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It's Black History Month!



The Importance of Black History Month: Honoring The Legacy, Progress, And The Power Of African American Contributions

Every February, Black History Month serves as a national reminder—but more importantly, a call to action. It asks Americans to confront the truths of our shared past, acknowledge the struggles and triumphs of African Americans, and celebrate the transformative contributions that have shaped the nation. Far more than a symbolic observance, Black History Month is a commitment to remembering, teaching, and living the lessons of history so the country can continue moving toward justice, equality, and collective progress.

The significance of Black History Month lies not just in honoring well-known figures, but in understanding the broad spectrum of leaders whose courage, innovation, and resilience changed America. Their stories reflect the complexity of the Black experience and demonstrate how African Americans have persistently pushed the nation toward its highest ideals.

From economic self-determination to political activism, from education to entrepreneurship, from non-violent resistance to radical calls for liberation, the contributions of Black changemakers are foundational to the American story. Figures like Marcus Garvey, Nat Turner, Mary McLeod Bethune, Madam C.J. Walker, Fannie Lou Hamer, Martin Luther King Jr., and Malcolm X each shaped pivotal chapters in the struggle for freedom. Their legacies illuminate why remembering—and continuing—their work is essential.

Economic Empowerment and Self-Determination: The Vision of Marcus Garvey



Marcus Garvey stands as one of the most influential advocates for Black economic independence in American history. Through the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), founded in 1914, Garvey championed a global vision of Black pride, unity, and self-reliance. His movement became one of the largest mass organizations in African American history, promoting economic development as a path to liberation.

Garvey believed that true freedom could not be achieved without economic power. He launched numerous ventures—including the Black Star Line shipping company, the Negro Factories Corporation, and a number of community-based enterprises—designed to create jobs, build wealth, and foster economic independence for Black communities worldwide.

Though not all of Garvey's en-

terprises succeeded, his impact remains undeniable. His ideas laid the groundwork for later Black empowerment movements and inspired generations of leaders who carried forward the message of self-determination. Garvey taught millions that Black people could define their future, control their economic destiny, and build global networks of power and influence.

Black History Month provides a necessary space to revisit and reclaim this history of economic activism—reminding us that financial literacy, entrepreneurship, and community investment remain essential components of liberation today.

Resistance and the Fight for Freedom: Nat Turner's Rebellion



Another foundational episode in Black history is the 1831 slave rebellion led by Nat Turner in Southampton County, Virginia. Turner, an enslaved preacher, believed he was divinely inspired to lead his people out of bondage. His uprising—one of the most significant and organized in U.S. history—sent shockwaves through the nation and forced Americans to confront the brutality of slavery.

Though the rebellion was ultimately suppressed, its impact was profound. Turner's defiance challenged the myth that enslaved people were passive or complacent; it exposed the moral contradictions of a nation that preached liberty while perpetuating human bondage. The rebellion also intensified national debates about slavery and contributed to an atmosphere that eventually led to the Civil War.

Nat Turner remains a symbol of resistance, courage, and the human longing for freedom—reminders that the fight for liberation has always come at an extraordinary cost.

Builders of Institutions and Opportunity: Mary McLeod Bethune's Educational Legacy



Few individuals embody the transformative power of education like Mary McLeod Bethune. Born to formerly enslaved parents, Bethune understood the generational impact of schooling and dedicated her life to uplifting Black youth through knowledge.

In 1904, she founded the Daytona Educational and Industrial Training School for Negro Girls—an institution that later became Bethune-Cookman College. She believed education was not just a path to employment but a pathway to dignity, empowerment, and citizenship.

Bethune's influence extended far beyond the classroom. She served as an advisor to multiple U.S. presidents, founded the National Council of Negro Women, and fought tirelessly for civil rights and women's equality. Her leadership made her one of the most influential Black educators and activists of the 20th century.

Honoring her life ensures that the legacies of those who built institutions, carved out opportunities, and uplifted generations are never forgotten.

Entrepreneurship and Innovation: Madam C.J. Walker's Business Empire



As one of the first self-made female millionaires in the United States, Madam C.J. Walker represents the heights of Black ingenuity and perseverance. Rising from pov-

erty and early hardship, Walker built a thriving hair-care empire that employed thousands of African American women and offered a model for community-focused entrepreneurship.

Walker's success was defined not only by her business acumen but by her commitment to empowering others. She used her wealth to support scholarships, civil rights organizations, orphanages, and political causes. Her story highlights the role Black women have played in shaping American business, philanthropy, and community development.

Trailblazers like Walker, whose stories demonstrate the power of entrepreneurship as a tool for economic and social transformation, are a powerful teaching tool for future generations.

Political Courage and the Fight for Voting Rights: Fannie Lou Hamer



Fannie Lou Hamer's famous declaration—"I'm sick and tired of being sick and tired"—captured the anguish and determination of African Americans fighting for their right to participate fully in American democracy.

A sharecropper from Mississippi turned voting-rights activist, Hamer co-founded the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party (MFDP), which challenged the state's all-white Democratic delegation at the 1964 Democratic National Convention. Her televised testimony exposed the violence and intimidation Black voters faced in the South, galvanizing national support for voting-rights protec-

tions.

Brutalized, jailed, and threatened—yet unbroken—Hamer became one of the most powerful voices of the civil rights movement. Her legacy underscores the ongoing necessity of protecting voting rights and political participation—issues that remain at the center of national debate today.

A Dream and a Movement: Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s Enduring Impact



No figure is more synonymous with the civil rights movement than Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. His philosophy of nonviolence, his eloquence, and his unwavering moral leadership transformed the nation.

From the Montgomery Bus Boycott to the March on Washington to the Selma campaign, King's work reshaped American law, expanded civil rights, and awakened the conscience of a nation. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 stand as monuments to his leadership and the collective struggle of millions of activists.

Black History Month honors Dr. King not simply as a hero but as a reminder of the unfinished work he championed—economic justice, voting rights, and equality for all.

A Voice for Black Dignity and Global Liberation: Malcolm X

Alongside King's nonviolent approach, Malcolm X offered a powerful counterpoint rooted in self-defense, Black pride, and global human rights. His unapologetic critique of racism, his emphasis on self-respect, and his call for international solidar-

ity propelled the civil rights movement in new directions.

Malcolm X helped reframe the conversation about Black identity, inspiring generations to embrace their heritage with pride. His leadership within the Nation of Islam, and later his global activism after his pilgrimage to Mecca, expanded the struggle for civil rights into a broader movement for human liberation.

Remembering Malcolm X during Black History Month underscores the diversity of thought, strategy, and leadership within the Black freedom struggle.

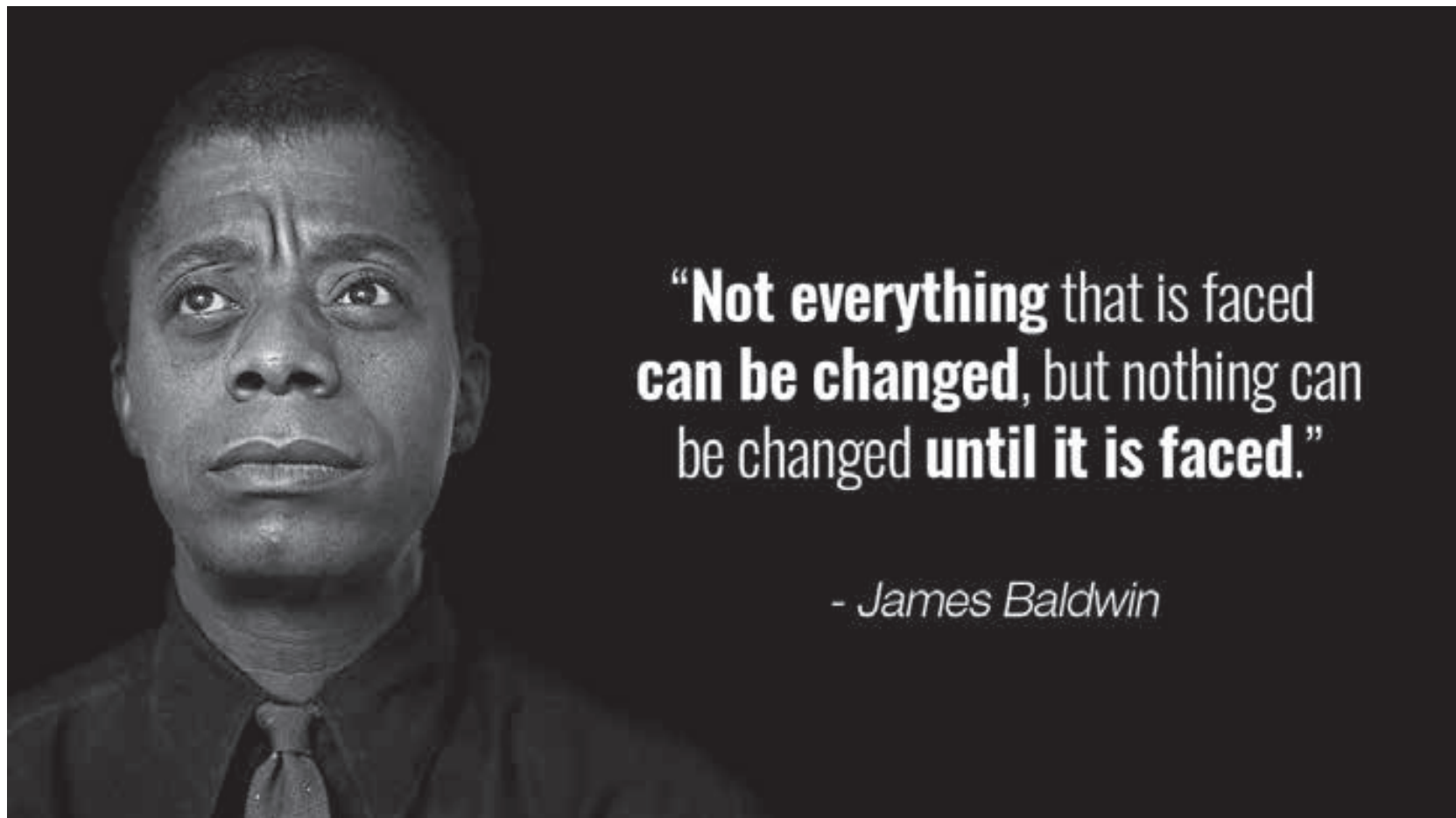


Why Black History Month Still Matters

Black History Month is critical because it ensures that the full story of America is told—not just in February, but throughout the year. It is a reminder that Black history is American history.

It teaches the values of resilience, creativity, courage, and justice. It honors the lives of those who built institutions, broke barriers, challenged oppression, and expanded democracy. And it inspires future generations to dream boldly and push forward, knowing that they stand on the shoulders of giants.

The stories of Garvey, Turner, Bethune, Walker, Hamer, King, Malcolm X, and countless others are not relics of the past—they are blueprints for the future. Their work is not yet finished, and the responsibility to advance equality, opportunity, and justice now rests with each of us. Black History Month reminds us that remembering is powerful—but continuing the legacy is even more so.



- James Baldwin

Flint Still Reckons With Water Crisis Fallout More Than A Decade Later

By Jordan Meadows

Staff Writer

Flint, Michigan's water crisis, now widely recognized as one of the most severe public health failures in modern U.S. history, emerged from a convergence of long-standing environmental neglect, economic decline and government decision-making that prioritized cost savings over public safety. Although the crisis captured national attention in 2015 and 2016, subsequent investigations and court proceedings have made clear that its roots stretch back years earlier — and that its consequences continue to shape the city today.

Long before lead was detected in Flint's drinking water, the city was struggling with deep structural challenges. Once a booming industrial hub and the birthplace of General Motors, Flint's population peaked at nearly 200,000 in the mid-20th century. As auto plants closed and jobs disappeared in the late 20th century, residents moved away, property values collapsed and the tax base shrank. By the early 2010s, Flint's population had fallen to about 100,000, a majority of whom were Black, with roughly 40 percent living in poverty and thousands of homes abandoned.

Environmental problems also predated the crisis. The Flint River, which runs through the city, had for more than a century served as a dumping ground for industrial waste, treated and untreated sewage,



agricultural runoff and landfill leachate. The river's poor water quality was well known locally; it was widely rumored to have caught fire on at least two occasions.

In 2011, facing a \$25 million budget deficit, Flint was placed under state control by then-Gov. Rick Snyder. An emergency manager — an unelected official with authority over local policy — was appointed to cut costs. In 2012 and 2013, city and state officials began exploring ways to reduce spending on water service, including ending Flint's long-standing contract with the Detroit Water and Sewerage Department.

