Services We Offer:
 Affordable Direct Burial
 Special on Direct Cremation
 Affordable Graveside Service
 Special on Funeral Service
 Special on Memorial Service
 Ship-In, Ship-Out & More

WE OFFER SPECIAL PRICING ON CREMATIONS AND FUNERALS

DIRECT CREMATION STARTING AT \$875.00

ASK FOR CRAIG SMITH (FUNERAL DIRECTOR)

Mailing Address:
 P.O. Box # 26572
 Raleigh, NC 27611
 Serving: Wake, Johnston, Harnett, & Durham Counties

CRAIG & DALE SMITH
 919- 698-7739

RBR | Physical Therapy, LLC

revive. boost. rebuild.

"Call us today, start your journey to recovery!"

RBR PT Specializes in:

- *Functional assessments
- *Strength training
- *Modalities for pain
- *Balance/Stability training
- *Flexibility/Mobility training
- *Home exercise programs

(No physician's referral to get started)
 1300 Corporation Pkwy, ste. B
 Raleigh, NC 27610
 919-917-7729 (office)
 919-400-4178
www.rbrpt.com

\$1.00 OFF

any take-out or dine-in combo order. Must present coupon at time of purchase.

offer exp 12/31/2025

Steven L. Lyons Funeral Home

"Trust ~ Service ~ Compassion"

1515 New Bern Avenue
 Raleigh, NC 27610
stevenlyonsfuneralhome.com
 (919)831-2596 Phone

Health and Wellness

Rural Healthcare Providers Could Be Collateral Damage

KFF Health News—Bekki Holzkamm has been trying to hire a lab technician at a hospital in rural North Dakota since late summer.

Not one U.S. citizen has applied. West River Health Services in Hettinger, a town of about 1,000 residents in the southwestern part of the state, has four options, and none is good.

The hospital could fork over \$100,000 for the Trump administration's new H-1B visa fee and hire one of the more than 30 applicants from the Philippines or Nigeria. The fee is the equivalent of what some rural hospitals would pay two lab techs in a year, said Holzkamm, who is West River's lab manager.

West River could ask the Department of Homeland Security to waive the fee. But it's unclear how long the waiver process would take and if the government would grant one. The hospital could continue trying to recruit someone inside the U.S. for the job. Or, Holzkamm said, it could leave the position unfilled, adding to the workload of the current "skeleton crew."

The U.S. health care system depends on foreign-born professionals to fill its ranks of doctors, nurses, technicians, and other health providers, particularly in chronically understaffed facilities in rural America.

But a new presidential proclamation aimed at the tech industry's use of H-1B visas is making it harder for West River and other rural providers to hire those staffers.

"The health care industry wasn't even considered. They're going to be collateral damage, and to such an extreme degree that it was clearly not thought about at all," said Eram Alam, a Harvard associate professor whose new book examines the history of foreign doctors in the U.S.

Elissa Taub, a Memphis, Tennessee-based attorney who assists hospitals with the H-1B application process, has been hearing concerns from her clients.

"It's not like there's a surplus of American physicians or nurses wait-

ing in the wings to fill in those positions," she said.

Until recently, West River and other employers paid up to \$5,000 each time they applied to sponsor an H-1B worker. The visas are reserved for highly skilled foreign workers.

The new \$100,000 fee — part of a September proclamation by President Donald Trump — applies to workers living outside the U.S. but not those who were already in the U.S. on a visa.

West River lab tech Kathrine Abelita is one of nine employees — six technicians and three nurses — at the hospital who are current or former H-1B visa holders. Abelita is from the Philippines and has worked at West River since 2018. She's now a permanent U.S. resident.

"It's going to be a big problem for rural health care," she said of the new fee. She said most younger American workers want to live in urban areas.

Sixteen percent of registered nurses, 14% of physician assistants, and 14% of nurse practitioners and midwives who work in U.S. hospitals are immigrants, according to a 2023 government survey. Nearly a quarter of physicians in the U.S. went to medical school outside the U.S. or Canada, according to 2024 licensing data.

The American Hospital Association, two national rural health organizations, and more than 50 medical societies have asked the administration to give the health care industry exemptions from the new fee. The new cost will disproportionately harm rural communities that already struggle to afford and recruit enough providers, the groups argue.

"A blanket exception for health-care providers is the simplest path forward," the National Rural Health Association and National Association of Rural Health Clinics wrote in a joint letter.

The proclamation allows fee exemptions for individuals, workers at specific companies, and those in entire industries when "in the national interest." New guidance says the fee will be waived only in an "extraordinarily rare circumstance." That includes



showing that there is "no American worker" available for the position and that requiring a company to spend \$100,000 would "significantly undermine" U.S. interests.

Taub called those standards "exceptionally high."

Representatives of the NRHA and the American Medical Association, which organized a letter from the medical societies, said they've received no response after sending requests to Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem in late September and early October. The AHA declined

to say whether it had heard back.

Homeland Security officials directed KFF Health News' inquiries to the White House, which did not answer questions about individual waiver timelines or the possibility of a categorical exemption for the health care industry.

Instead, White House spokesperson Taylor Rogers sent a statement defending the new fee, saying it will "put American workers first." Her comments echo Trump's proclamation, which focuses on accusations that the tech industry is abusing the

H-1B program by replacing American workers with lower-paid foreign ones. But the order applies to all trades.

Alam, the Harvard professor, said the U.S.' reliance on international providers does raise legitimate concerns, such as about how it takes professionals away from lower-income countries facing even greater health concerns and staffing shortages than the U.S.

This decades-long dependency, she said, stems from population booms, medical schools' historical exclusion of nonwhite men, and the "much, much cheaper" cost of importing providers trained abroad than expanding health education in the U.S.

Internationally trained doctors tend to work in rural and urban areas that are poor and underserved, according to a survey and research review.

Nearly 1,000 H-1B providers were employed in rural areas this year, the two rural health organizations wrote in their letter to the Trump administration.

J-1 visas, the most common type held by foreign doctors during their residencies and other postgraduate training in the U.S., require them to return to their home country for two years before applying for an H-1B.

But a government program called the Conrad 30 Waiver Program allows up to 1,500 J-1 holders a year to remain in the U.S. and apply for an H-1B in exchange for working for three years in a provider shortage area, which includes many rural communities.

Trump's proclamation says employers that sponsor H-1B workers already inside the U.S., such as doctors with these waivers, won't have to pay the six-figure fee, a nuance clarified in guidance released about a month later.

But employers will have to pay the new fee when hiring doctors and others who apply while living outside the U.S.

Alyson Kornele, CEO of West River Health Services, said most of the foreign nurses and lab techs it hires are outside the U.S. when they apply.

Ivan Mitchell, CEO of Great Plains Health in North Platte, Nebraska, said most of his hospital's H-1B physicians were inside the U.S. on other visas when they applied. But he said physical therapists, nurses, and lab techs typically apply from abroad.

Holzkamm said it took five to eight months to hire H-1B applicants at her lab before the new fee was introduced.

New Student Loan Rule Could Dissuade Some From Advanced Degrees



STATELINE — Zoe Clarke became a hospital registered nurse two and a half years ago, following in the footsteps of her mother and grandmother.

Clarke, an ICU nurse in Asheville, North Carolina, wants to get her master's degree to become a nurse practitioner or a certified registered nurse anesthetist — occupations in high demand — and eventually work toward a doctoral degree.

But new borrowing limits on federal student loans may hinder her from reaching that goal.

A provision in the federal One Big Beautiful Bill Act, the tax and spending law enacted this summer, overhauls the federal student loan program for graduate students in an effort to simplify the loan process and discourage colleges from raising tuition.

To comply with the new law, the U.S. Department of Education recently issued a draft rule that would impose limits on how much graduate students can borrow — up to \$20,500 per year and \$100,000 in total for most students, but up to \$50,000 a year and \$200,000 in total for students in a new "professional" category. The category includes people studying to be medical doctors, dentists, veterinarians, pharmacists and lawyers.

Students pursuing advanced nursing degrees, however, are not included in the professional category.

Advanced practice nurses, hospital associations and other health groups say the rule will make it unaffordable for many nurses to advance their careers — disproportionately affecting communities, especially rural ones, that rely on them amid physician shortages.

Advanced nurses can provide primary care, deliver babies as nurse midwives and anesthetize surgery patients where there aren't enough physicians to go around. They can also write some prescriptions. Advanced practice nurses also serve as college faculty in community colleges and nursing schools.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates the nation will employ an additional 134,000 nurse practitioners, nurse midwives and nurse anesthetists in the next decade, 35% more than there are now. In high demand, nurse practitioners are one of the fastest-growing occupations in the nation, the bureau says.

"We depend heavily on nurse practitioners," said Sandy Reding, a president of the California Nurses Association and vice president of National Nurses United. "But if they don't have access to getting further education, we're not going to see additional nurse practitioners come into the field."

Tuition, combined with living expenses, can far exceed \$50,000 a year for many post-bachelor's nursing programs.

"Potentially, this could devastate a whole generation of nurses getting their advanced practice degrees," Clarke said.

Some education advocates fear that losing a pipeline of advanced nursing practitioners to serve as college faculty also could lead to fewer registered and advanced nurses and other caregivers with two- and four-year degrees, because there would be fewer people to teach them.

Many advanced-degree nursing faculty are retiring. Nursing schools reported more than 2,100 full-time faculty vacancies in 2022, according to the American Nurses Association — leading to roughly 80,000 students being turned away.

States are already grappling with workforce shortfalls caused by exhausting work conditions that have led many nurses to burn out and leave the field, or leave bedside care to teach, nurses told Stateline.

In response to an uproar from nursing associations and others in health care, the Department of Education released a rebuttal last week defending its proposal, saying it is not a "value judgement about the importance of pro-

FOOD LION

Be the **MVP** season's **MVP**

MVP

Check everything off your list with savings across your local store and [foodlion.com](https://www.foodlion.com)

Arts & Culture

How the Thompson Institute Transformed Black Education & Lives In North Carolina

By Jordan Meadows

Staff Writer

In the years following the Civil War, when the promise of freedom demanded real institutions to sustain it, the Thompson Institute emerged in Lumberton, North Carolina, as one of the most important educational lights for African Americans in the state.

Born from former slaves, the origins of the Thompson Institute trace back to the founding of the Lumber River Missionary Baptist Association in 1877 in Fair Bluff. From its inception, the Association recognized education as essential to the freedom and advancement of Black families newly navigating life after emancipation. Four years later, in 1881, the Association established a school in Lumberton dedicated to teaching reading, writing, and the arts—disciplines denied to African Americans under slavery and still inaccessible due to the absence of public Black schools in Robeson County.

This school would soon bear the name Thompson Institute, honoring the leadership and vision of the Rev. Alexander H. Thompson, a man born enslaved in 1828 who would one day be recognized as one of the region's great spiritual and educational pioneers.

Alexander Thompson's life embodied the transformation of the Reconstruction era. Forbidden under threat of family separation to learn to read or write, he continued throughout his life to sign his name with an "X" in memory of that rule. Yet freed after the Civil War, Thompson helped establish five churches, became a leading figure in the Lumber River Baptist Association, and inspired the founding of the Institute that would carry his name. Thompson died in 1911.

The early years of the Thomp-



son Institute were humble. Funding came largely from local Black churches, supplemented by small aid from the Home Mission Society of New York. Yet the school quickly developed into a boarding institution that attracted students from far beyond Robeson County—some traveling from New England.

Under the leadership of A.H. Thompson, followed by the Rev. J. Avery, and—most notably—the Rev. William Henry Knuckles, a Shaw University graduate who served as principal for 30 years, the Institute grew into the first Black high school in Robeson County to be accredited by the Southern Association of Schools and Colleges.

By 1914, the curriculum reflected rigorous academic expectations: Latin, geometry, psychology, and the arts. Its graduates left to teach in communities across North Carolina and beyond, establishing schools and churches. Many alumni later recalled the Institute as "more like a college" because eighth-grade graduates were equipped to enter the teaching profession directly.