In April 2013, Flint formally decided to join the Karegnondi Water Authority, which planned to build

a new pipeline from Lake Huron. The move was projected to save the region about \$200 million over 25 years. Until the pipeline could be completed, officials opted for a temporary water source: the Flint River.

On April 25, 2014, Flint switched its water supply from Detroit's treated Lake Huron water to the Flint River. Almost immediately, residents complained that their tap water was brown, foul-smelling and foamy. Tests soon revealed elevated levels of trihalomethanes, E. coli bacteria and, eventually, lead. Despite these warning signs, city and state officials repeatedly assured residents that the water was safe to drink.

What officials failed to do — and later acknowledged — was treat

the Flint River water with corrosion-control chemicals. The river water was significantly more corrosive than Detroit's water, and without proper treatment it ate away at the protective lining inside aging lead pipes. Microscopic lead particles then leached into the drinking water in thousands of homes and businesses.

As the city remained on Flint River water for 18 months, the damage worsened. Later studies showed that the switch contributed to a doubling — and in some neighborhoods a tripling — of elevated blood lead levels among Flint children. High lead exposure is particularly dangerous for children and pregnant women, and is associated with learning disabilities, behavioral problems and long-term cognitive harm.

The water crisis was compounded by a deadly outbreak of Legionnaires' disease between June 2014 and October 2015. The outbreak sickened at least 87 people and killed 12, becoming the third-largest Legionnaires' outbreak ever recorded in the United States. Public health experts later linked the outbreak to failures in water treatment and insufficient chlorine levels in Flint's distribution system.

It was not until October 16, 2015 — after months of citizen complaints, independent testing by researchers and reporting by journalists — that Flint switched back to

(See *FLINT WATER CRISIS*, P. 9)

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Business & Finance

As AI-Generated Fake Content Mars Legal Cases, States Want Guardrails

STATELINE — Last spring, Illinois county judge Jeffrey Goffinet noticed something startling: A legal brief filed in his courtroom cited a case that did not exist.

Goffinet, an associate judge in Williamson County, looked through two legal research systems and then headed to the courthouse library — a place he hadn't visited in years — to consult the book that purportedly listed the case. The case wasn't in it.

The fake case, generated by artificial intelligence, came across Goffinet's desk just a few months after the Illinois Supreme Court's policy on the use of AI in the courts took effect. Goffinet co-chaired a task force that informed that policy, which allows the use of AI as long as it complies with existing legal and ethical standards.

"People are going to use [AI], and the courts are not going to be able to be a dam across a river that's already flowing at flood capacity," Goffinet said. "We have to learn how to coexist with it."

As more false quotes, fake court cases and incorrect information appear in legal documents generated by AI, state bar associations, state court systems and national law organizations are issuing guidance on its use in the legal field. A handful of states are considering or enacting legislation to address the issue, and many courts and professional associations are focused on education for attorneys.

From divorce cases to discrimination lawsuits, AI-generated fake content can cause evidence to be dismissed and motions to be denied.

While some states urge attorneys to lean on existing guidance about accuracy and transparency, the new policies address AI concerns related to confidentiality, competency and costs. Most policies and opinions encourage attorneys to educate themselves and to use proprietary



AI tools that prevent sensitive data from being entered into open source systems. Since AI tools could also increase efficiency, several policies advise attorneys to charge less if they spend less time on cases.

Some states, such as Ohio, also ban the use of artificial intelligence for certain legal tasks. In Ohio, courts are prohibited from using AI to translate legal forms, court orders and similar content that may affect the outcome of a case.

Several states have also advised legal professionals to adhere to the American Bar Association's formal opinion of ethical AI use in law.

Artificial intelligence can help attorneys and law firms by automating administrative tasks, analyzing contracts and organizing documents. Generative AI can also be used to draft legal documents, including court briefs. Experts say the use of AI productivity tools can save legal professionals time and reduce the risk of human error in everyday tasks.

But law professionals nationwide have faced fines and license suspensions, among other consequences, for submitting legal documents citing false quotes, cases or information.

Many legal professionals are likely to not notice instances in which an AI system is "hallucinating," or confidently making statements that are not true, said Rabihah Butler, the manager for enterprise content for Risk, Fraud and Government at the Thomson Reuters Institute. The institute is a research subsidiary of the Thomson Reuters company, which sells an AI system meant to help lawyers.

Courts and law organizations will need to consider education, sanctions and punitive actions to ensure law professionals are using AI appropriately, Butler said.

"AI has such confidence, and it can appear so polished, that if you're not paying attention and doing your due diligence, the hallucination is being treated as a factual piece of information," she said.

Since the beginning of 2025, there have been 518 documented cases in which generative AI produced hallucinated content used in U.S. courts, according to a database by Damien Charlotin, a senior research fellow at the HEC Paris business school.

"So far, if we're looking at the institutional response, there's not a lot because people are not very sure how to handle this kind of issue," Charlotin said. "Everyone is aware that some lawyers are using artificial intelligence in their day-to-day work. Most people are aware that the technology is not very mature. But it's still hard to prevent a mistake."

State guidance
As of Jan. 23, state bar associations or similar entities have issued formal guidance on the use of AI in at least 10 states and the District of Columbia, typically in the form of an ethics opinion. Those aren't enforceable as law, but spell out proper conduct.

In February, for example, the Professional Ethics Committee for the State Bar of Texas issued an ethics opinion that outlines issues that may arise from law professionals using AI. Texas lawyers should have a basic understanding of generative AI tools and guardrails to protect client confidentiality, it said. They should also verify any content generated by AI and refrain from charging clients for the time saved by using AI tools.

Legal professionals must be aware of their own competency with AI tools, said Brad Johnson, the executive director of the Texas Center for Legal Ethics.

"A really important takeaway from the opinion is that if a lawyer is considering using a generative AI tool in the practice of law, the lawyer has to have a reasonable and current understanding of the technology because only then can a lawyer really evaluate the risks that are associated with it," he said.



A National Association of Black Microschool Leaders Is Launched

Nationwide — Nicole Stewart, Founder and Executive Director, has officially launched National Association of Black Microschool Leaders (NABML), the first national organization dedicated to supporting Black educators and community leaders who are building microschools — small, community-driven, and culturally responsive learning environments.

NABML arrives at a pivotal moment. Black families are turning to alternative education options at unprecedented rates, yet Black-led microschools face systemic barriers to success, including limited access to funding, infrastructure, and national support networks.

"Black families are the fastest-growing demographic in alternative education, yet Black microschool founders have had no national home—no unified voice, no shared resources, no collective power," said Stewart. "We founded NABML to change that. We're building the infrastructure so that Black-led microschools don't just survive—they thrive for generations."

The microschool movement has grown rapidly in recent years, with an estimated 1.5 million students now learning in approximately 95,000 microschools nationwide. While Black educators represent just 13 percent of current microschool leaders, that number is poised to double: 27 percent of prospective microschool founders are Black, according to the National Microschooling Center.

This surge reflects a broader shift. The percentage of Black families home-schooling increased nearly fivefold during the pandemic—the largest jump of any demographic group—as parents sought educational environments that center their children's cultural identity and academic potential.

Yet despite growing demand, Black microschool founders consistently identify sustainability and access to resources as their greatest challenges. NABML was founded to close that gap.

Alissa Jacques Saint-Pierre, NABML's board chair, emphasized the urgency of the moment: "Black families are seeking educational options that see and celebrate their children. Black educators are answering that call. NABML exists to ensure they don't have to do it alone."

NABML is already building critical infrastructure for the movement. With support from a grant from EdChoice, the organization is developing the nation's first comprehensive Black Microschool Directory — a resource that will connect families with Black-led learning environments and help founders gain visibility and support.

Over the next four years, NABML will position itself as the nation's hub for Black-led microschool innovation, providing founders with funding pathways, professional development, shared infrastructure, and a powerful national network.

DNC Launches Aggressive Campaign To Win Back Groups Of Infrequent Voters

The Guardian—Democrats are launching an aggressive campaign to win back voters they lost, not to Donald Trump, but to the proverbial "couch," as they look to regain support ahead of the 2026 midterm elections.

On Wednesday, the Democratic National Committee (DNC) rolled out a new initiative called Local Listeners with the goal of targeting over one million "infrequent" voters in key battleground districts. Seeking to build on the party's string of off-year election victories, which extended into 2026 with an upset in Texas last weekend, the DNC is betting that early, localized outreach will be crucial in winning back these voters' trust — and their ballots — this time around.

"If we want to keep earning back the trust and support of voters, we have to listen to them," DNC chair Ken Martin said in a statement, shared in advance with the Guardian. "This program modernizes the way we are talking to and hearing from the voters that we need to win elections now and for years to come. The Democratic Party is done with waiting until the last minute to engage voters — these conversations



need to happen early and often."

The program marks the DNC's most ambitious early voter outreach effort for a midterm cycle, according to the organization. More than 2,000 volunteers have already signed up to participate in what the groups say is a sign of "renewed grassroots energy" for the party.

Volunteers will undergo a seven-week training program on how to better engage these voters, including sessions on "active listening" and "having difficult conversations about politics".

The goal is to engage voters who cast ballots for Joe Biden in 2020

but sat out in 2024, with volunteers aiming to conduct at least 250,000 phone conversations and host more than 50 grassroots events in key congressional districts by the end of March.

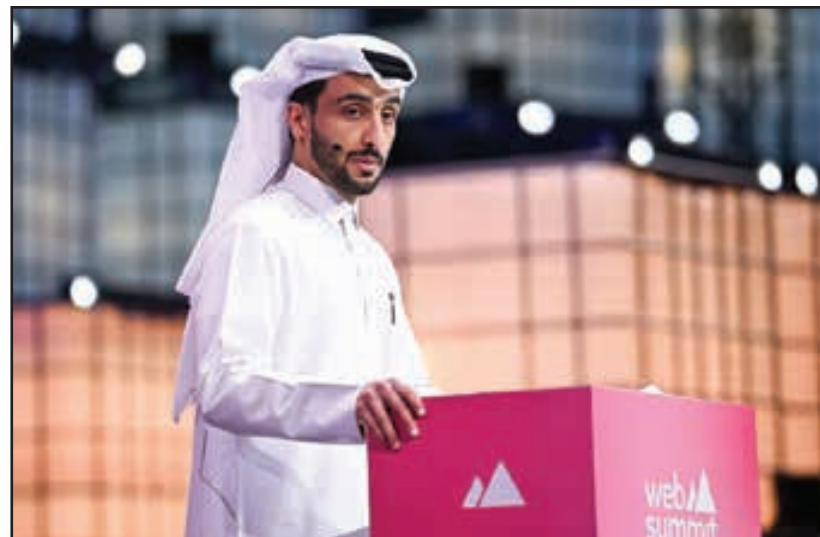
The Trump campaign employed a similar strategy in 2024, investing heavily in outreach to newly registered and "low propensity" voters — those who are registered but often don't vote. According to the Pew Research Center, voters who cast ballots in 2024 but skipped the 2020 election despite being eligible, favored Trump by a margin of 54% to 42%.

The president's party typically loses ground in the midterm elections, with Democrats well-positioned to retake control of the House — and possibly the Senate — as concerns persist about the high cost of living and Americans sour on Trump's stewardship of the economy.

The Republican National Committee (RNC) enters the 2026 midterm election year with a vast fundraising advantage over the DNC, according to federal financial disclosures. The RNC reported raising \$172m in 2025, with \$95m in the bank, while the DNC raised \$146m but ended the year with just \$14m in hand and \$17m in debt.

But party leaders are hopeful Democrats' recent gains will foreshadow even more wins in this year's gubernatorial and congressional contests.

"While Republicans ignore Americans, preferring to serve billionaires instead of everybody else, Democrats aim to reach over a million voters in the next few months," Martin said. "And we're going to talk about what matters in their lives: affordability, freedom, a shot at the American Dream. That's how we win in 2026 and beyond."



Al Jazeera Wants To Reinvent Journalism For The Digital Age

Journalism has acquired a renewed importance at a time technology guided by algorithmic systems has "fuelled new forms of polarisation", the Al Jazeera Media Network's director general says, adding that the Doha-based network aims to review its role and purpose in the digital age.

"Algorithmic systems, attention-based economic models and instant interaction have fuelled new forms of polarisation and deepened division instead of dialogue. They have built echo chambers where people live cut off from other narratives and from the true complexity of the world," Sheikh Nasser bin Faisal Al Thani said at the Web Summit Qatar 2026 on Tuesday.

Journalism, the Al Jazeera director general, said, is "not an alternative to technology, or in opposition to it, but rather a valuable force capable of adding context to events, connecting diverse voices and revealing the human stories behind the news".

"The evolution of journalism cannot be separated from profound changes driven by digital platforms and artificial intelligence within the public sphere," he said.

But he called on the global technology sector to fundamentally rethink the design of digital platforms, warning that algorithmic models prioritising "shock" and "outrage" are eroding shared human understanding.

Sheikh Nasser argued that humanity has entered an era in which the challenge is no longer accessing information but making sense of its "overabundance".

Addressing a packed audience at the Doha Exhibition and Convention Center, Sheikh Nasser cautioned that while technology has democratised storytelling, it has also given rise to "troubling realities" in which attention-based economic models deepen division instead of fostering dialogue.

"Many are now surrounded by cascades of content, yet they feel more isolated, more alienated," Sheikh Nasser said. He warned that current digital systems often "flatten complex truths into harsh binary choices", creating fragmented worlds where "disagreements never meet".

Amid fast-paced technological changes, such as artificial intelligence, Al Jazeera has embarked on a comprehensive initiative called the "Core Project" to review its role, responsibility and purpose in the digital age.

Describing it as a "re-evaluation of the fundamental ideas that underpin our journalism" rather than just a technical upgrade, Sheikh Nasser outlined a strategy to combine technology with "ethical and professional responsibility".

"We plan to combine technology with ethical and professional responsibility to give journalists the tools to provide context, to report responsibly on breaking news, to separate facts from biases and to maximise the power of objective analysis and understanding," he said.

The initiative aims to automate repetitive tasks to free up journalists for high-value analysis centred on three guiding principles: the "Now", "Meaning or Context", and "People".

"The 'Now' alone cannot guide us," he noted, explaining that while speed and accuracy are vital, journalism must provide the "Meaning" by linking events to their root causes.

Most critically, he redefined the audience not as passive consumers or data points but as "conscious actors" capable of engaging responsibly with the world.

"Resilient journalism — swift but not shallow, modern without abandoning its values — can restore context to the news, create space for debate and a human dimension to disagreements," Sheikh Nasser said.

The director general concluded with a direct appeal to the tech leaders and innovators gathered in Doha, calling for a partnership in which "responsible journalism meets ethical technology".

The Wealthy Ramp Up Spending While Other Americans Tread Water, Study Finds

WASHINGTON (AP) — Higher-income Americans and those with college degrees have ramped up their spending more quickly in the past three years than other consumers, according to new data released Tuesday, evidence of worsening inequality that may explain some of the growing pessimism about the economy.

The data, released by the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, also show that in the final three months of last year, lower-income and rural households faced higher inflation than higher-income households. The spending data focuses only on goods excluding autos, and does not capture likely spending by higher-income households on travel, restaurants and entertainment.

The figures add support to the notion of a "K-shaped" economy, in which upper-income Americans are fueling a disproportionate share of the consumption that is the primary driver of the economy, while lower-income households see fewer gains. Poorer households in general often experience higher inflation, with a greater share of their spending being set aside for goods that have seen prices soar since the pandemic, things like housing, groceries, and utilities.



The New York Fed's data show that households with incomes of \$125,000 and higher have boosted their spending 2.3%, adjusted for inflation, since 2023, while middle-income households — those between \$40,000 and \$125,000 — have increased their spending by 1.6%. Those earning below \$40,000 have lifted their spend-

ing by just 0.9%, the report showed.

The figures are an addition to the New York Fed's economic heterogeneity indicators, a series of data sets intended to track variations in the economy by geographic region and demographic and income groups.

The report underscores a pattern that has emerged since the pan-

demic: Lower-income households fared better in 2021 and 2022, when companies were desperate to hire and offered higher pay and benefits, while the government also provided several economic stimulus checks. Yet beginning roughly in early 2023, slower hiring and sharp gains in stock market values fueled spending by wealthier households.

The division is also clear when examined through the lens of education. In 2023 and most of 2024, inflation-adjusted spending by non-college households fell below its January 2023 level. It only regained that level in November 2024, while households with a college graduate had by then boosted their spending by 4%.

The New York Fed notes that college-educated households continued to spend at a rapid pace in 2025 even as hiring slowed and there were a spate of job cuts in white-collar industries such as high tech, government and marketing.

"The difference in the trend in retail spending between college graduates and nongraduates is consistent with the story of a 'K-shaped economy,'" Rajashri Chakrabarti, an economic research advisor at the New York Fed, and three colleagues wrote.

US Authorizes A Short Extension To An African Trade Agreement

CAPE TOWN, South Africa (AP) — U.S. President Donald Trump has extended a 26-year-old free-trade agreement with African countries that was left in doubt last year when his administration allowed it to expire while enforcing his policy of reciprocal tariffs.

Trump on Tuesday signed into law an extension of the African Growth and Opportunity Act, or AGOA, according to the Office of the United States Trade Representative.

But the extension is short-term, lasting only until Dec. 31. The trade office said the agreement, which gives eligible sub-Saharan African nations duty-free access to the U.S. market for some products, would be modified to account for tariffs the U.S. has imposed on other countries as part of the Republican president's America First policy.

The agreement is key to many African countries that feared it would be another economic blow following the new tariffs and cuts to U.S. aid under Trump.

Here is what to know.
AGOA was introduced in 2000

under former U.S. President Bill Clinton. Only some nations are eligible, and the U.S. can remove countries that fail to meet requirements including establishing market-based economies or upholding democratic standards and human rights. The East African nation of Uganda was removed in 2024 by the Biden administration for enacting a strict anti-gay law that the U.S. called a human rights violation.

The agreement allows some 1,800 products to be exported to the U.S. duty-free, including crude oil, cars and car parts, clothing, textiles and agricultural produce. It drives much of the trade between the U.S. and Africa, which was valued at more than \$100 billion in 2024 by the U.S. trade office.

AGOA included 34 African countries when the Trump administration allowed the expiration at the end of September, with many businesses in those nations claiming the end of the deal would endanger tens of thousands of jobs.

The extension until the end of



2026 is short compared to the 10-year extension agreement when it previously came up for renewal in 2015.

U.S. Trade Representative James Greer said in a statement Tuesday that the Trump administration would work with Congress "to modernize the program to align with

President Trump's America First trade policy" without giving details of possible changes.

South Africa, the continent's most advanced economy and one of the biggest beneficiaries of AGOA, said it welcomed the renewal but was concerned by the short-term nature of the extension. Minister of Trade

and Industry Parks Tau told South African news outlet News24 that he hoped the U.S. would soon "provide certainty" of the AGOA details.

The Trump administration has applied political pressure on sub-Saharan Africa's two biggest economies, South Africa and Nigeria, leaving them uncertain where they might fit into a renewed form of the agreement that is highly important to both nations.

Trump has criticized the South African government as anti-American and made baseless claims that a white minority group in the country is being violently persecuted. The U.S. has applied 30% tariffs, among the highest in the world, raising fears that its biggest African trade partner would be removed from AGOA due to the diplomatic fallout.

Similarly, U.S. ties with Nigeria have been strained over Trump's allegations that Christians are being persecuted in Africa's most populous country, claims officials say are inaccurate.

Trump's America First policy has been especially hard on Africa by

cutting billions of dollars for the now-dismantled United States Aid Agency while imposing tariffs on small or struggling economies. Some African countries such as Lesotho have said the double blow has been almost impossible to bear.

The U.S. has moved to renegotiate assistance methods for Africa, including a series of bilateral health agreements announced in recent months. The pledges of assistance also commit African nations to invest in their own health systems, which the Trump administration says will improve self-sufficiency and cut waste.

The U.S. has called on African nations to remove trade barriers to American imports. The U.S. trade office said AGOA would follow the America First policy and "must demand more from our trading partners."

The aggressive trade policies have pushed some African nations to enhance ties with other countries or regions, especially China, which is already the continent's largest trading partner.



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Health and Wellness

Stroke Survivors Can Counterintuitively Improve Recovery By Strengthening Their Stronger Arm – New Research Shows

THE CONVERSATION – Stroke survivors often face substantial and long-lasting problems with their arms. Both arms often decline together: When one arm is more severely affected by the stroke, the other becomes more difficult to use as well. Compared with a healthy person's dominant hand, a stroke survivor may take up to three times longer to complete everyday tasks using their less-impaired arm.

This creates a frustrating reality. People with severe impairment in one arm must rely almost entirely on their other arm for daily activities, such as eating, dressing and household tasks. When that "good" arm works slowly or awkwardly, even simple activities become tiring and discouraging, and some people may begin to avoid them altogether.

But that good arm can be strengthened. In our newly published research in the journal *JAMA Neurology*, we found that training the less-impaired arm in people living with chronic stroke can improve everyday hand function, in some cases even better than focusing only

on the most impaired arm.

What is a stroke?

A stroke occurs when the flow of oxygen-carrying blood to part of the brain is interrupted by a blockage in a blood vessel or by bleeding. Without oxygen, brain cells begin to die.

Because each side of the brain mainly controls the opposite side of the body, a stroke often causes movement problems on the side of the body opposite the brain injury. For this reason, stroke rehabilitation has traditionally focused on restoring movement in the most impaired arm.

However, research over the past few decades has shown that both sides of the brain contribute to controlling movements for both arms, although they play different roles. As a result, damage to one side of the brain can affect movement on both sides of the body.

As expected, the arm opposite the brain injury often has major problems with weakness, stiffness and voluntary control, limiting its use for reaching, grasping and manipulating objects. But the other arm, usu-



ally thought to be unaffected from the stroke, is frequently not normal either. Many stroke survivors experience reduced strength, slower movements and poorer coordination in the less-impaired arm.

Training the less-impaired arm

As neuroscientists who study how the brain controls movement after stroke, these findings led us to a simple question: Could training the less-impaired arm help it work better?

In a clinical trial of over 50 pa-

tients, we studied people living with chronic stroke who had severe impairments in one arm, making it unusable for everyday tasks. These individuals depended almost entirely on their less-impaired arm to manage daily life.

Participants were randomly assigned to one of two rehabilitation groups: one that trained their most-impaired arm, and one that trained their less-impaired arm. Both received five weeks of therapy that involved challenging, goal-directed hand movements, including virtual reality tasks designed to improve coordination and timing.

Compared to those who trained their most-impaired arm, we found that participants who conditioned their less-impaired arm became faster and more efficient at everyday hand tasks, such as picking up small objects or lifting a cup. These improvements remained six months after training ended.

We believe the lasting benefit of training the less-impaired arm may come from a simple feedback loop:

When their arm works better, people naturally use it more, and that extra practice in daily life helps lock in those gains.

Strengthening what remains

Stroke rehabilitation has long focused on the arm that is most visibly impaired. But for many people, full function in that arm never returns. They adapt and rely on their less-impaired arm to get through the day.

"Less-impaired," however, does not mean unaffected. When this arm becomes the sole tool for daily activities, even mild problems can have major consequences for independence and quality of life. Improving how well this arm works could make everyday tasks faster, easier and less exhausting, even years after a stroke.

Future work will focus on how best to combine training of the less-impaired arm with standard therapy for the more-impaired arm, and how these approaches translate into everyday life at home.

For many survivors, recovery may not mean restoring what was lost but strengthening what remains.

Coupons: The Art of Stretching a Dollar

COUPONING TRENDS TO WATCH IN 2026:

Knowing how couponing is evolving can help you take advantage of new savings tools — and avoid strategies that no longer work.

- In-app exclusives have replaced paper coupons: Newspaper circulars and paper coupons are being phased out, leaving room for app-only coupons and store loyalty programs.

- AI tools boost savings: AI tools such as coupon apps and browser extensions can help you save by finding the best coupon, listing price-matching opportunities, and finding retailer-specific promos you might be missing.

- Location-based offers determine savings: Retailer apps track your past purchases, store location, inventory and price trends to give shoppers an offer.

- Watch for social media flash deals: Influencer partnerships and timed deals on Instagram and TikTok are chances to save if you catch them. Redditors also share discount codes and savings tips on message boards.

- Coupon stacking might become harder: Retailers are tightening restrictions on how many coupons shoppers can stack and double coupon programs. That means shoppers in the same city might get different coupons.

If you're a couponing beginner, we'll help you make a plan. First, learn where to find coupons and how to apply them, then try tools to help you stay organized as you shop.

1. 'Stack' store and manufacturer's coupons

There are two major kinds of coupons to know about:

- Store coupons are issued by a specific retailer and can only be used at those locations.

- Manufacturer's coupons are issued by the company that makes the product and can be used at any retailer that accepts them.

You may be able to find both types of coupons in retailer apps and flyers in the mail. If you subscribe to a newspaper, check there, too — the Sunday edition usually has the most coupons.

Make sure the store allows coupon stacking before you try.

The best scenario is using a store coupon and manufacturer's coupon together. This strategy is called "coupon stacking," and it can save you big at the register.

For example, maybe you buy a box of Pampers diapers at CVS, which is offering a "\$5 off a \$25 baby purchase" store coupon. You snag that deal, then tack on a "\$3 off Pampers" manufacturer's coupon you found online — totaling \$8 in savings.