Like many private Black prepara-

tory schools across the South, the Thompson Institute found its identity transformed as public education expanded for African Americans. In 1942, local Baptists concluded their operation of the school. The next year, the buildings were leased and then sold to the Robeson County school board.

The Institute was renamed South Lumberton Elementary School in 1950 and, following integration in 1969 and a period of reorganization, became W. H. Knuckles Elementary School in 1994, honoring the principal whose long service had shaped the institution's golden era. Today, Knuckles Elementary stands on the historic site where thousands once pursued their education under the Thompson Institute banner.

The Thompson/Ashley Reunion, one of the oldest and most cherished gatherings of descendants, honors the "family sages"—the oldest living members whose wisdom and memories preserve the lineage.

In 2023, the honored family sage was Georgeva Gerald Wright, a lifelong educator who reflected the school's ethos of scholarship, ser-

vice, and community leadership. A descendant of the Thompson line through Maggie Thompson Gerald, Georgeva exemplifies the lifelong commitment to learning that the Institute nurtured. For 35 years she taught in North Carolina schools, mentored countless students, and championed community institutions including the Lumber River Baptist Association and Hilly Branch Baptist Church, founded by her ancestors.

The effort to secure statewide recognition for the Thompson Institute was itself led by descendants Carletta Thompson and Demetria Taylor, along with Rep. Garland Pierce, the campaign required decades of research and multiple applications. After initially being rejected for "lack of statewide significance," the family compiled documentation demonstrating the Institute's impact—teachers who spread across North Carolina, photos and diplomas dating back to the early 1900s, and testimonies about its role in advancing Black literacy after emancipation. Their persistence paid off: A North Carolina Highway Historical Marker was installed at 1520 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive in Lumberton—Robeson County's 15th such marker, and only the seventh honoring a Black preparatory school in the state. The cast-aluminum sign stands as a "roadside history lesson," preserving the memory of a school that shaped the educational landscape of a county and a state.

More than 140 years after its founding, the Thompson Institute remains a symbol of Black achievement born in the hardest of times.

As Rep. Charles Graham noted, it "laid the framework for the Black community to encourage and promote education and promote literacy"—not only in Robeson County, but across North Carolina and the United States.

Japan Releases Playwright Jeremy O. Harris Three Weeks After Arrest For Alleged Drug Smuggling

The American playwright and Emily in Paris actor Jeremy O. Harris has been released three weeks after his arrest in Japan on suspicion of drug smuggling while prosecutors investigate, police said Wednesday.

Japan has some of the world's strictest drug laws, and possession of illegal narcotics can result in jail time. Prosecutors also have a very high conviction rate.

Known for his Tony-nominated Slave Play, Harris was detained at Naha airport on 16 November when customs officers allegedly found 0.78 grams (0.028 ounces) of a substance containing the stimulant MDMA in



the 36-year-old's carry-on tote bag.

"He was released on December 8 while we sent the case to the Naha District Public Prosecutors Office," the Okinawa police official Tetsuya Shimoji said.

A spokesperson for the Tomishiro police station in Okinawa's Tomigusuku City declined to say whether Harris had been charged when contacted by the New York Times on Tuesday. A spokesperson for the prosecutors office also declined to comment to AFP on the case.

Kalu Becomes First Artist With A Learning Disability To Win The Turner Prize

The Guardian—Nnena Kalu has won the 2025 Turner prize for her colourful drawings and sculptures made from found fabric and VHS tape, becoming the first artist with a learning disability to take home the £25,000 prize.

Alex Farquharson, chair of the jury and director of Tate Britain, said the win by the British-Nigerian represented a watershed moment for the international art world.

"Nnena's work was very much selected for its quality but given she's a neurodiverse artist, given her verbal communication is limited, she's someone who previously would have been on the outside," he said.

"[Her win] begins to erase that border between the neurotypical and neurodiverse artist. You suddenly become aware that actually it's been a boundary around our history, and around contemporary art. But that boundary is dissolving."

Charlotte Hollinshead, Kalu's studio manager and artistic facilitator, made a winner's speech on her behalf. She said: "Nnena has faced an incredible amount of discrimination, which continued to this day, so hopefully this award helps to smash the prejudice away."

Kalu wore a rosette which read "Idol, Legend, Winner, Whatever", which was something a participant in a workshop had said about the artist.

Kalu's drawings and sculptures, described by the *Guardian* art critic Eddy Frankel as "huge cocoons wrapped into massive, tight, twisting, ultra-colourful knots", impressed the judging panel, who were torn in a year when nearly all the artists were tipped as potential winners.

The Turner prize, regarded as one of the art world's most prestigious awards, is presented to an artist born or working in Britain for an outstanding exhibition or presentation of their work over the previous year.

The 2025 nominees were widely seen as artists who all seemed to speak to Britain's contemporary times, where identity and the concept of belonging are in flux. The



THE GOLDEN YEARS

By Judykay Jefferson

WHAT'S IN A WORD

We have reached the end of the year. Annually at my church, each person selects a word to focus their prayers on for the coming year. The church also has a word. Next Sunday we will receive a card on which we will write our word and submit it to the church for prayer. Over the years I have selected words like "provision," "protection," "grace." This year I planned to select "strength." My thinking was that at my age to accomplish my goals, I would need strength from God. Shortly after making the decision, I heard God laugh. Really, God laughed. He then gave me my word for 2026, "evangelism." I didn't laugh. In fact, it kinda scares me. I don't mind sharing my faith journey with others however, I haven't deposited a lot of scripture in my memory bank, so I don't feel prepared for full-out evangelism. I'm sure God isn't the only one in Heaven laughing. I had an aunt, my mother's oldest living sister when I was growing up who was known as my "religious" aunt. She and her husband were childless, and her life was devoted to spiritual obedience and guidance. When my father died in 1979, Aunt Nell came from Chicago to spend a month with my mother and me. Each morning began with her standing in my doorway say, "Is today the day you give your life to Jesus?" I was always confused because although I was in a tug-o-war with God for control, I was clear that I was His child, and He was my God. Wasn't that enough?

Decades later, I had my own Road of Damascus moment and came to understand that my wishy-washy relationship with God was not enough. I made a conscious decision to quit running and reach out to the everlasting arms reaching for me. Now, I sing the songs, take sermon notes, even volunteer. What I don't do is active evangelism. Look out, 2026, here I come.

I don't know about y'all, but I grew up in a time when evangelism wasn't just something the pastor did on Sunday morning. No sir, it was something everybody thought they had a license to do. Your cousin at the cookout, your neighbor on the porch, even the lady at the beauty shop who'd just finished rolling your hair—everybody had a word from the Lord, and they were determined you were gonna hear it whether you wanted to or not.

Back in the 18th and 19th centuries, America was swept up in revival fever. Folks were preaching in fields, barns, and town squares. Some of it was powerful—people's lives were changed. But some of it? Well, let's just say not every sermon was Spirit-led. There were traveling preachers who promised miracles they couldn't deliver, and others who scared folks half to death with visions of fire and brimstone.

That's the thing about layperson evangelism. It's beautiful when it's done with love, humility, and a listening ear. But when it turns into a performance, or worse, a power trip, it can do more harm than good. History is full of examples. Some revivalists stirred up so much fear that communities split apart. Others got tangled up in politics and ended up preaching more about party lines than the gospel. And let's not forget the snake-handling churches that popped up in the Appalachian hills. My faith is strong, but it ain't foolish.

I'm not saying we should stop sharing our faith. Lord knows the world needs more kindness, more hope, more good news. But maybe we ought to remember that evangelism isn't about winning arguments or proving how holy we are. It's about meeting people where they are, listening to their struggles, and showing them love. The best sermon isn't preached—it's lived. It's in the casserole you bring to a grieving family, the ride you give to a neighbor, the patience you show when somebody's having a hard day.

And let's be honest: folks are more likely to listen when you've got a smile on your face and a little humor in your heart. Nobody wants to be browbeaten into belief. But they might just be drawn to joy, to laughter, to the kind of faith that makes life lighter instead of heavier. So next time you feel the urge, ask yourself, "am I sharing good news, or just making noise?" Because the gospel is too precious to be turned into a sideshow.

As for me, I'll keep on telling folks about Jesus—but I'll do it with a wink, a smile, and maybe a slice of sweet potato pie. And I'm going to intentionally learn more scripture. God's word is the food that feeds our soul. My sweet potato pie is just dessert.



critical response to the work was typically passionate and divided.

The *Guardian*'s Adrian Searle praised the show, but picked Kalu as the standout artist. Her work is constructed from adhesive tape, clingfilm, repurposed plastics, fabrics, cable ties and VHS tape which is bound up into different forms.

Searle said Kalu, an autistic artist with learning disabilities and limited verbal communication, created work that was "irreducible" and reminiscent of the US artist Judith Scott and the German artist Hanne Darboven.

"There's no fudging," he wrote. "Kalu deserves to win this year's Turner prize." His comments proved prophetic but other critics felt similarly passionately about other artists.





Candlelight Celebration of Remembrance

Sunday, December 14, 2025
3:00 PM
Lea Funeral Home Chapel

Your friends at Lea Funeral Home invite you to attend a very special Candlelight Celebration of Remembrance that we have planned to help you and your family face the holidays after the loss of a loved one. Also, it will help all of us cope with the loss and sorrow that we have shared both at home and abroad. This is a beautifully inspiring and uplifting celebration of Hope, Healing and Renewal.

The message, music, sharing of memories and fellowship are designed to bring comfort and peace, strength, love and closure in remembering.

*Fellowship and refreshments will follow the celebration.
(Open to the public)*





Lea Funeral Home
2500 Poole Road
Raleigh N.C., 27610
(919) 231-1000
www.leafuneralhome.com

Community

Shaw Univ. And The HBCU Triumph Gala

By Jheri Hardaway

Staff Writer

Briar Creek, NC - December 6, 1865, was profoundly symbolic; the 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified, abolishing slavery. Saturday, December 6, 2025, at The Westin Hotel-RDU was powerful as well. The 2nd Annual HBCU Triumph Gala was a celebration of the very legacy, pride, philanthropy, and endurance that keep us going today. The premier black-tie event dedicated to celebrating triumphs of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) nationwide, with a special focus on Shaw University, North Carolina's first HBCU. As Shaw University enters its 161st year, it is both powerful and inspiring to mark this historic moment by uplifting the legacy of HBCUs and celebrating leaders whose work exemplifies courage, resilience, and triumph.

The legal end of slavery and the birth of institutions paved the way for generations of empowerment. "The Thirteenth Amendment ended slavery, and Shaw University made sure we had a future. The Fourth of July freed the land, the 13th amendment freed the people," shared Phyllis Coley, CEO/Publisher of Spectacular Magazine, as the remarks began. We heard from Dr. Paulette R. Dillard, the 18th Presi-



dent of Shaw University and a host of leaders and dignitaries throughout the evening, which honored individuals who have significantly advanced educational equity and opportunity while raising crucial scholarship funds to empower the next generation of leaders, innovators, and change-makers. The organization aims to reaffirm the transformative role of HBCUs in higher education while raising critical scholarship funds to empower the next generation of leaders, innovators, and change-makers. The 2025 Triumphant Honorees



included: HBCU Triumph Magnum Opus Award: The Honorable Daniel T. Blue, Jr., Senator, NC State General Assembly. HBCU Triumph Community Activism Award: Mr. Marcus Bass, Deputy Director, NC Black Alliance. HBCU Triumph Legacy Award: The Dereck Whittenburg Foundation / Mr. & Mrs. Dereck & Jacqueline Whittenburg. Also celebrated, The Honorable Rosa Gill, Former Representative, NC State General Assembly, The Joseph Hiram Holt, Sr. & Elwyna Grant Haywood Holt Family and Descendants, and The Honorable

Bob Etheridge, Former United States Congressman.

Money was raised, and so were toasts to the endurance and progress made by HBCUs in our area. The overwhelming encouragement could only be matched by the celebratory energy as the night went on. Every speaker had important nuggets and gems to share. This was certainly a successful celebration, raising funds for education and connecting the community in a beautiful space with gorgeous gowns and suits. We look forward to the 3rd Annual HBCU Triumph Awards!



PSI PHI CHAPTER DONATES FOOD BOXES TO FAMILIES IN NEED

WINSTON-SALEM, NC – The brothers of Psi Phi Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity continue to make a positive impact on the community and impact lives.

A few days before loved ones would gather to enjoy the annual Thanksgiving feast, Psi Phi chapter ensured that families in need would also have a happy Thanksgiving by delivering brimming food boxes to more than two dozen families in Winston-Salem.

"This annual Thanksgiving mission is more than a community service project; it's blessing the lives of our neighbors," said Murray Miller, chair of the Psi Phi Social Action committee. "It's our duty as community leaders to be intentional about uplifting our community."

The morning of November 22, Murray and about a dozen more brothers congregated at Harris Teeter on Cloverdale Avenue to pick up the various Thanksgiving staples of turkey, green beans, gravy, cranberry sauce, stuffing, mashed potatoes, bread, desserts, yams, tea and lemonade. They then met at the Omega Friendship Center on Patterson Avenue to stuff the boxes.

Once all the boxes were packed, the brothers delivered them to families in need throughout Winston-Salem. Murray said each of the 28 families was very appreciative and thankful for the food boxes.

Psi Phi Basileus Richard Watkins thanked the Social Action committee and all the brothers who participated in the project to make it another successful endeavor.

Women's Ministry Holiday Extravaganza In Apex

On Sunday, December 8th, Apex First Baptist Church held a Holiday Extravaganza hosted by their Women's Ministry. The afternoon was filled with shopping, door prizes and

holiday cheer.

This event was success on all fronts. It brought the community together for one. Then you were able to do some Christmas shopping, and

every vendor there was a small business.

Some of the items that were available for sale were jewelry, luxury handbags, sports bags, boutique

wear, earrings, clothes makeup, custom t-shirts, hand and body cream, and much more.

This event was a perfect example of how to do the holidays!



BETA PHI CHAPTER WELCOMES NEW OFFICERS

The Beta Phi Chapter has officially announced its newly elected leadership team for the 2025-2026 term. The incoming officers represent a blend of experience, dedication, and continued commitment to advancing the organization's mission of brotherhood, academic excellence, and community service.

Seated L-R: Phillip Harrington-Asst Keeper of Records and Seal, Roderrick Ballard-Keeper of Records and Seal, Bryan Patton-1st Vice Basileus, Antonio Jones-Basileus, Darrell Spells-2nd Vice Basileus, William Dixon-Keeper of Finance & Cory Raulinson-Asst Keeper of Finance.

Standing L-R: Kumani Simmons-Immediate Past Basileus, Louis Threatt-Chaplain, John Ervin-Asst Editor, Jerome Johnson-Editor, Brandon Banister-Asst Keeper of Peace, Phillip Powell-Parliamentarian, Hank Speller-Talent Hunt Chair, Carlton Williams-Keeper of Peace, Not Pictured Jacob Bagley-Asst Chaplain



GIRLS WHO CODE CLUBS TO LAUNCH ACROSS 10 NC RURAL COUNTIES IN 2026

WUNC – A statewide network of museums and nature centers, among other things, is planning to launch a program aimed at helping girls learn about jobs in the technology and science industry.

"Girls Who Code" clubs will launch in 10 rural counties across North Carolina. NC Science Trails, the statewide network, is partnering with nonprofit Girls Who Code International on the initiative.

The clubs will be set up into semesters and held at places like neighborhood Boys and Girl Clubs or libraries, said Michele Houck, the founder of NC Science Trails.

"They'll come in on a weekly or biweekly schedule, and they will have some kind of fun project to do, and they'll work on that project there," she said. "And you know, they might have a speaker. They might have a field trip."

Girls Who Code will form clubs in these counties: Union, Johnston, Edgecombe, Person, Cabarrus, Lincoln, Polk, Cherokee, Haywood, and Pamlico.

The hands-on clubs will be broken down into age groups. Houck said there will be groups for elementary school kids, middle school kids, and then older kids.

"And what their focus is, to learn coding, to learn about AI and cybersecurity, but also to create this community of where it's okay to be a science or an IT girl," she said.

The first club is expected to start in Pamlico County in January and expand to the other rural counties by the end of next year. Those locations include Johnston, Edgecombe, Person, and Cherokee. Houck said that moving forward, she would like to have Girls Who Code clubs at all 65 NC Science Trail locations.

Perseverance, Politics, and the Power of Authenticity

By Jheri Hardaway

Staff Writer

RALEIGH, NC - In a city that has transformed dramatically over the last two decades, few voices have remained as consistent and authentic as Madison Jay, also known as "County!" A staple of the Raleigh hip-hop scene, Madison Jay has seen waves of artists come and go, but he remains grounded, driven by a philosophy of perseverance and community. I recently sat down with the rapper to discuss his journey, the changing landscape of the Triangle, and why, in these turbulent times, leading with love is a revolutionary act.

Madison Jay has been rapping since high school, starting with groups like H Gang and Headhunters. Reflecting on those early days, he noted that while life pulled many of his peers in different directions, he refused to let go of the vision. That persistence is fueled, in part, by the success of our former peer and coworker, Rapsody (Mar-



anna Evans) of Snow Hill, NC. Madison reminisced about "simpler times" when we worked retail with

the now-Grammy winner, spending shifts debating whether Jay-Z or Nas was the greatest and freestyling in the stock room. "She's somebody who achieved a level of success doing it the right way," Madison said, noting her integrity and lyricism. "To see Marlanna, persevere and keep going... that's a testament, and that's always been fuel for me." We shared a laugh at the memories; both Madison and Marlanna showered us with their exceptional lyrical talent daily as we sold shoes alongside our well-respected, longtime managers, Kyle Dove, Reese Strange, and Kevin Meyer.

As Raleigh grows, Madison acknowledges both the progress and the growing pains, particularly regarding traffic and the lack of mass transit. But despite the shifts in infrastructure, his focus remains on the human element of the city. When asked about the support he receives from Raleigh, Madison offered a mature perspective on "haters" and local love. "Positivity is in-

fectious," he explained. "I've been a recipient of positive energy being in a bad space, and I've been the one to give positive energy... It's literally one person at a time choosing to be positive."

Ultimately, Madison Jay's message is a call to action. "The unknown is beautiful," he said, challenging the community to stop fearing independence and change. "It's the fear that got us so locked mentally." He emphasized that explaining about the state of the city or the country is futile if you aren't participating in the process. "You're a fool if you don't vote," he stated plainly, stressing the importance of local engagement over national spectacle. "We have to come to the city council. We have to be present... These are our taxpayer dollars." Madison's words served as a powerful reminder that change requires collective diligence. He offered a reminder to us all that big changes often start small. "Faith of a mustard seed," he said. "That's all it takes."



SALTWATER SEAFOOD & FRY SHACK

4 FENTON STREET RALEIGH, NC 27604
919.834.1813
www.saltwaterseafoodnc.com

RESTAURANT OPEN

TUESDAY-FRIDAY 10:30am - 6:30pm SATURDAY 10:30am-5:30pm

BONE-IN FISH SPECIAL
\$8.50

MARKET OPEN
MARKET HOURS: T-F 9:00-7:00/SAT. 8:30-6:00
SUNDAY 9:00-4:00

Church

Passing the Baton, Not Throwing It: A Conversation On Leadership And Legacy With Rev. Dr. Darian Bouie

By Jheri Hardaway

Staff Writer

In the world of leadership—whether political, corporate, or spiritual—how one enters a role is often just as critical as how one performs in it. I was recently inspired by the installation ceremony of Rev. Dr. Darian Bouie, where a speaker noted the profound difference between a predecessor “passing the baton” versus “throwing it” at the new leader. This essential metaphor has stuck with me. It speaks to stewardship, preparation, and the grace required to lead effectively. I sat down with Dr. Bouie, the newly installed pastor of one of Raleigh’s most historic churches, First Baptist Church on Wilmington Street, to discuss his transition, his vision for the future, and the theology of leading with

love.

Dr. Bouie is unique in his current placement; he is the youngest pastor in the church’s history. Yet, what defines his transition isn’t just his age, but the presence of his impactful mentors and predecessor. Unlike many pastoral transitions that occur due to death or conflict, Dr. Bouie has the benefit of a supportive predecessor in Dr. Dumas Alexander Harshaw, Jr. “There is an African adage that essentially states, ‘When an elder dies without sharing, it’s like a library has burned down,’” Dr. Bouie noted. “It makes no sense for me to receive nothing from the person who has already served in that room.” The two pastors meet weekly for lunch, not always to talk business, but to build a relationship between a senior statesman and the new visionary.



Innovation in a historic place takes balance. Yet, being the youngest pastor in the church’s 217 history comes with a mandate for innovation. His vision for the church extends far beyond Sunday morning service. Dr. Bouie is looking at leveraging the church’s Family Life Center to engage youth in ways that resonate with the 21st century. His interest in STEM education through e-gaming, a billion-dollar industry, are likely synergies to diversify community engagement and increase overall impact. “It’s a draw that has nothing to do with church, but it’s connected to the church,” he said, emphasizing the need for the church to be a community hub, potentially hosting after-school mentoring programs similar to models he has observed in other cities.

For Dr. Bouie, stewardship means

utilization. “It’s pointless to me to have access to things that are of value to other people and not use them,” he said, expressing openness to allowing local groups and businesses to utilize church facilities.

Perhaps the most poignant part of our conversation centered on how the church engages with the world. In an era where political and religious rhetoric often descends into condemnation, Dr. Bouie offered a refreshing perspective on correction and relationship. Dr. Bouie emphasized, “It makes no sense for God to call you into a space and then you be a bad steward of the people you’re connected to... Love must be the foundational element.” He shared a moving story of a woman he met at a pastoral event who co-founded a nonprofit with the very woman who murdered her father. It was a

radical example of forgiveness that challenges us all. “If someone can forgive the murderer of her father, surely we ought to be able to forgive,” he reflected. “It’s not a matter of will. It’s a matter of want.”

As we concluded, we discussed the landscape of the Black church in our region—from Raleigh to rural North Carolina. We touched on the economic power of consolidation and collaboration, rather than the fragmentation often seen when egos get involved.

Rev. Dr. Darian Bouie represents a generation of leadership that honors history while aggressively pursuing a brighter future. He is a reminder that whether we are passing a baton in ministry, politics, or business, the goal is to ensure the next runner has the best possible start.

Young Adults Are Waiting In Line To Worship At This Church

ATLANTA (AP) — After Atlanta pastor Philip Anthony Mitchell stopped dwelling on growing his congregation about three years ago, its attendance surged. Now, lines packed with young adults snake outside 2819 Church, some arriving as early as 5:30 a.m. to secure a spot for Sunday worship.

Christian rap and contemporary music blast like a block party as volunteers cheer into megaphones for around 6,000 weekly churchgoers — up from less than 200 in 2023, the church reports. Inside the sanctuary, the atmosphere turns serious. Many drawn to 2819’s riveting worship are hungry for Mitchell’s animated intensity and signature preaching: No sugarcoating the Bible.

After spirited prayers and songs leave many crying, Mitchell ambles onstage in his all-black uniform, sometimes in quiet contemplation or tears, before launching into a fiery

sermon. His messages, unpolished and laden with challenges to revere God and live better, often spread quickly online. A recent prayer event



drew far more people than State Farm Arena could handle, with many flying in.

Crying, shouting, storming across the platform and punching the air, Mitchell preaches with his whole body — and an urgency to bring people to faith before they die or what he calls Jesus’ impending return to Earth.

“It is life or death for me,” Mitchell told The Associated Press, comparing preaching to the front lines of war. “There are souls that are hanging in the balance. ... I think about the fact that in that room somebody might hear the Gospel, and that might be their last opportunity.”

The church — whose name references Matthew 28:19, a Bible verse commanding believers to go “make disciples of all the nations” — is nondenominational and theologically conservative, with beliefs opposing abortion and in support of

marriage only between a man and a woman.