Before stacking coupons, check that the retailer allows you to do so.

2. Find a coupon database or a browser extension

Downloading the apps from your favorite retailers can get you access to digital coupons that you can "clip" on your phone and present at checkout.

Also explore coupon databases, which are websites that aggregate coupons in one place, so it's easy to find deals. Search online for the words "coupon database" to find one you like. Some databases allow you to search by coupon type — such as a printable, newspaper insert or mobile coupon.

If you don't feel like searching through a coupon database, consider installing a browser extension, which will do the work of finding coupons and discount codes while you shop online. Popular extensions include PayPal Honey and Rakuten, which is also a cash-back app.

3. Download store apps for digital coupons and offers

Many retailers have shifted away from paper coupons and offer deals through their smartphone app. To get access to those special savings, download the apps for stores you shop at most and join their free loyalty programs.

Just downloading the app isn't enough, though. You'll likely need to "clip" digital coupons to get the savings at checkout. You might also have to enter your phone number or scan a loyalty card at the register to get the deals.

Lastly, enable push notifications, to see personalized offers based on your previous purchases and access to special savings based on your location.

4. Read the fine print and know your store's policy

Before using a coupon, check the fine print so you know exactly what qualifies — the correct product size, limits per transaction and whether you need a separate coupon for each item. This helps you avoid surprises at the register.

It's just as important to understand your store's coupon policy. Rules vary by retailer: some double coupons up to a certain amount, while others require you to join their loyalty program to access deals or stack discounts.

You can usually find these policies online, or go in person and ask, says Jenny Martin, the writer behind frugal-living website Southern Savers.

Once you learn a store's policies and shop there regularly, you'll start to recognize its sales cycles, making it easier to stock up when prices are lowest.

5. Make a shopping list and use apps for more savings

Know which products you plan to buy so you can find coupons that match. A grocery list app, such as Bring! or AnyList, can help keep you organized.

They allow you to create shareable grocery lists that you or other family members can edit. The apps can organize the list based on categories, such as dairy, pasta or produce to help you shop efficiently. There are also free apps that let you digitally clip coupons for products that are on your list.

And check out cash-back apps, such as Fetch or Ibotta, that allow you to upload receipts and earn rewards or rebates for the purchase of featured products. They can help you save even more.

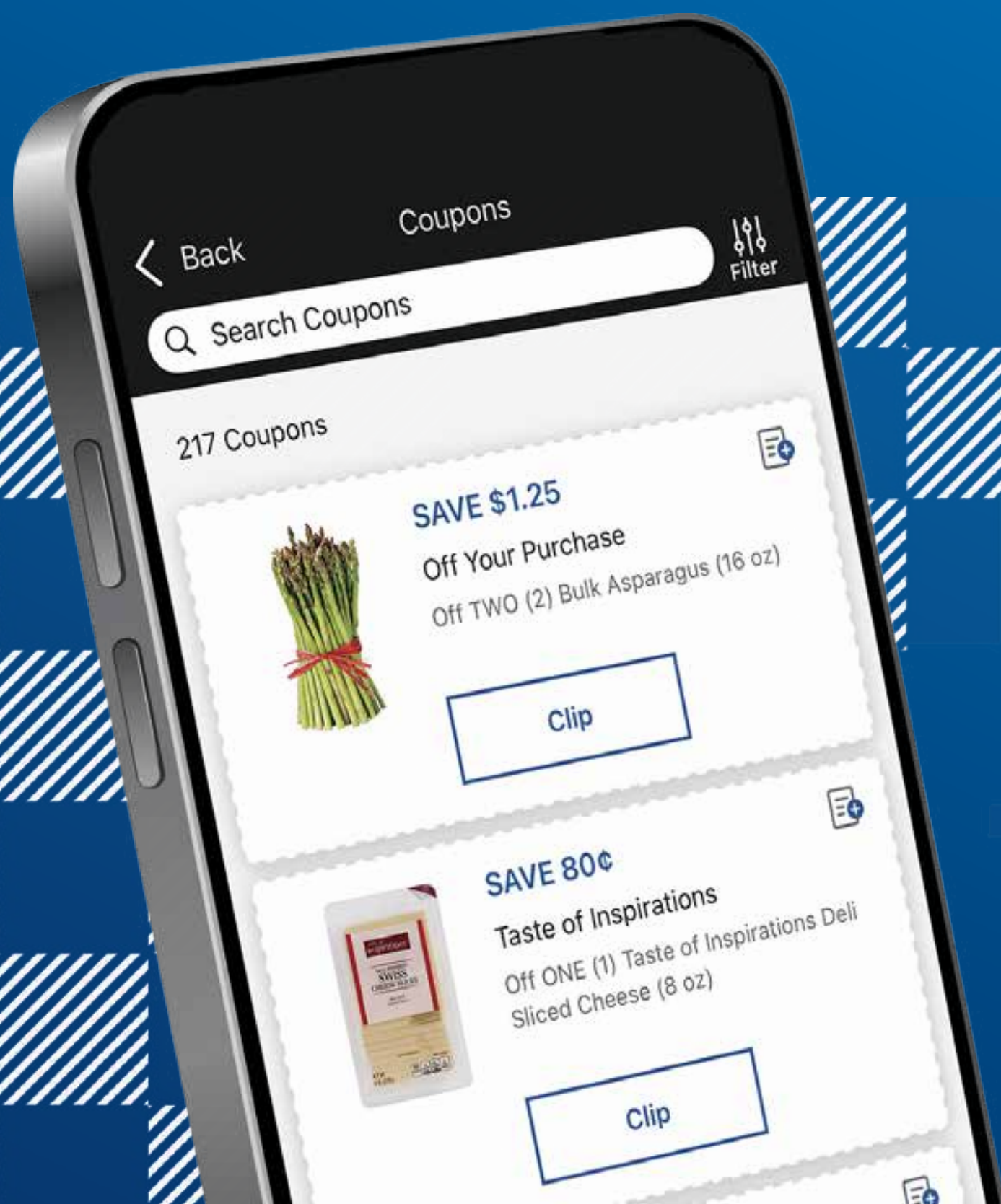
6. Use coupons strategically

Don't use coupons solely because you find them, which could mean you're buying unnecessary items. Check whether there's an alternative that's cheaper than your coupon deal, such as a store brand or sale item.

Pay attention to annual sale cycles, and look for coupons to amplify savings. For example, school supply sales begin mid-summer. You can save even more if you are gathering coupons for pens, pencils, notebooks and so on leading up to those sales — but keep an eye on the coupons' expiration dates.

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Arts & Culture

New Ackland Exhibit Now In Chapel Hill Investigates Manhood Through The Lens Of Local High Schoolers

WUNC NEWS – A new exhibit at UNC-Chapel Hill's Ackland Art Museum is something of a homecoming for documentary photographer Bill Bamberger.

The UNC alumnus and Duke University professor spent the past two academic years photographing and working with more than 250 students at Durham School of the Arts for the newest iteration of his series "Boys Will Be Men." But, the story behind the project actually starts about 40 years ago.

In 1984, Bamberger was a teacher at an all-male private boarding school in Deerfield, Massachusetts. Grappling with his own experiences and questions about masculinity, Bamberger began to photograph students as they navigated the path from adolescence to manhood.

He returned to the project in 2000, now a documentary photographer working as an artist-in-residence at an inner-city school in Flint, Michigan. The stories were different and the times had changed, but the conversations Bamberger had with students had stayed the same.

"It was about our identity and where we would go in the future,



our work, identity, our careers, the imagination of the kinds of men we wanted to be," he said.

In 2022, the Ackland commissioned Bamberger to return to the project for a third chapter, this time partnering with DSA.

Lauren Turner, associate curator for contemporary art and special projects, said the project aimed to be as community-driven as possible.

That's why the exhibit first debuted at DSA, in an abandoned basement that Bamberger and students converted into an underground gallery.

"It is a hallway that he and the team transformed via drywall, paint, (and) track lighting, all with the administration's permission," Turner said. "That is being left as a legacy for the school that they're able to use simply for exhibiting other art. So it



wasn't like we set up this beautiful thing to help this project, and then took it away. It gets to stay there."

Available at the Ackland until April 12, the exhibit features 42 portraits of students, as well as audio interviews from selected participants.

While previous iterations of "Boys Will Be Men" were photographed in black and white, this time Bamberger and the students chose to keep the

images in color.

"Color is nuanced, it's contemporary, it's ever changing," Bamberger said. "That's the way we saw gender in this world, more subtle, more nuanced, more complicated, more contemporary."

Over the last four decades, Bamberger said dialogue around toxic masculinity, sexuality and gender have changed. When he started the project in Deerfield, only one student was out as gay. At DSA, students from all over the gender and sexuality spectrum were welcomed to be included in the project.

Aside from being photographed themselves, students like Vasileios Gkoulioumis-Mantzoukas were also involved behind the camera. Gkoulioumis-Mantzoukas said he had heard about the project, but he

didn't get involved until he stumbled into it in the art classroom one day.

"I was like, whoa, this is not your average student project," Gkoulioumis-Mantzoukas said.

He became a part of the student team who helped Bamberger, a group that he described as very grassroots and diverse.

Now graduated from DSA, Gkoulioumis-Mantzoukas' own portrait is featured in the gallery. He hopes the exhibit will inspire people to talk about masculinity, but that's not all that he's taking away from the experience.

"Making new friends and getting to take part in this?" he said. "That's the greatest memory I could ever have."

Also new at Ackland

In the room beside Bamberger's exhibit, another new installation is now open to the public until May 17. Titled "Color Concentrated," the gallery features modern paintings and sculptures from the Robertson collection as well as a floor to ceiling collection of vibrant paintings intended to create a wall of color.

On the opposite side of the room, a magnetic reproduction of the gallery is available for visitors to make their own arrangements of the works of art.

"I think we have the freedom to really experiment with this and allow responses that are everything from allowing yourself to be immersed in a warm bath of color to a kind of critical attention to the ideology of display," said Deputy Director for Curatorial Affairs Peter Nisbet.

We Can Do Better: The Kingsboro Fight Against Environmental Racism

By Jordan Meadows

Staff Writer

Nearly 30 years after residents of the predominantly Black Kingsboro community—sitting in between Rocky Mount and Tarboro—stopped a massive hog slaughterhouse from being built in their neighborhood, the fight is being recognized as a defining environmental justice victory in Edgecombe County.

In the mid-1990s, Iowa Beef Processors (IBP) proposed constructing a 300-acre hog slaughterhouse between Rocky Mount and Tarboro that would have operated 24 hours a day and killed an estimated 20,000 to 30,000 hogs daily. The facility was expected to employ about 2,000 workers and bring constant tractor-trailer traffic through the rural community.

In 1995, the white-majority Edgecombe County Board of Commissioners began efforts to rezone land in Kingsboro from residential to heavy industrial use to accommodate the IBP facility.

The proposal drew little public attention until Tarboro attorney Marvin V. Horton Jr. noticed a legal notice in The Daily Southerner announcing the rezoning request. After



pressing county officials for details, Horton learned that IBP was behind the plan.

"They were excited about it," Horton later recalled in a documentary called We Can Do Better. "I told them I thought I was going to be sick."

Horton alerted Kingsboro residents, warning that the slaughterhouse posed serious risks to the community's health, property, and environment. The proposed facility raised immediate concerns about water use and pollution. The slaughterhouse would have required up to six million gallons of water per day from the city of Rocky Mount, a demand that opponents argued threatened the Tar River as a clean water source.

Environmental advocates warned that waste discharge and runoff from the plant could contaminate water-

ways and harm aquatic life. Slaughterhouses are widely recognized as significant contributors to water pollution, with weak regulatory oversight often leaving neighboring communities exposed to environmental and health risks. Residents also objected to the project's economic structure, noting that many of the higher-paying management jobs would be based in neighboring Nash County, while Edgecombe County would bear the environmental burden and receive mostly low-wage positions.

In response, residents formed the Citizens for Responsible Zoning (CRZ), chaired by Kingsboro resident Gleno Horne. Under the slogan "We Can Do Better," the group organized public opposition to the IBP proposal.

CRZ members packed planning board meetings and public hearings,

where crowds frequently overflowed and chanted "No IBP!" The group brought in a health expert from Iowa to brief the public and elected officials on the impacts of hog slaughterhouses, and held organizing meetings at Antioch Church, where residents established the Kingsboro Property Owners Association.

In March 1996, the Kingsboro Property Owners Association filed a lawsuit against Edgecombe County, alleging contract zoning, abuse of public duty, and the creation of a public nuisance. One issue proved especially influential: water consumption. Horton and other opponents argued that slaughtering tens of thousands of hogs per day would require two to three times the daily flow of the Tar River, making the project environmentally untenable.