The congregation’s growth has attracted people of many races and ages, but it’s predominantly young Black adults. Their youth is notable since Americans ages 18 to 24 are less likely than older adults to identify as Christian or attend religious services regularly, according to Pew Research Center.

Sharp sermons and moving worship

Warren Bird, an expert on fast-growing churches, believes the right leader is key to a church’s growth — along with God’s help — and described Mitchell as “speaking a language” that connects with young people who other pastors haven’t reached.

Churchgoers say Mitchell’s message resonates because he carefully walks them through scripture and talks candidly about his spiritual transformation, including his past dealing drugs, paying for abortions and attempting suicide.

“I’m still a little rough around the edges, right? I still got a little hood in me,” said Mitchell, who still speaks with a regional New York accent.

Many at 2819 want more than motivational speeches and say Mitchell’s sermons are counterweights to the feel-good American preaching he criticizes.

“I’m preaching without watering that down, without filtering out things that we think might be too controversial,” said Mitchell, who wants people to mature spiritually

and insists they can’t deal with sin and its consequences without Jesus.

“I think that there is a generation that is gravitating towards that authenticity and truth,” he said. “As a result of that, we are seeing lives being radically transformed.”

Christian podcaster Megan Ashley said she brought a friend to 2819 who had stepped away from her faith, and Mitchell had an impact. The friend told Ashley, “When he speaks, I believe him.”

The tougher messages might hurt some people’s feelings, said Donovan Logan, 23.

“But that’s what it’s supposed to do. If you don’t come to church and want to change, then that’s not the church you’re supposed to be going to,” Logan said.

Practical Biblical Principles

PRIORITY VERSUS WHAT’S IMPORTANT

Read: Luke 10: 28-41

By John L. Caldwell, Pastor
New Jerusalem Baptist Cathedral

Have you ever had the experience of being in the middle of praying to God and the phone rang? And you stopped your prayer just to answer the phone. Are you one of those persons who try to watch television and read your bible or Sunday School lesson at the same time? Do you do this as a way of trying to save time? Or are you telling yourself answering the telephone in the middle of your prayer is more important than talking to God, and I want to be entertained while reading the bible, to remove the boredom of scripture reading?

Let’s break this down for you. Are you mixing up what’s “important” with what is “priority”? Importance and priority are not the same thing. Important things matter to us. They help us grow, stay healthy, and reach our dreams. Priorities are what we choose to do first, because they need our attention right away.

Just because something is important doesn’t mean it should be done today. And just because something feels urgent doesn’t mean it’s important at all. One of the most important, underlining objectives of the Bible is to lead the children of God in putting “first things first — God.”

Here is a simple framework to look at things on your daily to do list. There are four categories: (1) Urgent

and important; (2) Urgent but not important; (3) Important but not urgent; and (4) neither urgent nor important. What should come from this framework is to know what your priorities are for the day. Ask yourself, “What is truly important to me? What should be my priority today?”

When you stop to think about what truly matters and give it attention before it becomes a crisis, life will become easier. Make space for what really matters in your life, your peace of mind will thank you.

In recent days Jesus had welcomed the return of the seventy disciples He sent out on their first mission. The disciples returned with joy, “saying, Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name.” (Luke 10:21). It wasn’t long after this event that a lawyer challenged Jesus as to what shall he do to inherit eternal life and who is his neighbor (Luke 10:27)? Jesus continues and tells the lawyer a parable about a man found hurt on then Jericho Road and who was it that ministered to the hurt man (Luke 10:33-36).

It appears that in today’s church, there are some Christians who have problems determining what is and is not important in their daily lives as opposed to what is a priority or most important. This is so because many are wrapped up and distracted by worldly things and events. This should not be. What is more important than one’s soul heading in the right direction that our Lord laid out

for us at the cross.

Even Paul tells us that He will let nothing separate him from the love of God. Yet many of God’s children have allowed worldly attraction to do just that — separate them from the presence of God in the form of worship, bible study, prayer time, praise, and thanks — making worldly issues more important than spending time with God. Jesus clarified this issue of what is important as to what is priority. The question here is, are you in agreement with Jesus on this issue?

Now Jesus entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, who sat at Jesus’ feet and heard His word when Jesus came into the house and started teaching scriptures.

Now the text tells us that Martha was distracted with much serving, and she approached Jesus and said, “Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me alone? Therefore, tell her to help me.” And Jesus answered and said to Martha, “Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her.”

Do you not agree with what Jesus said? He said learning God’s word is more important than eating. Yes, eating gives us temporary life, but the Word of God is the bread of life which gives “eternal life.”

“STAY ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE BOAT!” Powerful Homecoming/Church Anniversary Message — John 21:2-19 NIV Bishop-Elect William “Billy” Eli Ratcliff

I am honored to be here at the AWESOME Deliverance Cathedral of Love, where Bishop M. S. Nesbitt stands as a powerful woman of God and a spiritual beacon in this city. God has blessed her with Agape-Love, Wisdom, Longevity, and Sanctification. Homecoming usually has a Queen, so today I nominate your Pastor. No second needed; Heaven already approved it. Let’s bless our Homecoming-Holy-Queen with a standing ovation!

Our text, John 21:6, declares: “Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some.” They obeyed, and the nets overflowed.

Let me start with myself. I thank God I’m not still hanging out at the Friday-night club—because if I were, I’d be too hungover to preach. Probably some in the choir would be too hungover to sing, and the musicians might just be arriving from their last gig. Some of us need to thank God for spiritual growth, because if we were still how we used to be, by the time we rolled out of bed, service would already be over.

There are many places in life that will put you on the wrong side of things—but thank God that this Saturday morning at 11 a.m., you’re on the right side. And speaking of doing things right, my Minister of Music didn’t need a chauffeur or an Uber, and he didn’t stagger in smelling like his cologne came from the ABC store. God blessed him to drive himself from Greensboro to use his gift.

Deliverance Cathedral, this event’s theme (Faith to Faith) reminds us that where you stand—your faith and obedience—determines what you receive. The disciples fished all night and caught nothing. But one 10-word sentence from Jesus changed everything: “Cast your net on the right side of the boat.”

1. Jesus Already Had What They

Were Working For

They were exhausted and empty-handed, but when they reached shore, Jesus already had fish cleaned and cooking. He had 153 of them ready before His disciples ever arrived.

Hear the message: Whatever you need, God already has it before you even get to it. Before you prayed, He prepared. Before frustration hit, He supplied.

Once you pass God’s tests and learn His lessons, you’ll hear Him say, “Come, Breakfast is ready.” Now we should say, “Oh taste and see that the Lord is good!”

2. The Biggest Lesson Wasn’t on the Boat—It Was on the Shore

The miracle of the overflowing net was wonderful, but the greater lesson came at the sandy breakfast table. Peter learned that faith in Jesus’ spoken word produces faith to faith. When they relied on themselves, they caught nothing. When they relied on Jesus, they received more than they could manage.

Many people, even church folks, still end up on the wrong side of the boat. They move from Homecoming to Anniversary to Holy Convocation, but in between, God sends lessons, challenges, and even warfare to prepare them for blessing.

Remember: these disciples were professional fishermen. They knew the sea. Yet a Carpenter had to tell them where to cast. Their skill could not replace His direction.

Some saints want to fish with a pole so they can keep what they want and throw back what they don’t. But a net gathers everything God sends. The lesson is simple: The assignment is bigger than our preferences.

3. The Miracle Wasn’t the Fish—It Was the Assignment

After breakfast, Jesus asked Peter three times, “Do you love me?” Each time Peter said yes, Jesus replied: “Feed my lambs. Tend my sheep. Feed my sheep.” The fish were temporary. The breakfast was temporary. But the assignment was eternal.

Most people celebrate miracles but

avoid missions. Yet the blessing isn’t in the boat, it’s in obedience. Not in the fish—but in the assignment.

So, today I declare: Stay on the right side of the boat. The right side of faith, obedience, purpose—and most of all, the right side of Jesus. Because if you’re on the right side of Jesus, you’ll always be on the right side of your Pastor.

The net miracle required teamwork, unity, strength, faith, and obedience. When their faith connected with His word, the miracle became greater than their capacity.

I remember when I was tangled in the devil’s net—but one day the Lord pulled me out. His Word, combined with my faith, produced my deliverance. Can you say while reading this Sermon of the Week, “He brought me out too?”

Paul said it best: “He is able to do exceedingly, abundantly above all we ask or think.” Heavenly-Graciously, even if someone is on the wrong side right now, the moment they hear God’s Word and obey, it all changes. God is able!

Many saints from Deliverance Cathedral and Lincoln Park have already gone home but thank God they died on the right side. They believed Jesus would return—not on a cruise ship, but on the old Ship of Zion.

All we have to do is step on board.

Stay on the Right Side:
• Stay on the right side of faith
• Keep feeding God’s people
• Keep strengthening the flock
• Keep teaching God’s Word
• And keep casting your net on the right side

Once God scoops you up, stay in the net until Jesus comes. Scripture says the net was not torn. One day, we will step on board and sail from earth to glory. Until then, make sure—and be sure—you’re on the RIGHT SIDE of the boat!

Please visit www.youtube.com/@lincolnparkholinesschurch1913 to watch this week’s sermon on video. We invite you to Like, Subscribe, and Share your comments. We would love to hear from you.



N.C.’s Twice-Weekly African American Newspaper

SUBSCRIBE TODAY

Yes, I Want A 1 Year Subscription For \$45.00

Yes, I Want A 2 Year Subscription For \$75.00

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____

EMAIL _____

Make checks payable to The Carolinian Newspaper
Mail your subscription form and payment to PO Box 25308 Raleigh, NC 27611





“Our family serving your family for 110 years”

www.haywoodfh.com 2415 S Wilmington Street Raleigh, NC 27603 919-832-2835

Editorials

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.

2A 101 - Pistols

If you ever talk about investing in the stock market, the number one rule is invest based on your risk tolerance. If you put 10k into a stock, then you are essentially stating that you are ok with the potential of losing up to ten thousand dollars. Your first firearms purchase is similar in the thought process.

You have decided that you want to purchase your first firearms. Perhaps you saw a John Wick movie, or decided you want to take up hunting. Maybe you want it for no other reason than just because you want it and can afford to do so, the next step is to decide on what to get.

In general, you have 3 categories of firearms, and within them there are sub categories. You have pistols, shotguns, and rifles. All three have pros and cons. If you approach a firearm as a tool, with the mindset, that a hammer is not a screw driver, and a screw driver is not a file, you will at times use the handle of a screw drive like hammer if you do not have one on hand, or use the screw drive like a chisel to file something down on a case by case basis. However using the correct tool for the correct circumstances is preferred. This piece is about pistols, so let's get to it.

Pistols, or hand guns, come in three different subsections; full size, compact, and subcompact. Full size guns are often considered duty pistols. They are typically worn on the waist and are visible. Similar to what you see law enforcement wear. They're longer in length. The extra length allows the round to rotate in the barrel longer and utilize more of the gas created when the round is fired to propel it forward with more speed. The quicker velocity improves the ballistic coefficient of the round. In simple terms, it helps the bullet perform better.

For the casual gun owner, carrying a full size gun is not practical because that is a wardrobe malfunction in the making. They are heavy to carry on your body and that is before you add the weight of ammunition. It essentially acts like an anchor pulling your wardrobe down and the tension needed to keep it in place can be quite uncomfortable. This is why many full size gun owners use full sized guns primarily for home defense. That is what is on the nightstand when you hear a bump that goes off in the middle of the night.

The next option is a compact size pistol. Do not let the term 'compact' fool you. The compact pistol is smaller than a full size but still provides plenty of punch in spite of its diminished size relative to a full size pistol. What you gain with a compact gun is the ability to wear it more comfortably than a full sized gun, while still maintaining the ability to carry the same amount of rounds. In other words, many compacts and full sized guns carry the same amount of rounds in their magazines. What you lose in the compact is accuracy over distance. However, we have to consider that if a target or threat is too far away to hit accurately, this could mean that you are in a position where you can escape to safety. Handguns by nature are designed to be used in close proximity, not long distance. One other feature that compacts bring to the table is that they can be worn outside of the body, or concealed inside the waistband.

The final category is subcompact. These are smaller pistols aimed at deep concealability. The biggest mistake people make with subcompacts is they think its relative size means it is meant for smaller people, specifically women. Nothing could be further from the truth. Smaller handguns are far more challenging to shoot well than longer, larger handguns. Small handguns are snappy. Snappy means they have more kick or muzzle flip. This makes accuracy challenging over repeated shots, especially during rapid fire. When you pull the trigger, the front of the barrel, called the muzzle, moves upward from the blast. Longer weapons have more weight to mitigate the rise and can allow for faster follow up shots. Also, the longer the distance is between the front and rear sights, the greater the aimpoint accuracy. Shorter separation between the front and rear sights create higher degrees of deviation and parallax. This is why subcompacts best case use is when a threat is within your personal space where aim is not as much as a priority. The advantage of the subcompact comes with its concealability. However, you must get a special license and go to a class in order to legally conceal carry.

Smaller guns used to have longer trigger pulls which adds to the difficulty of getting accurate shots. The longer trigger pull could be either intentional or just poor design. Some argue that the longer trigger pull is to help prevent an accidental discharge when unholstering in the heat of the moment. Newer subcompacts have all but eliminated the excessively long trigger pull. Regardless of the size of the gun, practice must become routine to prevent an accidental discharge.

Before sticking a pin in this topic let's address the two types of handguns; pistols and revolvers. Revolvers have a rotating cylinder that chambers the rounds. The average revolver holds 6 rounds. The more expensive ones can hold 8. Pistols on average hold 15 rounds. Subcompacts are around 10 to 12 rounds. You will hear this term when discussing the trigger on both types of firearms and it does make a huge difference on whether or not it is right for you. The terms are single action and double action.

A single action trigger means it has only one function. That function is to release the hammer from its sear so the hammer can strike the primer of the round and make the gun shoot. This means the trigger can not release the hammer simply by pulling it. You must first set the trigger by pulling the pistol's slide rearward. Revolvers are typically not single action. Many of them are both single and double action.

A double action trigger means that when you pull the trigger, it has two functions. The first is to set or cock the hammer, and the second function is to release the hammer so that it strikes the primer and fires the gun. These types of handguns are hammer fired weapons. Pistols can be either hammer fired, or striker fired. A striker fired pistol can only be single action. We will go into how a striker fire system works at a later time.

The advantage of a double action revolver comes into play if there is a malfunction with the round. Simply pull the trigger and the cylinder rotates to the next round. With a semi auto pistol, clearing jams, especially under pressure can be a huge challenge, especially if you do not practice clearing jams. This is why some prefer a hammer fired gun, regardless of whether it is a revolver or pistol. If it is a pistol, perhaps the round did not discharge because of a light primer strike. So pulling the trigger again may apply the necessary force to make the round go off. The other advantage to the revolver is that the brass casings do not fly out. When shooting a semi automatic pistol there is a chance that one of the ejected casing lands on you. The heat from the casing is hot enough to burn your skin if it gets stuck on you. It does happen. Still people lean more towards pistols than revolvers because of cost, round capacity, and they're generally easier to shoot, especially when shooting fast. This is because a pistol allows you to use more of the gun to support with both hands, while traditional revolver style of gripping does not. Regardless of which method is used, both require time and training to be accurate.

The conversation around gun ownership is a broad one and I hope you will tune in as we address the community in regards to this topic. We welcome and encourage your feedback.



X@Ramireztoons

michaelpramirez.com



HAVING A MORAL COMPASS

The president of the United States refuses to make decisions based on what is good for the citizens of this country. His intent appears rooted in his faulty belief that he alone knows what is best. He either does not know how this country began as the United States, or he knows and believes that the dream of democracy is no longer relevant. This country did not begin as a democracy because there were already people here when the immigrants arrived.

The Indigenous peoples who lived here had governments and tribes. They had values, morals, and although they did not call it democracy, they had a system that in many ways resembled one. I once read the book Black Elk Speaks, and to me it tells the story of a wise and spiritual people.

I believe, as I have said before, that if Indigenous people had required of immigrants what this administration, and past administrations, now demand of people who want to come to our country, we would have a better nation today. In other words, they should have built a wall—LOL.

The ideas of this president and of his followers, minions, and sycophants have already shown us that these ways will not make the country great. The average kindergarten or preschool teacher would know that the atmosphere Donald Trump is creating cannot sustain civility or progress. Any leader who governs by lying, insulting, and dictating policies fueled by cult-like rules is destined to fail.

Creative intelligence, problem-solving, and genuine progress cannot occur under dictatorship without increasing rebellion. It would create a chaotic environment in a kindergarten classroom, a Sunday school class, or a church. No social progress can be made this way.

It is clear to most enlightened minds that rules without relationship breed rebellion. Brainwashed people eventually wake up, even if, in the case of the Jim Jones cult, it did not happen until the last moments before death, after they had consumed poison.

The president is now claiming that Democrats are using a word he invented when they talk about "affordable" or "affordability." Surely he is not serious, but given his past, I am not entirely sure. Just in case, here is a simple definition:

Affordability means the state of being inexpensive enough for people to buy. It is the quality of having a cost that is not too high. It is an economic term, and that is why Democrats use it.

Donald cannot talk himself out of this one because people go to grocery stores. People desire housing, cars, college, health, medicine, dental care. People like to wear nice clothes and comfortable shoes. Some want to travel, take vacations, or attend funerals across the country but cannot afford the gas or even pay their water bills. He cannot convince people that what is in their pocketbooks or bank accounts is imaginary. People believed him and voted based on the price of eggs, and those prices are rising every day.

Even those who like his racist views see him giving away their tax dollars to other countries, and to himself, his family, and his wealthy friends. More people are waking up. Hunger does that. The economic situation is bad for most middle-class and poor people.

But it is not just about what we can or cannot afford financially. We cannot afford a country without immigrants. Some people have lost their farms and businesses because of his tariffs. We also cannot afford to kill people clinging to a boat after we bombed it, and then call ourselves a Christian nation.

We cannot afford to arrest citizens and shoot citizens while labeling them "illegal immigrants," only to later discover they were telling the truth. We cannot ignore Trump's negative attitude toward the beautiful Somali people or his calling them "smelly" and "fraudulent."

I know he is talking about himself and looking again into his own mirror, but our children are watching. It is an unwell man who takes over the Kennedy Center, gives himself a peace prize, and talks about renaming it the Trump Center.

I have known others who have given themselves awards or asked for things to be named after them when they did not deserve it. I have watched supposedly intelligent people go along with this and wondered how far we are willing to go when we give unmerited titles and awards. Do we not see our children watching?

Finally, although Donald Trump does not know this, he does not have the right to change birthright citizenship. Neither does the Supreme Court. If they go against the Constitution on this issue, we as a nation will lose our soul.

We cannot afford that, because there goes democracy for real. We cannot afford a leader so vindictive that he wants to charge people to visit national parks on Martin Luther King Day, Juneteenth, and during Black History Month. He is so jealous of real leadership that he has no boundaries.

Other Viewpoints

AMERICA MUST CLOSE THE RARE EARTH GAP

By Austin Bay

The Trump administration and technology-savvy congressional leaders (in both parties) agree on one very key strategic issue vis-à-vis Communist China: America must close the rare earth gap.

The 17 rare earth minerals — also called rare earth elements (REEs) — are fundamental to digital modernity. REEs possess irreplaceable catalytic, magnetic, conduction and luminescent properties vital to manufacturing digital-age essentials such as smartphones, computers, medical imaging equipment, advanced batter-

ies, etc.

The Cold War had its bomber gap, followed by the missile gap — "gaps" in the number of strategic offensive weapons possessed by the East and West. In the early 1950s, Washington believed the Soviet Union had the advantage in deployed long-range, jet-powered, nuclear-capable bombers. Eventually, aerial recon imagery revealed Russia had no edge. However, the 1957 Sputnik satellite launch provided a strong indication that Moscow had a big advantage in long-range, large-payload ballistic missiles — the missile gap.

The U.S. caught up — by manufacturing and fielding superior systems.

However, it's the 21st century. Today, manufacturing virtually all high-tech military weapons and communications systems requires REEs, from vital strategic sensors (e.g., satellites and radars detecting enemy missiles) to the command and guidance systems on offensive weapons.

Unfortunately, the U.S. is once again playing a serious game of catch-up.

Communist China has become a rare earth monopolist. Well, not quite a monopolist, but China is definitely the overwhelmingly dominant political actor in the mining, refining and distribution of rare earth minerals essential to modern digital and electronic tech.

How did it happen? Washington let it. The Epoch Times recently noted that, until 1991, the U.S. "was a leading producer of rare earth minerals ..." But environmentalist objections led to the closure of major mines. China stepped in.

Fair question worth investigating: Did Chinese strategists encourage and perhaps fund U.S. environmental and climate extremists? Cold War Moscow's intelligence agencies used Western peace and disarmament activists to try and shake Western resolve.

Beijing has also targeted some not-so-modern military essentials. China has gained production and/or market control of other critical minerals, including trisulfide, a type of antimony used in manufacturing bullet cartridge primers — as in the ignition of a simple rifle bullet. Reuters recently reported that the U.S. had not domestically manufactured trisulfide since the 1960s.

I credit this to Red China's deep strategy, which I summarize as this: Beijing does not want to risk a shooting war with the U.S. ("kinetic war" in Pentagonese). Goodness, the U.S. is China's biggest market. Post-Tiananmen Square, the communist dictatorship's deal with the Chinese people is they can have smartphones and MacBooks and American pork — the goodies of modernity — as long as they shut up and let the Politburo rule.

Trading high explosives with your biggest market is bad for business. However, Beijing has a deep case of ethnic Han Chinese Middle Kingdom imperialism. Emperor Xi really wants to become the world's superpower.

So, Beijing plays a long game: Surpass the U.S. as the world's leading manufacturer, and gain control of essential minerals to the point it can deny modern manufacturing essentials. On the dirty side, China wages disintegrative warfare against the U.S. by supplying drug cartels with fentanyl and encouraging open U.S. borders.

Another fair question: Has Beijing helped fund the "defund the police" and "no cash bail" movements?

How does America respond? The Trump administration has reached mineral deals with several nations, including Australia, Malaysia and Japan. Reopening domestic "mothballed" REE mines has to happen. How long will that take? Likely a decade or more. Cost? Probably hundreds of millions. But reshoring REE production is a must.

Brilliant research may have opened a readily accessible domestic mine that's an interim solution: graveyards of old electronic and digital equipment. The Epoch Times reported that Rice University chemist and nanotechnologist James Tour "has pioneered a way to quickly extract rare earth metals" from "electronic waste" (discarded electronics).

He uses a process called "flash Joule heating," rapidly heating the valuable junk "to thousands of degrees to vaporize the metals ..." A chemical process then extracts individual REEs.

Tour claims a flash Joule heating facility can be up and running for "a few tens of millions of dollars." I'll donate a very dead Compaq Deskpro to the cause.



"My wife tried on one of your diamond rings and now it's stuck. I think the easiest solution is just to let you keep her."

Classifieds

AVERY COUNTY

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
AVERY COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File Number 25E001179-050
THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 20th day of October 2025, as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of FREDDY GWYN, late of Avery County, North Carolina, hereby wish to notify all persons having claims against the Estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned at the below listed address on or before the 27th day of February, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned at the below listed address.

This, the 27th day of November, 2025.

David Gwyn, Administrator
c/o Edwards Beightol, LLC
714 St. Mary's Street
Raleigh, NC 27605
11/27, 12/4, 12/11 and 12/18/2025

CHATHAM COUNTY

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
CHATHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File Number 25E000643-180
THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 26th day of November 2025, as EXECUTOR of the Estate of DONNA LEE MCCORKLE, late of Chatham County, North Carolina, hereby wish to notify all persons having claims against the Estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned at the below listed address on or before the 4th day of March, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned at the below listed address.