On April 9, 1996, after months of protests, public hearings, and legal action, the Edgecombe County Board of Commissioners voted to deny IBP's rezoning request. The decision marked a major victory for Kingsboro residents, who viewed the outcome as protection against environmental racism — the disproportionate siting of polluting industries in communi-

(See ENVIR. RACISM, P. 12)



"SAY IT LOUD, I AM BLACK AND I AM PROUD": A PROFESSOR TEACHING CHILDREN ABOUT COLORISM

Nationwide — In her children's book, Little Miss Linda Speaks Out About Diversity, Dr. Linda J.M. Holloway speaks to the issue of colorism and the impact it can have on a child. Colorism is when someone is discriminated against based on the color of their skin within their own race. For example, in the Black community, it is often the light-skinned complexion competing against the darker-skinned complexion.

The lighter-skinned complexion is believed to be shown more favoritism than the darker-skinned complexion. Though there has been progress, childhood scars and race-based trauma can be extremely detrimental to the emotional, psychological, and social development of a child, resulting in him or her feeling unwanted, unloved, unappreciated, and devalued. Often, these feelings are carried into adulthood impacting one's self-image and causing the person to have extremely low self-esteem.

However, where the rubber really meets the road is when society tends to favor one skin tone as more likable than another. For example, people have been denied jobs, given harsher prison sentences, accused of committing a crime, and not chosen in romantic relationships because of having darker skin. Therefore, researching this topic and writing an academic journal article resulted in Dr. Holloway feeling compelled to write a children's book to address the harsh reality of this situation.

She wanted to openly create conversations around this topic, which would challenge people to talk about the impact and emotional damage it causes young children. She also wanted to address the influence it was having on a child's emotional and psychological wellbeing resulting in negative self-talk and the hate for others because of one's skin complexion.

Little Miss Linda Speaks Out About Diversity is a book about Little Miss Linda, a school-age girl, who has traveled the world because of her father's military career. However, there is something she is keeping from her parents. Little Miss Linda was a darker-skinned complexion child who was often teased and made fun of by the children in her school. Finally, Little Miss Linda and her friends want to teach the children a lesson about the pain and heartache a person experiences when teased and taunted about being dark-skinned. Thus, they speak with their teacher about conducting a diversity project at their school.

It is during this time that all the children learn to appreciate and celebrate other children regardless of their skin color. All the children are extremely impressed by Little Miss Linda's project about the Skit-tles being different colors, but are able to live together regardless of the color of their skin. Little Linda creates a program called Project P.R.I.D.E., in which P.R.I.D.E. stands for People Respecting Individuals' Differences Every day. This program is so well-received that she goes around the world teaching the concept of having children to appreciate the skin they are born in.

You will find this book very exciting, educational, and engaging. Dr. Holloway created a song, dance, and pledge to accompany the book, which the children thoroughly enjoy. There is also a treasure hunt where students are given the opportunity to locate Skit-tles throughout the book, coupled with LOL questions, which stand for Learning Out Loud.

Corneilous Harnett & The Price of Progress

By Jheri Hardaway

Staff Writer

Harnett County is one of the fastest-growing counties in the state. The 'Old North State' is experiencing rapid growth. North Carolina boasts 11 million residents as of July 2025, making it the 3rd fastest-growing state in the nation. Nearly 150,000 people have moved in over the past year, which makes 600,000 new residents since the 2020 Census.

A bedroom community to our capital county of Wake, Harnett boasts a slower-paced lifestyle and a more rural vibe. You can still drive through Harnett and see cows, horses, goats, and a menagerie of other animals and crops. Harnett County represents the heart of central North Carolina, also bordered by Johnston, Sampson, Cumberland, Hoke, Moore, and Lee counties.

We see the growth in our infrastructure, when you're trying to get a DMV appointment or driving in our metropolitan areas, which now have traffic concerns that didn't exist before. You'll see it riding through rural areas where a series of developers have laid claim to what was once farmland or green spaces. The reminders of growth are present in the litter on the roadways, which was never as terrible as it is now. Accord-

ing to the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners, "Between 2023 and 2024, 87 North Carolina counties experienced population growth. Notably, five of the nation's 75 fastest-growing counties are in the state: Brunswick (14th), Franklin (52nd), Johnston (69th), Harnett (72nd), and Iredell (73rd)."

As Harnett grows, one important thing we can do is also look back. This reflection is timely as we celebrate the United States Semiquincentennial, also called the Bisesquicentennial, the Sestercentennial, America 250, or the Quarter Millennium. It will be the 250th anniversary of the United States Declaration of Independence. While not a signer, Corneilous Harnett was an influential figure in the Revolution and the namesake of one of the centrally located and fastest growing counties, Harnett.

Details from America250.nc.gov outline his powerful impact. Corneilous Harnett (1723-1781) served North Carolina as a statesman and champion for independence during the Revolutionary War. Born in Chowan County to an Irish immigrant family, he built his early success as a Cape Fear merchant before entering politics in Wilmington in 1750.

Harnett rose to prominence by opposing the 1765 Stamp Act, helping to form the Sons of Liberty in

Wilmington, and championing states' rights. As chair of the committee that produced the 1776 Halifax Resolves, he helped make North Carolina the first colony to call for full independence from Britain. He later assisted in drafting the state's first constitution. Corneilous Harnett served in the Continental Congress from 1777 to 1780 but was captured during a British raid on Wilmington in 1781 and died shortly after his release. Harnett County, established in 1855, honors this legacy of leadership and commitment to independence.





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Community

Historic Site In Wendell To Become A Community Hub



By Jordan Meadows

Staff Writer

The Pleasant Grove Redevelopment Project marks a major step in restoring and reimagining one of Wendell's most historically significant African American community sites, centered on the former Carver School and Pleasant Grove Community Church campus.

The campus includes a 3.15-acre site, with a western building constructed between 1949 and 1959, currently known as the Carver Center, which today houses a daycare and a community food pantry. To the east stands the former Carver School building, built by 1949 on the site of an earlier Rosenwald School that was destroyed by fire in the 1940s. That structure has been vacant for roughly 20 years. A small brick shed sits south of the two main buildings. Under the redevelopment plan, the former Carver School will be renovated into a new community center, while continuing and expanding the site's longstanding role as a neighborhood anchor.

The proposed Carver Community Center at Pleasant Grove is envisioned as a comprehensive hub for services and programs, including

after-school, track-out, and summer camp programs; job development services; space for nonprofit organizations to provide services; performing arts space within the retained auditorium; inclusive program areas suitable for multigenerational and multi-capable community members; universal design to ensure full Americans with Disabilities Act compliance; and space to continue onsite food security efforts.

The school and church property were only recently annexed by the town, despite the Pleasant Grove community existing long before Wendell's incorporation.

Pleasant Grove Community Church, founded in 1863, has been central to that history. The school originated as part of the church and, in the early 1900s, became a Rosenwald School, part of the nationwide effort to educate Black children in the segregated South.

Asa Bell, pastor of Pleasant Grove, emphasized the site's historic role, saying, "This school served historically as a community anchor; a community asset. This is where black folk gathered, this is where assemblies occurred. Many of the teachers who taught at the school attended the church—there was a partnership."



Bell noted that many successful Black residents who grew up in the area credit the Carver School as foundational to their achievements beyond Wendell.

In 2007, the church purchased the two school buildings and the land from Wake County, returning the property to local ownership and renewed community use. From the campus, the church helped birth a food pantry, after-school programs, and workforce development initiatives, often in partnership with the county.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, however, one of the buildings was boarded up and became an eyesore, requiring more resources to redevelop than the church could provide alone. At the same time, the church served as a vaccine and COVID testing site, as church and town leaders began broader discussions about restoring the property and addressing historic inequities.

"The town committed significant funds to the project. They reached out to county, state, and federal entities to solicit additional funding. What came from that was a \$2M appropriation from Congress, with Deborah Ross leading the effort," Bell said.

The project, years in the making,

is supported by federal funding, contributions from Wake County, and local dollars. A groundbreaking held this past October brought together some of the church's oldest members alongside elected officials and town staff.

Marc Collins, Wendell's town manager, described the partnership between the town and the church as intentional and relationship-driven.

"There are deliberative conversations about trust, to help build relationships and have conversations. It's important to understand that nothing happens without people getting to know each other and establishing trust," Collins said.

He added that the town and Pleasant Grove shared values and goals, and that the investment was meant to signal that the community is an integral part of Wendell: "The town wanted the community to know they were part of the town itself and the broader community by investing time, money, and energy into it," Collins said.

Collins explained that the long-term facility lease agreement with the church allows the town to operate the center while respecting the property's legacy and limitations.

"The town is able to do a long-term facility lease agreement with the

church, so we understand what our limitations are and our limitations on the use of the property. We want to make sure it's protected and secure, and available to the public while also providing community programs," Collins said.

Community engagement has been central to the redevelopment process. Church members and residents were invited to meetings to review architectural renderings, offer comments, and provide feedback on plans for the site.

Bell described the relationship among the town, the church, and the community as collaborative, shaping both the design and the programming of the future center.

"They should expect to be greeted in an inviting way," Bell said of future visitors. "They should expect a half gymnasium for recreation purposes, an auditorium that will have a stage to show cultural arts and community meetings. They should expect a space with collapsible walls to have family

reunions and gatherings, office space, and meeting rooms with computers."

Collins said the finished center will intentionally blend history with forward-looking opportunity: "Expect history...a glass tower beacon of light was designed by the architect to represent a beacon of hope for the community. Within that space will be a rendering of the history of Pleasant Grove," he said.

"Some of the programming will include kids and seniors. You'll see opportunities for small business classes and senior citizens gathering. A new playground and ball field for recreational teams to play on," Bell added.

For Bell, the project represents both restoration and justice.

"I think we will, in the same spirit that has brought us to the table, bring something back to life that laid dormant for decades and had the potential to be lost forever," he said. "We were able to do that by seeing need, act on need, and bringing the necessary skill set to right that wrong."



THE GOLDEN YEARS

By Judykay Jefferson

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Every February, Black History Month arrives with familiar rituals: school programs, church celebrations, televised tributes, and a renewed chorus reminding America that our story is inseparable from the nation's story. But as time moves forward, the meaning of this month has shifted—not only in society at large, but within our own families. For those of us who lived through segregation, the Civil Rights Movement, and the long fight for recognition, Black History Month carries a weight that younger generations sometimes interpret differently. Understanding these perspectives helps us see where we stand today, especially in a moment when diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts are facing unprecedented pushback.

If you came of age before or during the Civil Rights era, Black History Month is not just a commemoration—it is a victory. I remember a time when textbooks erased Black contributions entirely, when the only Black figures mentioned in school were George Washington Carver and maybe Booker T. Washington. Carter G. Woodson's original vision for Negro History Week was radical in its time: it insisted that Black people had a history worth studying.

For us, Black History Month represents recognition after erasure, a platform for truth-telling, and a reminder of how far we've come. It is a sacred space, a time to honor ancestors who endured the unimaginable and still built institutions, art, scholarship, and movements that shaped the nation.

Those who grew up in the 1970s through the 1990s experienced a different America. They saw the rise of Black Studies programs, the growth of Black political power, and the mainstreaming of Black culture. For this generation, Black History Month became a celebration of pride and possibility. They remember school assemblies featuring African drumming, Kente cloth, and speeches about Malcolm, Martin, and Maya.

Yet they also witnessed the persistence of inequality, mass incarceration, and the widening racial wealth gap. Many in this group appreciate the month but also critique it. They argue that Black history should be integrated into American history year-round—not confined to 28 days. They want deeper conversations, not just feelgood tributes.

Today's young adults—Millennials and Gen Z—have grown up in a digital world where information is instant, and activism is global. They witnessed the deaths of Trayvon Martin, Michael Brown, Breonna Taylor, and George Floyd in real time. They organized protests through social media. They challenge institutions loudly and publicly.

For many of them, Black History Month feels both important and insufficient. They want authenticity, not corporate slogans. They want Black history to include queer voices, disabled voices, AfroLatino voices, and everyday people—not just the same five historical figures repeated each year. They see the month as a starting point, not a destination.

The current backlash against DEI initiatives has placed Black History Month under a sharper spotlight. Across the country, some institutions are scaling back diversity programs, revising school curricula, or avoiding discussions about race altogether. While the motivations vary, the effect is unmistakable: spaces that once embraced conversations about Black history and identity are becoming more cautious, even silent.

In the words of Nettie Stowers, "The more things change, the more they stay the same." For African American seniors, this moment can feel painfully familiar. Many lived through earlier eras when acknowledging Black history was considered controversial or even dangerous. The difference now is that the resistance is often framed in bureaucratic language: "efficiency," "neutrality," "colorblindness"—rather than the overt exclusion of the past. But the outcome can be similar: less room for honest conversations about race, inequality, and the contributions of Black Americans.

Ironically, attempts to limit DEI efforts highlight exactly why Black History Month exists. When discussions about race are restricted, there will be more covert hand-rubbing and a dedicated month becomes one of the few remaining spaces where Black stories can be told openly.

Black History Month remains a powerful tradition, but its purpose is evolving. Across generations, a few themes emerge:

- We all agree Black history matters.
- We differ on how it should be taught, celebrated, and expanded.
- We share a desire for truth, dignity, and progress.

For African American seniors, this moment offers an opportunity. Younger generations need our stories—our memories of segregation, our triumphs, our lessons, our warnings, our wisdom. They need to hear how we navigated a world that tried to limit us and how we carved out space for the freedoms they now take for granted.

Black History Month is not just about the past. It is a bridge between generations. It is a reminder that history is still being written—and that each of us plays a part in shaping what comes next.

'Protect Ours.' NC A&T Univ. Students Are Taking The Wheel On Early Voting

CAROLINA PUBLIC PRESS – A NC A&T student came up to county elections board Democrat Carolyn Bunker in tears after the North Carolina State Board of Elections' January meeting. The board had just voted 3-2 to exclude two Guilford County college campuses from early voting primary plans.

Unlike many of her fellow students, the student had a car. She told Bunker she felt pressure to drive her friends, her friends' friends and her classmates to the polls — all while trying to balance schoolwork and a job.

Election boards shouldn't put that burden on anyone, Bunker told Carolina Public Press. But at North Carolina Agricultural & Technical State University, the largest HBCU in the nation, a group of students are shouldering it proudly.

Juniors Terrence Olu Rouse and Shia Rozier recently launched Protect Ours, a movement to get students from campus to the polls this March.

Since 2004, the NC A&T site has been used for presidential general elections, according to data provided by Guilford County elections director Charlie Collicutt. A University of North Carolina – Greensboro site was added in 2012. The county board added both campus sites to presidential primary early voting plans in 2020.

However, neither NC A&T site has ever been used during midterm or municipal election cycles as early voting sites.

Students want that to change. Ideally, they'd like to be on the list for every election, no matter how small, Rouse said.

"This was no goof of the system or administrative error; this is a modern day poll tax on a student," he said. "There are thousands of students who do not have accessible transportation from campus to polling sites off campus, or students that cannot financially afford it or do not have the time to figure out another means of transportation."

But it's too late to change election board members' minds for this election, so NC A&T students are taking the primary into their own hands. That means tackling the biggest barrier to student voter participation: transportation.

Letting the 'grown ups' decide? Rozier has gone to the county elections board three times in her three



NC A & T juniors Shia Rozier and Terence Olu Rouse hold a press conference on Friday, Jan. 23, 2026, at the Beloved Community Center in Greensboro. Sarah Michels / Carolina Public Press

years to advocate for the inclusion of NC A&T campus voting sites. This time, she didn't succeed.

Republican State Board member Stacy "Four" Eggers, for one, doesn't buy that an urgent need exists to add campus early voting sites in Guilford County. He cites the historical record; in 2022, a majority Democratic county board voted unanimously to approve early voting plans that did not include campus sites.

If there was such a need, Democrats should have included the sites then, he said.

"Now we're being asked, suddenly, you must add seven sites and double the amount of sites, otherwise you're discriminating against someone?" Eggers asked.

Guilford County Republican elections chair Eugene Lester is of the same mindset. Campus sites will be open on Election Day, and mail-in absentee voting is available, he said in a December interview with Carolina Public Press. Plenty of options exist, he said, because the board chose 10 sites he thinks serve the entire community.

"We're certainly not going to look at one group and say that that group is more important than any other group," Lester added.

Democratic State Board member Siobhan Millen thinks excluding students sends the wrong message.

"What you've done, is you've said in the primary, the grown ups are going to pick the candidates, and then in the

fall, you all can vote or not vote as you want to," she said. "What my point is, is that I think the primary sites should be as representative as possible and as similar, demographic-wise, to the general so that it's the same group that's doing the choosing."

After the Guilford County portion of the meeting, dozens of NC A&T students stood in front of board members with signs, asking why they weren't included. In a video of the exchange, one student suggests that if their skin color were different, the outcome would have been too. Republican board chair Francis De Luca firmly rejected that idea.

At the January meeting, the State Board also upheld the Jackson County election board's majority plan, which cuts a historical Western Carolina University campus early voting site that has been proven to increase youth voter turnout.

Building a movement at NC A&T Transporting students to the polls won't be cheap.

Rozier and Rouse are raising funds for a shuttle to take students from campus to the Old County Courthouse, a 1.5-mile journey, for five days of early voting. Each day would cost about \$1,500.

As of Monday afternoon, they had raised \$1,370.

In the meantime, they plan to stage a march on Feb. 12 from NC A&T's Dudley Lawn to the Old County Courthouse. The students are in discussions to partner with several local

and statewide organizations in their effort, but were not ready to share a finalized list Monday. Their effort is not connected in any way with the university.

State Rep. Pricey Harrison, D-Guilford, said NC A&T students have always been engaged in the voting process.

"It's really commendable how energetic students are about voting, and I think this is a great commentary on that commitment to making sure that their votes are recorded," she said.

In the longer term, Rozier hopes this is a "turning point" for current and future NC A&T students. They want to work with county boards of election, not against them. They'd like to address and resolve any barriers in the way of placing early voting sites on their campuses so they don't have to continuously relitigate the issue, she said.

"That will be difficult. Early voting decisions often hinge on turnout, which tends to be lower on college campuses. But while those numbers are important, they aren't everything, Bunker said.

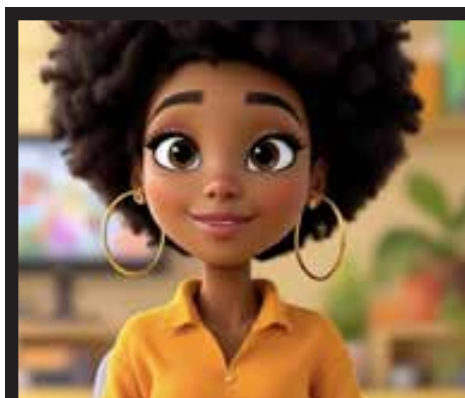
"Students are our future," she said. "... We have to be cultivating our students into being lifelong voters, and if we don't provide the sites for them to be able to vote, then we are doing a disservice to our future generation."

In addition, early voting on college campuses has always been a "partisan battle," Harrison said. Republicans perceive campus sites as boosting Democratic turnout. It's also sometimes hard to justify "student-specific" early voting sites that may have difficult parking situations for outsiders, she added.

"But the population centers at these campuses are tremendous, and so from my perspective, it makes sense to locate them there," Harrison said.

Rozier and Rouse at NC A&T plan to coordinate with other student leaders across the state moving forward — both those who have lost early voting sites and those who want to maintain them.

"We won't see these different attempts to get college voting to stop anytime soon," Rozier said. "There is power in strategy, power in community. We hope to build a larger community where we can strategize together about what's coming next, what we're doing."



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YouTube @thecarolinian

LIGON RENOVATION COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT MEETING

Monday, Feb. 9th 6:00 P.M. - 8:00 P.M.

Ligon Magnet Middle School, 706 E Lenoir Street, Raleigh NC 27601

During this event, district staff will provide an update on the current status of the Ligon Magnet Middle School renovation project and outline next steps for the revitalization of the school's facilities. Following the presentation, there will be time for discussion to give families, staff, and community members an open opportunity to share feedback and ask questions.

Church

Obituaries

LAWRENCE TIBBITT WILLIAMS OBITUARY

Lawrence Tibbitt Williams was born Nov. 10, 1933 to Addie Mae Williams in Wake Co., NC. He peacefully departed his earthly life on Tuesday, Jan. 13, 2026 at home surrounded by his loving and devoted wife of seventy years and beloved daughter.

Lawrence was dedicated to a lifetime of learning and education, beginning in the Wake Co Public School System. He graduated from Washington High School and entered the military with the 82nd Airborne Division. Following four years of military service, he continued to serve our country in the Army Reserve for several years.

Mr. Williams attended Howard University and later graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Education from Shaw University. After completing his undergraduate studies, he went on to receive a Masters of Education Degree from North Carolina Central University.

His marriage to the love of his life, Ellen Chavis Williams, was a profound and enduring one of seventy years. Out of the love of this union four children were born: Shelita, Larry, Cedric, and Rueben.

Lawrence's life's passion was learning and instilling a joy of education in others. He returned to the Wake Co. Public School System where he progressed in leadership over the course of thirty-seven years in various roles including: Math and Science Educator, Counselor, Assistant Principal, Principal, and the Director of Student Assignment.



His co-workers and community members reflected on his impact in assisting them with employment development and career progression. Parents of former students also expressed their appreciation to him for providing guidance and support in keeping their children on the right path.

During the summer months, Lawrence was one of the first African Americans hired as a Greyhound bus driver in the 1960s. He was also passionate about officiating both basketball and baseball games.

Dedicated to civic and community organizations, Mr. Williams was a very active member of the Iota Iota Omega Psi Phi Fraternity for more than seventy years. Throughout that time, he held the position of Keeper

of Finance for the 6th District, and received numerous awards in recognition of his lifetime of service to the fraternity.

Lawrence was a mere thirteen years old when he became a lifetime member of Davie St. Presbyterian Church in 1946. There, he led and served on numerous committees, including the men's council, a member of the session, and in the choir. He loved singing and had an astute ear for melody and the music of many genres including Jazz, Brazilian music, and Reggae.

Beyond a passion for education, Lawrence was a fierce competitor on the tennis court. From the existence of Ebony Racquet Club, Mr. Williams shared his love of the sport through promoting the game of tennis throughout the state, in addition to winning tournaments and coaching players of all ages. His love of the game was inherited by his children and grandchildren, and he remained active in attending their sporting competitions, musical recitals, and other events.

Lawrence also loved to travel and impressed the importance of annual family vacations. Over his lifetime, his travels with family and friends span across the U.S. and other countries.

Left to continue his legacy is his devoted wife of seventy years, Ellen Chavis Williams; devoted daughter, Shelita Williams, and loving sons, Larry (Jewell) Williams, Cedric (Lucille) Williams, and Rueben (Gail) Williams. Also carrying on his legacy are seven grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren, and a host of other relatives and friends.

Clergy Protests Against ICE Is Turned Into A Music Playlist

THE CONVERSATION – On Jan. 28, 2026, Bruce Springsteen released “Streets of Minneapolis,” a hard-hitting protest against the immigration enforcement surge in the city, including the killings of Renee Good and Alex Pretti. The song is all over social media, and the official video has already been streamed more than 5 million times. It's hard to remember a time when a major artist has released a song in the midst of a specific political crisis.

Yet some of the most powerful music coming out of Minneapolis is of a much older vintage. Hundreds of clergy from around the country converged on the city in late January to take part in faith-based protests. Many were arrested while blocking a road near the airport. And they have been singing easily recognizable religious songs used during the Civil Rights movement of the 1950s and '60s, like “Amazing Grace,” “We Shall Overcome,” and “This Little Light of Mine.”

I have been studying the politics of music and religion for more than 25 years, and I wrote about songs I called “secular spirituals” in my 2004 book, “How Sweet the Sound: Music in the Spiritual Lives of Americans.” Sometimes called “freedom songs,” they were galvanizing more than 60 years ago, and are still in use today.

But why these older songs, and why do they usually come out of the church? There have been many protest movements since the mid-20th century, and they have all produced new music. The freedom songs, though, have a unique staying power in American culture – partly because of their historical associations and partly because of the songs themselves.

Stronger together
Some of protest music's power has to do with singing itself. Making music in a group creates a tangible sense of community and collective purpose. Singing is a physical activity; it comes out of our core and helps foster solidarity with fellow singers.

Young activists working in the Deep South during the most violent years of the Civil Rights Movement spoke of the courage that came from



March on Washington Aug. 28, 1963. (Pic: Library of Congress)

singing freedom songs like “We Shall Overcome” in moments of physical danger. In addition to helping quell fear, the songs were unnerving to authorities trying to maintain segregation. “If you have to sing, do you have to sing so loud?” one activist recalled an armed deputy saying.

And when locked up for days in a foul jail, there wasn't much else to do but sing. When a Birmingham, Alabama, police commissioner released young demonstrators he'd arrested, they recalled him complaining that their singing “made him sick.”

Test of time
Sometimes I ask students if they can think of more recent protest songs that occupy the same place as the freedom songs of the 1960s. There are some well-known candidates: Bob Marley's “Get Up, Stand Up,” Green Day's “American Idiot” and Public Enemy's “Fight the Power,” to name a few. The Black Lives Matter movement alone helped produce several notable songs, including Beyoncé's “Freedom,” Kendrick Lamar's “Alright and Childish Gambino's “This Is America.”

But the older religious songs have advantages for on-the-ground protests. They have been around

for a long time, meaning that more people have had more chances to learn them. Protesters typically don't struggle to learn or remember the tune. As iconic church songs that have crossed over into secular spirituals, they were written to be memorable and singable, crowd-tested for at least a couple of generations. They are easily adaptable, so protesters can craft new verses for their cause – as when civil rights activists added “We are not afraid” to the lyrics of “We shall overcome.”

And freedom songs link the current protesters to one of the best-known – and by some measures, most successful – protest movements of the past century. They create bonds of solidarity not just among those singing them in Minneapolis, but with protesters and activists of generations past.

These religious songs are associated with nonviolence, an important value in a citizen movement protesting violence committed by federal law enforcement. And for many activists, including the clergy who poured into Minneapolis, religious values are central to their willingness to stand up for citizens targeted by ICE.

Practical Biblical Principles

THERE IS NO WAY POSSIBLE

Read: Genesis 18:6-15

By John L. Caldwell, Pastor
New Jerusalem Baptist Cathedral
It has been said that if you want a miracle, one must always expect one. However, this is not necessarily true. Expecting a miracle does not guarantee that a miracle will take place in one's life. However, there is no harm in thinking and being positive about an issue seemingly impossible to solve. Solving problems is often a Christian's dilemma.

The enemy is always trying to make our troubles appear impossible to solve. This can only be if our faith is not strong. Theologically speaking, having faith does not always open the door to receiving miracles in one's life. As a Christian or non-Christian, who do you believe can perform miracles? The only answer is a supreme power or creative being, greater than ourselves, who controls all life and earthly movements. One Who is a master in changing any circumstance in our lives for whatever reason to suit His purpose in the universe. This is non-other than Almighty God, Himself.

A miracle is defined as an act or event that seems to transcend or contradict all known or scientific laws. Usually, thought to be supernatural in nature. In other words, beyond human comprehension. Theologically speaking, faith is not always an ingredient in order for God to perform miracles in the lives of His children. God also performs miracles among us to carry out His objectives. God performs miracles for non-believers providing such miracles fall within His plans and will. It appears that all miracles God performs points to the coming of the Messiah. There is a question of faith on the table today, “Is there anything too hard for God?”

Our text today is focused upon the aged couple of Sarah and Abraham. Sarah is ninety and Abraham is 100 years of age. This couple had always wanted children but wasn't able to have any. At their age the situation was hopeless. Abraham had been waiting in faith for more than 25 years to have a child of promise from God. Abraham is now 85 years of age. Sarah became impatient and desperate. She then suggested/commanded Abraham to lay with her

hand maiden, Hagar, to produce a boy child in order to help carry out God's “slow” promise to her and Abraham. Abraham accepted the challenge from his wife and a son, Ismael, is born. This one is not accepted by God as the promised child.

He wanted to spearhead the headline of the promised Messiah. The question may be asked, “Why was God seemingly slow in bringing about the birth of the son He wanted?” God was simply testing His servants. Age and time are never a factor in any of God's forth-coming blessings to His children. A child of God should never attempt to put God on their time clock, so to speak.

Eventually there were consequences to Sarah's hasty decision. Abraham almost lost Sarah to Abimelech, a desert king located south of Israel as he was traveling through the land. Abraham lied to the king and had instructed Sarah previously to say that she's Abraham's sister.

Sarah was very pretty and Abimelech tool a liken to her and took her into his haram. God came to Abimelech in a dream and told him in no uncertain terms, “If you even touch this woman, you are sure as dead (Gen 20:3). Here God saved Abraham from his lies and Sarah from being violated by a heathen king. In short, Abimelech sent Abraham and his sister away with many gifts (Gen 20: 14-15).

God finally opened Sarah's womb and a boy child, Isaac, was born. Ismael grew up with Isaac and Sarah was careful to see that Isaac would be favored. Sarah became angry and jealous when she observed Hagar and Ismael scoffing at Abraham and herself. Sarah then commanded Abraham to abandon and send Hagar and the young boy away. This Abraham regretfully did.

God then instructed Abraham to listen to his wife (Gen 21:12-13). God then told Abraham He would bless Ismael and he will become a great nation (Genesis 21:13).

The Angel of the Lord found Hagar and her son in the desert alone starving and thirsty.

God then opened Hagar's eyes, and she saw a fountain from which she and the lad drank. The lad grew up and got married to an Egyptian woman and was blessed to become

“the father of the today's Arab nation.”

Now the final test of obedience for Abraham is now set by God. Up until now Abraham had gotten into some un-called for disobedience. God now tells Abraham to take his only son of promise to a mountain (Mt. Moriah) and make a sacrifice of him. We must note that God did not say make a sacrifice to Him. God never requires human sacrifices under any circumstances.

God's love sacrificed His own Son on our behalf on the cross to take away our sins and the opportunity for eternal life.

Abraham obeyed and took his son, Isaac, along with two young men as company, along with some firewood on a donkey's back to the place pointed out by God. Can you imagine what thoughts were flowing through Abraham's mind when Isaac asked his father, “Where is the lamb for the sacrifice?” Abraham replied, Son, God will supply for Himself a burnt offering.

Outside of a miracle taking place, Abraham's only hope was to believe that when he sacrificed his only son God would soon have to raise him up alive in order to fulfill His long standing-promise to this aged couple. Is this hope or is this faith? (Hebrews 11:19, Genesis 7:21).

Out of obedience Abraham prepared Isaac for the sacrifice on top of the wood pile. Abraham prepared to slay Isaac and then burn him on the wood pile for a burnt offering as God requested (Genesis 22:2). How would God raise Isaac to life from a pile of ashes?

As Abraham raised his hand to slay Isaac an Angel called Out to him to stay his hand and said, “For now I know you Fear God since you have not withheld your son from Me.”

Abraham lifted his eyes behind him and saw a ram caught in the thickets by its horns. Abraham went and got the ram and sacrificed it instead of Isaac. And Abraham called the name of the place.

“The Lord Will Provide. God did not want Abraham to Sacrifice his son. He only wanted Abraham's submission. That Angel was God, Himself (I Myself have sworn, says the Lord). And God promised to bless Abraham and his descendants and He did.

The Film, “From The Sin Of Slavery, To Winning Souls For Christ” Makes Its Black History Month World Premiere

Raleigh, NC, - In 1948, Bishop Eli Ratcliff, Sr. started a little wooden church in the heart of Southeast Raleigh, that 75 years later, has grown into a prominent holiness church led by Bishop Ratcliff Sr.'s grandson, General Overseer Pastor William “Billy” Eli Ratcliff.

But the story actually began years earlier, on an Anson County plantation in 1842, where Overseer Pastor Ratcliff's great, great, great grandfather, Washington, was sold into slavery, along with his older brother, Warren, to a white slave owner, Elijah Ratliff, for just \$400.00. A new film from director/journalist Cash Michaels, in association with producer Bishop-Elect William “Billy” Eli Ratcliff, traces this extraordinary piece of local African American history.

The film titled, “Lincoln Park Holiness Church: From the Sin of Slavery to Winning Souls for Christ,” retells the story not only of the Ratcliff family beginning with the sale of Washington to an Anson County plantation owner as a child, but how his descendants later founded Lincoln Park Holiness Church, and built it into a powerful place of worship over its 75-year history, and a vital source of food distribution and surrounding community revitalization today.

The film not only chronicles the leadership of the church's founder, Bishop Eli Ratcliff Sr., but the continued vision of his son, Bishop Eli Ratcliff, Jr., who courageously led Lincoln Park Holiness Church for an astounding 55 years before his passing in 2015. During that time, the church caught fire, which devastated the building, forcing Bishop Ratcliff Jr. to rebuild it into the solid structure that stands at 13 Heath Street in Raleigh today. And now, as his son, Bishop-Elect William “Billy” Eli Ratcliff, leads the church's continued mission of winning souls for Christ, this new film (a Black History Month first for an area church), made its' first and only world premiere February 26 at 11 a.m. at Lincoln Park Holiness Church, 13 Heath Street in Raleigh. Now, this outstanding, educational, and very touching jewel of Black History is going public for a second time and will now be forever reaching out to the whole world with its only one-of-a-kind story that ended up in the world-renown City of Raleigh, NC.

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR
Cash Michaels is an award-winning journalist, filmmaker and broadcaster. The former Carolinian



reporter/columnist currently writes and reports weekly for five African-American newspapers across North Carolina. Michaels has also produced several social justice films through his CashWorks HD Productions in Cary, NC., including “Al: My Brother” (which was just donated to the Civil Rights Movement Archive), “Obama in North Carolina: the Path to History,” and “Pardons of Innocence: The Wilmington Ten.”

Michaels has also produced a short film honoring “The Legacy of Mary Alice Jervay Thatch,” the late publisher of The Wilmington Journal who led the Wilmington Ten pardons of innocence investigation, which debuted during the 22nd Annual African American Cultural Celebration at the NC Museum of History on January 28th.

And a feature-length film about a church and Black family history titled, “Lincoln Park Holiness Church: From the Sin of Slavery to Winning Souls for Christ.” It Premiered's Sunday, Feb. 26th.

Michaels, a Brooklyn, NY native, is married to his wife of twenty years,

Markita, and they have two daughters, the youngest, KaLa, now a second-year student at Yale University; and the oldest, Tiffany, an alumna with an MBA from the University of Maryland at College Park, who is now studying to go into law.

ABOUT THE PRODUCER
Bishop-Elect William “Billy” Eli Ratcliff is a third-generation pastor following in the footsteps of his grandfather Bishop Eli Ratcliff, Sr. founder of Lincoln Park Holiness Church, Raleigh, North Carolina where he is currently the General Overseer, and also Presiding Elder of Truevine Assembly of Pentecostal Churches, Inc.

He attended North Carolina Central University and obtained degrees from St. Augustine College and Shaw University Divinity School. Bishop-Elect William “Billy” Eli Ratcliff has been a bi-vocational pastor during his 25 years in ministry at Lincoln Park and Mount Moriah Missionary Baptist Church. His corporate affiliations include Progress Energy, Primercia Financial Services & the United States Postal Service.





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Editorials

Editorial Policy

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Don Lemon's Arrest Looks Like an Assault on Freedom of the Press: A Federal Indictment Accuses Him and Another Journalist of Conspiring With Protesters Who Disrupted a Church Service

By Jacob Sullum



Don Lemon and Georgia Fort, two journalists who covered a protest that disrupted services at a St. Paul church on Jan. 18, were arrested last week on federal charges punishable by up to a decade in prison. While the protest itself entailed trespassing coupled with disorderly conduct, the attempt to treat reporting on the event as a federal felony looks like a thinly veiled assault on freedom of the press.

Opponents of the Immigration and Customs Enforcement crackdown in Minnesota targeted Cities Church because one of its pastors, David Easterwood, directs enforcement and removal operations at ICE's field office in St. Paul. Was that a good reason to interrupt a service at his church and self-righteously harangue the congregants, to the point that many of them fled?

No, it was not. Even if Easterwood had been there, the demonstration would have been misguided, misdirected, obnoxious, morally objectionable and plainly illegal, especially after the protesters were asked to leave and refused to do so. But that does not mean Lemon and Fort should be held criminally liable for the conduct of the people they were covering.

Lemon, a former CNN anchor and longtime critic of President Donald Trump who hosts a YouTube show, and Fort, a local reporter who runs a livestreaming news outlet, covered an organizational meeting that preceded the protest, agreed not to divulge the protest's location ahead of time, and recorded the event itself. According to a federal indictment filed last Thursday, those actions made them "co-conspirators."

Lemon and Fort allegedly conspired with the protest's organizers to "injure, oppress, threaten, or intimidate" the Cities Church worshipers "in the free exercise or enjoyment" of their religious freedom — a crime that carries a maximum penalty of 10 years in prison. The evidence supporting that charge seems skimpy.

At one point, the indictment says, Lemon and Fort "approached the pastor" running the service, Jonathan Parnell, and "largely surrounded him." They "stood in close proximity to the pastor," allegedly "in an attempt to oppress and intimidate him," and "physically obstructed his freedom of movement" while Lemon "peppered him with questions to promote the operation's message."

That is one way to describe Lemon's interaction with Parnell. Here is another way: Lemon interviewed the pastor about his response to the protest.

Lemon's questions were clearly sympathetic to the protesters. But the interview looks a lot more like journalism, however biased, than a conspiracy to violate someone's constitutional rights.

The indictment says Fort "stood in front" of "a minivan full of children" outside the church while interviewing a protest organizer. Although Fort's behavior may have been inconsiderate, that interview likewise does not easily fit within the statute that the Justice Department is invoking.

The indictment also charges Lemon and Fort with violating a federal law that applies to someone who, "by force or threat of force or by physical obstruction, intentionally injures, intimidates, or interferes with" a person exercising his religious freedom at a place of worship. Again, that description does not seem consistent with their conduct or their avowed intent.

Those difficulties help explain why a federal magistrate judge who approved arrest warrants for three protesters declined to approve warrants for Lemon and Fort. When federal prosecutors asked Patrick Schiltz, a George W. Bush appointee who serves as chief judge of the U.S. District Court in Minnesota, to override that decision, he saw "no evidence" that the journalists at the scene "engaged in any criminal behavior or conspired to do so."

You can fault Lemon for implicitly condoning this protest, which he acknowledged was intended to be "traumatic and uncomfortable," and for erroneously suggesting that it was protected by the First Amendment. But those misjudgments are not the same as actively participating in what the indictment calls "a coordinated takeover-style attack" on the church.

If the evidence is not driving the case against Lemon, what is? The White House's gloating take on his arrest suggests his real offense was political.

Jacob Sullum, a senior editor at Reason magazine

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Guest Columnist

Armstrong
Williams

Consistency Matters: Moral Clarity Requires It As I read the commentary across social media, legacy media and the broader public discourse surrounding the latest deadly shooting in Minnesota, I see something deeper than disagreement over facts or law. I see a nation struggling to reconcile rights, authority, fear and accountability in moments when events move faster than judgment.

Let's begin with the Constitution and the Second Amendment. The right to bear arms is not granted by government; it is recognized as preexisting. Its historical purpose includes guarding against tyranny. But that truth does not cancel another: Constitutional rights were never meant to suspend moral responsibility or situational wisdom. The Founders understood both human dignity and human fallibility. Rights without restraint was never the design.

It is also insufficient to dismiss what happened in Minneapolis as merely "bad judgment." That framing flattens the facts and avoids a harder truth. By multiple credible accounts, Alex Pretti did not attend a protest or seek to interfere with an Immigration and Customs Enforcement operation. He stepped onto the streets of his own neighborhood, streets where many lawful gun owners carry daily, after hearing alerts that federal agents were present. What he encountered matters.

Pretti witnessed a woman who was not the target of the operation being forcefully shoved, pepper-sprayed at close range, and left on the street. Any honest observer must concede that this moment reflected a breakdown of proportionality and control. His instinct to move toward someone being assaulted is not radical; it is human. He did not initiate violence. He was drawn into chaos already unfolding.

In the heat of the moment, Pretti failed to fully appreciate the added danger of being armed in such a volatile situation. His reaction was tragically flawed even as he acted humanely to help someone being harmed. That tension matters. It neither absolves his actions nor erases his humanity.

This is where slogans fail. The First Amendment protects peaceful assembly, not riots, assaults or obstruction. That distinction matters. But another truth matters as well: Armed federal operations in residential neighborhoods carry a heightened duty of restraint. Authority is not measured by force alone but by discipline under pressure. When force escalates unnecessarily, or when bystanders are treated as threats, legitimacy erodes regardless of the mission's legality.

And here is the uncomfortable reality: Two things can be true at once.

ICE agents operate in dangerous, fast-moving conditions and deserve to return home safely to their families. And when non-criminal citizens are killed during those operations, it is not "noise." It is a grave failure that demands scrutiny, not reflexive defense or instant condemnation.

This brings us to the double standard now on full display. When Kyle Rittenhouse carried a firearm into a volatile protest, many insisted intent, context and escalation mattered. They demanded nuance before moral judgment. Yet some of those same voices now abandon that standard when the armed citizen is Alex Pretti, treating the mere presence of a firearm as proof of guilt, provocation or deserved death.

Consistency matters. Moral clarity requires it. If Rittenhouse's actions merited careful analysis, Pretti's deserve the same intellectual honesty. Otherwise, we are not defending principles — we are defending sides.

This moment calls for humility, restraint and leadership that lowers the temperature rather than inflames it. That responsibility does not rest with the president alone. The governor of Minnesota and the mayor of Minneapolis must also choose language that calms rather than provokes, clarifies rather than polarizes, and deescalates rather than postures. Tragedy turned into theater only deepens mistrust and raises the risk of further loss of life.

Federal, state and local authorities must work together to reduce these flashpoints, not compound them. Citizens, too, must resist turning every tragedy into an ideological battlefield.

We do not need heroes and villains in every crisis.

We need truth.

We need accountability.

And above all, we need the wisdom to remember that a republic survives not by force alone but by legitimacy, restraint and a shared commitment to human dignity, especially when fear and anger tempt us otherwise.

FUNdraising Good Times

By Mel & Pearl Shaw
Saad & Shaw



A DIFFERENT APPROACH FOR A NEW YEAR

As the staff leader of your nonprofit, you are responsible for developing and sustaining an open and honest relationship with the board. As there are multiple board members and only one executive director, you will find your work becomes easier the more you engage with your board members and partner with them in the area of fundraising. That's suggestion number one: think of the time you spend with board members as a valuable investment in the growth, sustainability, and financial health of your organization or institution.

Take the time to meet individually with each board member on a regular basis. Let each member know your vision and goals for the organization, even if you think they know them. Share the fundraising goals and the progress being made towards these. Always ask for their assistance in taking on a fundraising or fund development task. This can include things such as hosting a small group of individuals at their home, office, or other location to share information about your organization and to request involvement or financial support. You can ask board members who they may know who could provide specific pro-bono services...the sky is the limit! What's most important is that you are consistently communicating with each board member and that each member is involved in some way with a fundraising-related activity.

Here's suggestion number two: when you are preparing to make a request of the board, or to present new information, talk with each member individually beforehand. Ask for their thoughts and perspectives. As appropriate, integrate these into your thinking. The goal is to share information with board members one-on-one, so they are not surprised by what you are presenting, and so you are not surprised by their response. You want to know in advance who supports you and what the objections might be. Your goal is to gain support and engagement so that you and the board are moving forward together. Of course, they may have suggestions that could change your proposed course of action — don't take that as a negative. What's most important is that the board is deeply engaged in fundraising, not that your specific idea is the one always agreed to.

You are most successful when the board is actively engaged in fundraising and sometimes that requires a mindset. Don't think of board members as "my board." Think instead of yourself as their facilitator, encouraging engagement, providing guidance, tools, and information and modeling accountability and transparency.

We have learned that too often the relationship between the board and the executive director can devolve into finger-pointing where each holds the other responsible for fundraising goals that are not being met. This doesn't have to happen. Try a new approach and see what happens.

FLINT WATER CRISIS

Continued from page 2

Detroit's water system. By then, however, the city's pipes were so corroded that lead continued to contaminate drinking water even after the source was changed.

In early 2016, President Barack Obama declared a federal state of emergency in Flint, and bottled water and filters were distributed to residents. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimated that nearly 100,000 Flint residents had been exposed to lead. Criminal charges were later brought against several state and local officials in connection with the crisis, though those cases were eventually dismissed.

A coalition that included Flint resident Melissa Mays, Concerned Pastors for Social Action, the Natural Resources Defense Council and the ACLU of Michigan sued city and state officials under the Safe Drinking Water Act. The lawsuits sought safe drinking water, proper testing and treatment, and the replacement of all lead service lines in the city. In November 2016, a federal judge ordered the government to provide every Flint household with either bottled water delivery or properly installed and maintained faucet filters.

In 2021, the state of Michigan agreed to a \$626 million settlement resolving most civil lawsuits related to the crisis. The settlement created a compensation fund for more than 26,000 claimants, prioritizing children who were exposed to lead during critical developmental years. Children six and under at the time of the crisis were allocated more than 64 percent of the fund, with some eligible for awards approaching \$100,000. Adults with documented injuries, property owners and businesses were also included.

Infrastructure work has also progressed. As of recent court filings, the state reports that more than 11,000 lead pipes have been replaced and over 28,000 properties restored. Roughly 4,000 homes are believed to still have lead service lines, primarily vacant properties or homes whose owners opted out of replacement.

Classifieds

CHATHAM COUNTY

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
CHATHAM COUNTY

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION In the General Court of Justice District Court Division File No: 26CV00047-180

To: EDGAR PERALES CASTRO,
Defendant.

Take notice that a pleading seeking relief against you has been filed. The nature of the relief being sought is for child custody. You are required to make defense to such pleading no later than March 3rd, 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, LEVY MORALES RAMIREZ, will apply to the court located at 40 E Chatham St, Pittsboro, NC 27312 for the relief sought.

This, the 16th day of January 2026.

Aneta Pavai
Pavai Law Offices, PLLC
Telephone: (919) 410-6690
1/22, 1/29, and 2/5/2026

DURHAM COUNTY

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS File No: 25E001433-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 11th day of December, 2025, as Administrator CTA of the ESTATE OF PAULA TERRY THOMPSON, 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 May 8, 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 5th day of February, 2026.

Juanita T. Rose, Administrator CTA
Estate Of Paula Terry Thompson
c/o Shirley M. Diefenbach, Attorney
Walker Lambe, PLLC
Post Office Box 51549
Durham, North Carolina 27717
2/5, 2/12, 2/19, and 2/26/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division Before the Clerk File No: 13E001332-310

Having qualified as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of OTIS REID PULLEY, deceased, late of Durham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the Estate to present them to the undersigned, in writing, at the address shown below, on or before May 5, 2026, or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the decedent or the Estate are requested to make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This the 5th day of February, 2026.

Georgina Nicole Moreno
Administrator
404 Idlewood Drive
Durham NC 27703
2/5, 2/12, 2/19, and 2/26/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division Before the Clerk File No: 26E000106-310

Having qualified as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of CURTIS G. DAYE, deceased, late of Durham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the Estate to present them to the undersigned, in writing, at the address shown below, on or before May 5, 2026, or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the decedent or the Estate are requested to make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This the 5th day of February, 2026.

Carla Alston Daye, Administrator
12603 Hampton Rd.
Rougemont, NC 27572
2/5, 2/12, 2/19, and 2/26/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS File No: 25E001576-310

Having qualified as Administrator of the Estate of DAVID JUNIOR DOWDY, deceased, late of Durham County, North Carolina, the undersigned Administrator does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against the Estate of said decedent to present such claims to Stella Jones at 215 Omega Road, Durham, NC 27712 on or before the 7th day of May, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons, firms and corporations indebted to the said Estate will please make immediate payment to the Estate.

This, the 5th day of February 2026.

Stella Jones
215 Omega Road
Durham, NC 27712
C. Terrell Thomas, Jr.
Kirk, Kirk, Howell, Cutler & Thomas
Post Office Box 729
Wendell, NC 27591
Attorney for the Estate
(919) 365-6000

2/5, 2/12, 2/19, and 2/26/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division Before the Clerk File No: 26E000090-310

Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of WILLIAM WITT, JR., deceased, late of Durham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the Estate to present them to the undersigned, in writing, at the address shown below, on or before May 5, 2026, or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the decedent or the Estate are requested to make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This the 5th day of February, 2026.

Laressa Witt Griffiths, Executor
1616 Kent St.
Durham, NC 27707

2/5, 2/12, 2/19, and 2/26/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS File Number 26E000092-310

ALL PERSONS, firms and corporations having claims against MARJORIE HUITT HAWKINS, deceased, of Durham County, N.C., are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before 5-6-2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This 2-5-2026.

Vincent Michael Micelotta,
Executor of the Estate of Marjorie Huitt Hawkins
c/o Lori M. Bernstein, Attorney at Law

2726 Croasdaile Dr. Suite 202
Durham, North Carolina 27705
2/5, 2/12, 2/19, and 2/26/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division Before the Clerk File No: 26E000073-310

Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of MARLOW P. SEVERIN, deceased, late of Durham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the Estate to present them to the undersigned, in writing, at the address shown below, on or before May 5, 2026, or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the decedent or the Estate are requested to make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This the 5th day of February, 2026.

Marlena Yates, Executor of the Estate of Marlow P. Severin
c/o Zachary A. Marks, Esq.
Wyrick Robbins Yates & Ponton, LLP
4101 Lake Boone Trail, Ste. 300
Raleigh, NC 27607

2/5, 2/12, 2/19, and 2/26/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division Before the Clerk File No: 26E000068-310

Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of ROBERT PRICE SNEED, deceased, late of Durham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the Estate to present them to the undersigned, in writing, at the address shown below, on or before May 5, 2026, or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the decedent or the Estate are requested to make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This the 5th day of February, 2026.

Carla Alston Daye, Administrator
12603 Hampton Rd.
Rougemont, NC 27572
2/5, 2/12, 2/19, and 2/26/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

All persons indebted to the decedent or the