This, the 4th day of December, 2025.

Molly Jo Swann, Executor
c/o Richard F. Prentis, Jr.
4 Consultant Pl.
Durham, NC 27707
12/4, 12/11, 12/18, and 12/25/2025
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
CHATHAM COUNTY

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION
In the General Court of Justice
District Court Division

File No. 25CV001255-180
To: HENRY FILANDE ARTICA MATAMOROS, 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 January 13, 2026 said date being at least forty (40) days from the first publication of this Notice, and upon your failure to do so, the Plaintiff, PAULA ISABEL LEON BENITEZ, will apply to the court located at 40 E Chatham St, Pittsboro, NC 27312 for the relief sought.

This, the 4th day of December, 2025.

Aneta Paval
Paval Law Offices, PLLC
7404 Chapel Hill Rd
Suite M
Raleigh NC 27607
Telephone: (919) 410-6690
12/4, 12/11 and 12/18/2025

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 25E001486-310
THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 3rd day of December 2025, as EXECUTOR of the Estate of MARTHA HELEN CASH a/k/a HELEN M. CASH a/k/a HELEN MASSEY CASH, late of Durham County, North Carolina, hereby wish to notify all persons having claims against the Estate of said deceased to exhibit them to

the undersigned at the below listed address on or before the 11th day of March, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned at the below listed address.

This, the 11th day of December, 2025.

Brant Taylor Massey, Executor
822 Knight Drive
Durham, NC, 27712
December 11, 18, 25, and 1/1/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File Number 25E001462-310
THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 4th day of December 2025, as EXECUTOR of the Estate of FREDERICK SAMUEL BATTAGLIA, JR., late of Durham County, North Carolina, hereby wish to notify all persons having claims against the Estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned at the below listed address on or before the 11th day of March, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned at the below listed address.

This, the 11th day of December, 2025.

Catherine Thomas, Executor
c/o Bagwell Holt Smith P.A.
111 Cloister Court, Suite 200
Chapel Hill, NC 27514
December 11, 18, 25, and 1/1/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
File Number 25E001432-310
ALL PERSONS, firms and corporations having claims against MARY LOU CLARKE CARTER a/k/a Mary Louise Clarke Carter a/k/a Mary Lou Carter, deceased, of Durham County, N.C., are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before 4-13-2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This 12-11-2025.

Frances Lynn McSherry, Executor of the Estate of Mary Lou Clarke Carter a/k/a Mary Louise Clarke Carter a/k/a Mary Lou Carter c/o Lori M. Bernstein, Attorney at Law 2726 Croasdaile Dr. Suite 202 Durham, North Carolina 27705 12/11, 12/18, 12/25/2025, and 1/1/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION
In The General Court of Justice Superior Court Division Before The Clerk File No. 25SP001018-310 For The Adoption Of A Male Minor TO: The biological father of A.J.M., a male child, born on January 23, 2023 in Raleigh, Wake County, North Carolina.

Take notice that a Petition for Adoption was filed with the Clerk of Superior Court for Durham County, North Carolina in the above entitled special proceeding. The Petition relates to A.J.M., a male child, born on January, 2023 in Raleigh, Wake County, North Carolina to Angela Grace Merida. The putative biological father is unknown. PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that you are required to file a response to such pleading not later than 40 days from the first day of publication of this notice, that date being December 11, 2025, and upon your failure to do so the Petitioner will apply to the Court for relief sought in the Petition. Any parental rights you may have will be terminated upon the entry of the decree of adoption.

Kelly T. Dempsey, Attorney for Petitioners, 10310 Couloak Drive, #400, Charlotte NC 28216. 12/11, 12/18, and 12/25/2025
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION
In The General Court of Justice Superior Court Division Before The Clerk File No. 25SP001017-310 For The Adoption Of A Female Minor TO: The biological father of A.R.M., a female child, born on December 29, 2023 in Durham, Durham County, North Carolina.

Take notice that a Petition for Adoption was filed with the Clerk of Superior Court for Durham County, North Carolina in the above entitled special proceeding. The Petition relates to A.R.M., a female child, born on December 29, 2023 in Durham, Durham County, North Carolina to Angela Grace Merida. The putative biological father is unknown. PLEASE TAKE NOTICE

that you are required to file a response to such pleading not later than 40 days from the first day of publication of this notice, that date being December 11, 2025, and upon your failure to do so the Petitioner will apply to the Court for relief sought in the Petition. Any parental rights you may have will be terminated upon the entry of the decree of adoption.

Kelly T. Dempsey, Attorney for Petitioners, 10310 Couloak Drive, #400, Charlotte NC 28216. 12/11, 12/18, and 12/25/2025
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File Number 25E001486-310
THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 10th day of July, 2025, as EXECUTOR of the Estate of DOROTHY LUCILLE ROYCROFT MOORE, 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 4th day of March, 2026 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 4th day of December, 2025.

Joseph Harold Roycroft, Jr., Executor, c/o Richard F. Prentis, Jr.,

that you are required to file a response to such pleading not later than 40 days from the first day of publication of this notice, that date being December 11, 2025, and upon your failure to do so the Petitioner will apply to the Court for relief sought in the Petition. Any parental rights you may have will be terminated upon the entry of the decree of adoption.

Kelly T. Dempsey, Attorney for Petitioners, 10310 Couloak Drive, #400, Charlotte NC 28216. 12/11, 12/18, and 12/25/2025
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File Number 25E001486-310
THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 24th day of November 2025, as EXECUTOR of the Estate of JACQUELINE LADD, late of Durham County, North Carolina, hereby wish to notify all persons having claims against the Estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned at the below listed address on or before the 4th day of March, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned at the below listed address.

This, the 4th day of December, 2025.

Donald Ladd jr., Executor
4533 Holloman Rd
Durham, NC 27703
12/4, 12/11, 12/18, and 12/25/2025
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File Number 25E001351-310
THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 23rd day of October 2025, as EXECUTOR of the Estate of TONYA MICHELLE MANGUM, late of Durham County, North Carolina, hereby wish to notify all persons having claims against the Estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned at the below listed address on or before the 4th day of March, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned at the below listed address.

This, the 4th day of November, 2025.

Tyressa Mangum-McCormick
Executor
1704 Stargross Drive
Grayson, GA 30017
12/4, 12/11, 12/18, and 12/25/2025
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File Number 25E001130-310
THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 1st day of October 2025, as EXECUTOR of the Estate of JEAN COLEMAN PAGE, late of Durham County, North Carolina, hereby wish to notify all persons having claims against the Estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned at the below listed address on or before the 4th day of March, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned at the below listed address.

This, the 4th day of December, 2025.

Roger Dale Page, Executor
4313 Page Road
Morrisville, NC 27560
12/4, 12/11, 12/18, and 12/25/2025
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File Number 25E000862-310
THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 19th day of June 2025, as CO-EXECUTORS of the Estate of BERTICE RAY SORRELL, late of Durham County, North Carolina, hereby wish to notify all persons having claims against the Estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned at the below listed address.

This, the 27th day of November, 2025.

Debra Gay Sorrell, Co-Executor
242 Sun Colony Blvd, Unit 104
Longs, SC 29568
Timothy Russell Sorrell Sr.
Co-Executor
4205 Greens Ferry Court
Wilmington, NC 28409
11/27, 12/4, 12/11 and 12/18/2025
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION
In the General Court of Justice
District Court Division

File No. 25CV003291-310
[CHILD CUSTODY PROCEEDING]
Ana Julia Rodriguez Lanza, Plaintiff v. Carlos Rene Munguia Flores, Defendant.
To Carlos Rene Munguia Flores, the above-named defendant:
TAKE NOTICE that a pleading seeking relief against you have been filed in the above-entitled action. The nature of the relief being sought is as follows: that permanent sole legal custody of Carlos Munguia Rodriguez, born November 19, 2010, and Oscar Munguia Rodriguez, born August 11, 2014, be granted to Ana Julia Rodriguez Lanza.

You are required to make defense to such pleading not later than January 6th, 2026 said date being forty (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 27th day of November 2025
12/4, 12/11, 12/18, and 12/25/2025
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION
In the General Court of Justice
District Court Division

Doe v. John Reed, 25CV006835-310
Mr. Reed:

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 as follows: Complaint for Emergency Child Custody, Temporary, and Permanent Child Custody.

You are required to make defense to such pleading not later than January 20, 2026 and upon your failure to do so the party seeking service against you will apply to the court for the relief sought. You may file responsive pleadings with the Durham County Clerk of Court, 510 South Dillard St., Durham, NC 27701.

This the 4th day of December, 2025.

/s/ Mr. Robert L. Schupp,
Attorney for Plaintiff
PO Box 396, Benson, NC 27504
12/4, 12/11 and 12/18/2025
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File Number 25E001148-310
THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 20th day of November 2025, as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of DARIN PAUL RHEW, late of Durham County, North Carolina, hereby wish to notify all persons having claims against the Estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned at the below listed address on or before the 27th day of February, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned at the below listed address.

This, the 27th day of November, 2025.

Dwayne Russel Rhew,
Administrator
8807 Camden Park Drive
Raleigh, NC 27613
11/27, 12/4, 12/11 and 12/18/2025
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File Number 25E000820-310
THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 19th day of June 2025, as CO-EXECUTORS of the Estate of BERTICE RAY SORRELL, late of Durham County, North Carolina, hereby wish to notify all persons having claims against the Estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned at the below listed address on or before the 27th day of February, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned at the below listed address.

This, the 27th day of November, 2025.

Debra Gay Sorrell, Co-Executor
242 Sun Colony Blvd, Unit 104
Longs, SC 29568
Timothy Russell Sorrell Sr.
Co-Executor
4205 Greens Ferry Court
Wilmington, NC 28409
11/27, 12/4, 12/11 and 12/18/2025
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION
In the General Court of Justice
District Court Division

File No. 25CV003291-310
[CHILD CUSTODY PROCEEDING]
Ana Julia Rodriguez Lanza, Plaintiff v. Carlos Rene Munguia Flores, Defendant.
To Carlos Rene Munguia Flores, the above-named defendant:
TAKE NOTICE that a pleading seeking relief against you have been filed in the above-entitled action. The nature of the relief being sought is as follows: that permanent sole legal custody of Carlos Munguia Rodriguez, born November 19, 2010, and Oscar Munguia Rodriguez, born August 11, 2014, be granted to Ana Julia Rodriguez Lanza.

You are required to make defense to such pleading not later than January 6th, 2026 said date being forty (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 27th day of November 2025
12/4, 12/11, 12/18, and 12/25/2025
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION
In the General Court of Justice
District Court Division

File No. 25E001333-310
THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 10th day of November 2025, as Executor of the ESTATE OF WILLIAM JAMES GRAHAM, JR., 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 23rd day of February, 2026, 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 20th day of November, 2025.

Scott Anthony Mann, Executor
ESTATE OF WILLIAM JAMES GRAHAM, JR.
c/o Shirley Diefenbach, Attorney
Walker Lambe, PLLC
Post Office Box 51549
Durham, North Carolina 27717
11/20, 11/27, 12/4, and 12/11/2025
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File Number 25E001269-310
THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 7th day of November 2025, as Executor of the Estate of JANE ISABELLA AUSTIN, 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 23rd day of February, 2026, or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This December 11, 2025.

Arnice Jones, Administratrix
c/o Browning Law Firm, PA
120 E. Main Street
Durham, NC 27701
December 11, 18, 25, and 1/1/2026

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File Number 25E000398-900
ALL PERSONS, firms and corporations having claims against ANNIE M. JONES, deceased, of Prince Georges County, MD, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before March 4, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This December 11, 2025.

WAKE COUNTY

FILE NO. 25E000398-900
ALL PERSONS, firms and corporations having claims against ANNIE M. JONES, deceased, of Prince Georges County, MD, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before March 4, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This December 11, 2025.

Arnice Jones, Administratrix
c/o Browning Law Firm, PA
120 E. Main Street
Durham, NC 27701
December 11, 18, 25, and 1/1/2026

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File Number 25E001456-310
THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 14th day of November 2025, as Executor of the Estate of STEPHEN SHELLEY PRYDE, 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 23rd day of February, 2026, 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 20th day of November, 2025.

Ellen Marie Wilbur, Executor
2339 Glendale Ave
Durham NC 27704
11/20, 11/27, 12/4, and 12/11/2025

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File Number 25E001456-310
THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 10th day of November 2025, as Executor of the ESTATE OF WILLIAM JAMES GRAHAM, JR., 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 23rd day of February, 2026, 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 20th day of November, 2025.

Scott Anthony Mann, Executor
ESTATE OF WILLIAM JAMES GRAHAM, JR.
c/o Shirley Diefenbach, Attorney
Walker Lambe, PLLC
Post Office Box 51549
Durham, North Carolina 27717
11/20, 11/27, 12/4, and 12/11/2025
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File No. 25CV043269-910
CAPITAL CITY CAR CARE LLC, Plaintiff vs. UNKNOWN VIN: 1G1BL52P2TR160297, 1996 CHEVROLET, 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 1996 CHEVROLET, ID No. 1G1BL52P2TR160297 and that the petitioner shall have the right to sell to the highest bidder the motor vehicle listed on January 26, 2026 at WCCH, 316 Fayetteville St., 3rd Floor, Raleigh, NC 27601, at 1:00 p.m. You are required to make a defense to such pleading before such date and time.

This the 11th day of December, 2025.

Capital City Car Care LLC, Plaintiff
1819 POOLE ROAD
Raleigh, NC 27610
12/11, 12/18, and 12/25/2025
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. 25CV043269-910
CAPITAL CITY CAR CARE LLC,
Plaintiff vs. UNKNOWN VIN:
1G1BL52P2TR160297, 1996
CHEVROLET, 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 1996 CHEVROLET, ID No. 1G1BL52P2TR160297 and that the petitioner shall have the right to sell to the highest bidder the motor vehicle listed on January 26, 2026 at WCCH, 316 Fayetteville St., 3rd Floor, Raleigh, NC 27601, at 1:00 p.m. You are required to make a defense to such pleading before such date and time.

This the 11th day of December, 2025.

Capital City Car Care LLC, Plaintiff
1819 POOLE ROAD
Raleigh, NC 27610
12/11, 12/18, and 12/25/2025
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. 25CV041587-910
CAROLINA AUTO BODY,
Plaintiff vs. UNKNOWN VIN:
1FDKF38FXRNB29280, 1994
FORD, 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 1994 FORD, ID No. 1FDKF38FXRNB29280 and that the petitioner shall have the right to sell to the highest bidder the motor vehicle listed on January 26, 2026 at WCCH, 316 Fayetteville St., 3rd Floor, Raleigh, NC 27601, at 1:00 p.m. You are required to make a defense to such pleading before such date and time.

This the 11th day of December, 2025.

Carolina Auto Body, Plaintiff
468 Old Wilson Road
Wendell, NC 275
c/o PO Box 46882
Raleigh, NC 27620
12/11, 12/18, and 12/25/2025
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File No. 25E001456-310
THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 14th day of November 2025, as Executor of the Estate of STEPHEN SHELLEY PRYDE, 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 23rd day of February, 2026, 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 20th day of November, 2025.

WAKE COUNTY

PROCESS BY PUBLICATION
In the General Court of Justice
District Court Division
File No. 25CV019735-910

To: BRYANT KEITH RICHARDSON, 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 divorce. You are required to make defense to such pleading no later than January 12, 2025 said date being at least thirty (30) days from the first publication of this Notice, and upon your failure to do so, the Plaintiff, ASHLEY WRIGHT-RICHARDSON, will apply to the court located at 316 Fayetteville St., Raleigh NC 27601 for the relief sought.

This, the 11th day of December, 2025.

Ashley Wright-Richard, Plaintiff
8210 McGuire Drive
Raleigh, NC 27616
12/11, 12/18, and 12/25/2025
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION
In the General Court of Justice
District Court Division
File No. 25CV019679-910
To: JAMES EBERT, 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 as follows: The Plaintiff has filed a COMPLAINT FOR JUDGMENT FOR ABSOLUTE DIVORCE. You are required to make defense to such pleading no later than January 8, 2026 said date being at least thirty (30) days from the first publication of this Notice, and upon your failure to do so, the Plaintiff, BRENDA EBERT, will apply to the court located at 316 Fayetteville St., Raleigh NC 27601 for the relief sought.

This, the 4th day of December, 2025.

Brenda Ebert, Plaintiff
827 Firebrick Dr.
Cary, NC 27519

12/4, 12/11 and 12/18/2025
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION
In the General Court of Justice
District Court Division
File No. 25CV037179-910

To: ALEX WAIGI KIMANI, 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 divorce. You are required to make defense to such pleading no later than January 8, 2026 said date being at least thirty (30) days from the first publication of this Notice, and upon your failure to do so, the Plaintiff, IRENE WANJIKU NJAU, will apply to the court located at 316 Fayetteville St., Raleigh NC 27601 for the relief sought.

2026 said date being at least thirty (30) days from the first publication of this Notice, and upon your failure to do so, the Plaintiff, IRENE WANJIKU NJAU, will apply to the court located at 316 Fayetteville St., Raleigh NC 27601 for the relief sought.

This, the 4th day of December, 2025.

John On Eluwa, Esq.
PO Box 3336
Cary, NC 27519

12/4, 12/11 and 12/18/2025
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File Number 25E003728-910

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 1st day of October 2025, as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of LEVON SCOTT, late of Wake County, North Carolina, hereby wish to notify all persons having claims against the Estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned at the below listed address on or before the 27th day of February, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned at the below listed address.

This, the 27th day of November, 2025.

Kathery L. Jones, Administrator
505 Poplar Springs Church Rd.
Raleigh, NC 27603
11/27, 12/4, 12/11 and 12/18/2025
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
FILE NO. 25E004276-910

The undersigned, having qualified as Administrator of the Estate of RICHARD L. CUMMINGS, deceased, late of Wake County, North Carolina, hereby notifies all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against said estate to present them to the undersigned on or before the 27th day of February, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons, firms, and corporations indebted to said estate are requested to make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This, the 27th day of November, 2025.

Wilma M. Johnson Administrator of the Estate of Richard L. Cummings, Deceased

c/o Lawrence J. D'Amelio, III
Attorney for the Estate
1834 Pembroke Rd Ste 2
Greensboro, NC 27408
Telephone: 336 615 8367

11/27, 12/4, 12/11 and 12/18/2025

FORECLOSURE

NORTH CAROLINA DURHAM COUNTY AMENDED NOTICE OF SALE
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
25SP001010-310

IN THE MATTER OF THE FORECLOSURE OF THE DEED OF TRUST EXECUTED BY ROBERT NESTA MICHAEL AND MEGAN MICHAEL RECORDED ON DECEMBER 22, 2022, IN BOOK 9839, PAGE 583, IN THE DURHAM COUNTY REGISTRY.

Under and by virtue of the power and authority contained in the Deed of Trust executed by Robert Nesta Michael and Megan Michael ("Grantors") on December 22, 2022, and recorded on December 22, 2022, in Book 09839, Page 583, in the Durham County Registry ("Deed of Trust"), and because of default in the payment of the indebtedness secured by the Deed of Trust (referred to as the "Note"), and pursuant to the Order of the Clerk of Superior Court for Durham County, North Carolina, entered in this foreclosure proceeding, the undersigned, Ryan J. Adams, appointed Substitute Trustee by instrument recorded on March 10, 2025, in Book 10267, Page 381, in the Durham County Registry, will expose for sale at public auction to the highest bidder for cash, that certain tract or parcel of property located in Durham County, North Carolina (including any fixtures and improvements thereon) as more particularly described as follows:

BEING all of Lot 2 per plat and survey entitled "Survey for Lewis W. Fletcher and wife Patricia H. Fletcher" on file in Plat Book 129, Page 214, Durham County Registry, to which reference is hereby made for more particular description of same.

Parcel 169881
Oak Grove Township
Durham County, North Carolina
Commonly known as 4218 Fiesta Road, Durham, NC 27703

This is the same property identified as "Parcel #3 (Parcel Identifier No. 169881)" on that deed recorded in Book 8522, Page 765, with a correct tax parcel reference on page 3 ("169681"), and an incorrect Plat Book and Page reference on page 3 ("Plat Book 48, at Page 92").

The record owners of the above-described property, as reflected by the records in the Durham County Register of Deeds not more than ten (10) days prior to the posting of this notice are Robert Nesta Michael and Megan Michael. The above-described real property, improvements and fixtures will be sold subject to any and all superior mortgages, deeds of trust and liens, including, without limitation, the lien of all unpaid ad valorem taxes and assessments, as well as easements, conditions, restrictions and other matters of record filed prior to the Deed of Trust.

The above-described property will be sold "AS IS, WHERE IS." The property is not being sold subject or together with any subordinate rights or interests.

Neither the Substitute Trustee, nor the holder of the Note secured by the Deed of Trust being foreclosed, nor the officers, members, managers, directors, attorneys, employees, agents or authorized representatives of either the Substitute Trustee or the holder of the Note make any representation or warranty relating to the title or any physical, environmental, health or safety conditions existing in, on, at or relating to the property being sold, and any and all responsibilities or liabilities arising out of or in any way relating to any such conditions expressly are disclaimed.

Pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 45-21.10 and the terms of the Deed of Trust, any successful bidder may be required to deposit with the Substitute Trustee immediately upon conclusion of the sale a cash deposit or certified check not to exceed the greater of five percent (5%) of the amount of the bid or \$750.00. Any successful bidder shall be required to tender the full balance purchase price so bid in cash or certified check at the time the Substitute Trustee tenders to the successful bidder a deed for the property or attempts to tender such deed, and should said successful bidder fail to pay the full balance purchase price so bid at that time, the successful bidder shall remain liable on the bid as provided in N.C. Gen. Stat. § 45-21.30 (d) and (e).

Please be advised that an order for possession of the property may be issued pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 45-21.29 in favor of the purchaser and against the party or parties in possession by the clerk of the superior court of the county in which the property is sold.

Further, be advised that any person who occupies the property pursuant to a rental agreement entered into or renewed on or after October 1, 2007, may after receiving the notice of sale, terminate the rental agreement upon 10 days rental notice to the landlord. Upon termination of such rental agreement, the tenant is liable for rent due under the rental agreement prorated to the effective date of the termination.

The sale will be held open for ten (10) days for upset bid as required by law.

DATE OF SALE: December 23, 2025
HOUR OF SALE: 1:00 p.m.
PLACE OF SALE: Durham County Courthouse

510 S Dillard St.
Durham, NC 27701

This the 17th day of December, 2025.

ADAMS, HOWELL, SIZEMORE & ADAMS, P.A.
By: /s/ Ryan J Adams
Ryan J. Adams
N.C. State Bar No.: 27687
1600 Glenwood Ave., Suite 101
Raleigh, North Carolina 27608
Telephone: (919) 900-4700
Facsimile: (919) 839-2230
Email: ryan.adams@adamshowell.com
Substitute Trustee
December 11 & 18, 2025

Classifieds



ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

The North Carolina Department of Adult Correction has the following contract in Lincoln County out for bid: C- C11750 Lincoln AC installation . The bid opening is scheduled for: Wednesday, 01/14/2026 . To obtain the Notice to Bidders, any Pre-Bid Requirements, and any Addenda visit: <https://evp.nc.gov/solicitations/details/?id=e804b557-77c9-f011-bbd3-001dd80c2969>

MBE/WBE WANTED

BCS Contractors needs MBE/WBE participation for the construction of a 2812 sqft single story garage including structural, mechanical, electrical and site development. Construction consists of slab on grade, pre-engineered bldg frame & structure, brick veneer, metal siding, and metal standing seam roofing. BCS will break down or combine elements of work into economically feasible units to facilitate minority participation. We will try to negotiate joint ventures to help increase minority participation. BCS will also provide quick pay agreements to meet cash flow demands. Need bids by December 17th by fax 252-478-4141 or email bc-contractors@embarqmail.com. Plans/specs may be viewed at our office (call 252-903-4102) or emailed to you.

SEEKING MBE/WBES

Raven Builders needs MBE/WBE participation for the construction of a 2812 sqft single story garage including structural, mechanical, electrical and site development. Construction consists of slab on grade, pre-engineered bldg frame & structure, brick veneer, metal siding, and metal standing seam roofing. Raven Builders will break down or combine elements of work into economically feasible units to facilitate minority participation. We will try to negotiate joint ventures to help increase minority participation. Raven Builders will also provide quick pay agreements to meet cash flow demands. Need bids by December 17th by fax 252-478-4141 or email ravenbuilders24@gmail.com. Plans/specs may be viewed at our office (call 252-903-4166) or emailed to you.

D/M/WBE

SUBCONTRACTORS/SUPPLIERS WANTED

T. A. Loving Company (NC General Contractor License No. 325) is seeking certified DBE, MBE, and WBE subcontractors and suppliers for the **Kingsboro Highway 64 Alternate Booster Pump Station Replacement project for Edgecombe County** which bids on **December 16, 2025, at 2:00 PM**. Plans and specifications for this project are available at the following locations: T. A. Loving Company; 400 Patetown Road; Goldsboro, NC 27530 * Edgecombe County; 201 St. Andrew Street; Tarboro, NC 27886 * The Wooten Company; 120 North Boylan Avenue; Raleigh, NC 27603 * Dodge Data and Analytics website * ConstructConnect website * North American Procurement Council website.

Potential subcontracting opportunities include but are not limited to surveying, demolition, hauling, earthwork, erosion control, seeding, electrical, linework/pipe installation, bypass pumping, masonry, roofing, HVAC, roll up doors, insulation, flatwork, painting, plumbing, and fencing. Please contact **Jeff Price (jprice@taloving.com)** if you are interested in submitting a proposal on any portion(s) of this project. Contact via phone 919-734-8400; fax: 919-736-2148; or email. All quotations will be accepted up to the closing time of the bid date. T. A. Loving Company is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer.

Please advise if assistance is needed with obtaining necessary equipment, supplies, materials, or insurance/bonding to satisfy the work requirements. We are willing to accept quotations for all or partial quantities and items of work. We can offer 2-party check payments and quick payment agreements, but the agreements need to be negotiated prior to the bid date.

Paying cash and buying old cassette tapes and church sermons. Call Marvin 919-268-7476.

D/M/WBE

SUBCONTRACTORS/SUPPLIERS WANTED

T. A. Loving Company (NC General Contractor License No. 325) is seeking certified DBE, MBE, and WBE subcontractors and suppliers for the **3rd Pressure Filter and Raw Water Well No. 15 project for the Town of Carolina Beach** which bids on **December 18, 2025, at 11:00 AM**. Plans and specifications for this project are available at the following locations: T. A. Loving Company; 400 Patetown Road; Goldsboro, NC 27530 * Town of Carolina Beach; 1121 North Lake Park Boulevard; Carolina Beach, NC 28428 (website) * Engineering Services, PA; 1202 Benson Road, Suite 200; Garner, NC 27529.

Potential subcontracting opportunities include but are not limited to surveying, clearing and grubbing, grading, erosion control, electrical, SCADA, linework/pipe installation, horizontal directional drilling, painting, and fencing. Please contact **Jeff Price (jprice@taloving.com)** if you are interested in submitting a proposal on any portion(s) of this project. Contact via phone 919-734-8400; fax: 919-736-2148; or email. All quotations will be accepted up to the closing time of the bid date. T. A. Loving Company is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer.

Please advise if assistance is needed with obtaining necessary equipment, supplies, materials, or insurance/bonding to satisfy the work requirements. We are willing to accept quotations for all or partial quantities and items of work. We can offer 2-party check payments and quick payment agreements, but the agreements need to be negotiated prior to the bid date.

Advanced Nursing Degrees — CONTINUED FROM PG 5

grams." It also said it may make changes in response to public comments. The new limits would take effect July 1, 2026.

Rural and underserved communities

Advanced practice registered nurses, known as APRNs, fill gaps in rural communities where there aren't enough clinicians. For example, nurses needed for surgeries — nurse anesthetists, or CRNAs — make up 80% of anesthesia providers in rural counties. About a fifth of APRNs nationwide worked in rural areas in 2022, according to one survey of more than 18,800 APRNs.

"The nurse practitioners, APRNs, are a needed lifeline to help fill those gaps," said Heidi Lucas, executive director of the Missouri Rural Health Association and former director of the state's nurses association. "Putting barriers in the way to keep [nurses] from getting degrees — that's just going to exacerbate the problems that we already have."

She said Missouri will be short about 2,000 physicians next year.

The new rule cutting options for federal student loans would only worsen staffing shortages amid tenuous rural hospital budgets, said state-level observers. Hospitals al-

ready are grappling with millions of dollars in looming Medicaid cuts over the next 10 years, said Rich Rasmussen, president of the Oklahoma Hospital Association.

Nurse practitioners often serve as primary care providers, writing prescriptions and managing patient care. About 80% of them see Medicaid and Medicare patients, according to the American Association of Nurse Practitioners, citing federal data from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

The proposal to deny advanced practice nurse practitioners the more generous loan options ignores the nation's needs, said nurse practitioner Valerie Fuller, president of the association.

"At a time when America needs more health care providers, we can't afford to put more obstacles in place for nurse practitioner students who want to go on and further their education and take care of the patients that need care," said Fuller, former president of the Maine Nurse Practitioner Association. "We know it's going to harm our workforce."

"Clipping the wings" Rasmussen, of the Oklahoma Hospital Association, said he is concerned about the effect the rule will have on the pipeline for certi-

fied nurse midwives and the state's already dwindling rural maternal health care options.

"We are clipping the wings of rural [obstetrics] to be able to blossom in our state if we're going to put these types of restrictions on the borrowing capability of nurses who want to pursue obstetrical services in nursing as well," he said. He added that the rules will force nurses to seek private sector loans — which don't qualify for federal loan forgiveness programs that encourage clinicians to come work in rural areas.

Teshieka Curtis-Pugh, executive director of the South Carolina Nurses Association, is also concerned about nurse midwives. South Carolina is expected to see a shortage of 3,200 physicians by 2030.

"We also live in a state that has very poor maternal outcomes, especially for women of color. So think about, how does that impact them?" she said. "That means we don't get the certified nurse midwives who are masters prepared, some of them are doctorally prepared, who are able to fill that gap for birth in that area."

Diversity and opportunity for students from marginalized groups could also take a hit, said Curtis-Pugh, a registered nurse with a master's of science in nursing. And for

those going back to school while juggling parenting, federal loan dollars can help beyond tuition, she noted.

"They help that mom be able to supplement child care for their child, so that they can have child care while they go to school," she said. "There's tuition, there's books, there's keeping the lights on. They're feeding the family they're getting to and from."

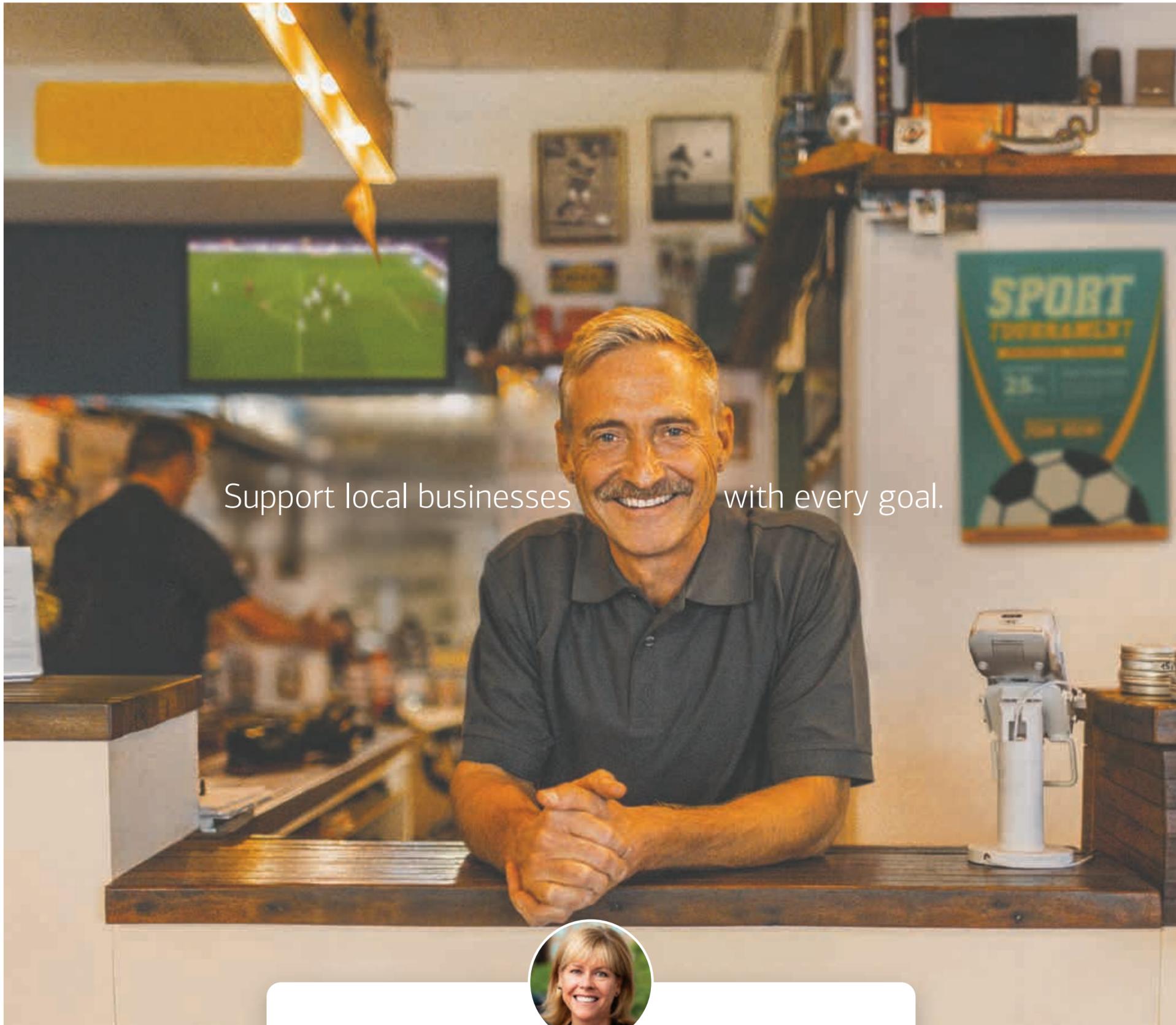
The exclusion from the higher, "professional" category of student loan options is especially galling after nurses' work during the COVID-19 pandemic, said Reding, of National Nurses United.

"We were all heroes in 2020. Now, what are we?" Reding asked. "It's a slap in the face to the nurses that go to work every day doing our very best to care for our patients, even under very adverse conditions and even facing deadly viruses."

Clarke, the registered nurse considering a post-bachelor's degree, said nurses' pandemic-era devotion influenced her own career path.

"When I saw the nurses and the health care workers really working hard for their communities and sacrificing a lot, I was really inspired by that," Clarke said. "And that's why I went to school."

ATTENTION:
Beginning on January 1, 2026 the Classified Advertising Rate will increase \$2 per column inch



Support local businesses with every goal.



As the Official Bank of FIFA World Cup 2026™, Bank of America is on your corner and in your corner. Because with the right team, Triangle businesses thrive and communities prosper.

Kari

Kari Stoltz
President, Bank of America Triangle

#1 Business Lender
in America

\$1.1B in loans to Triangle
businesses

3,700+ local business
specialists

Let's get to work on your next goal. Contact one of our business specialists in the Triangle at bankofamerica.com/localbusiness

What would you like the power to do?®



BANK OF AMERICA



PROUD TO SUPPORT

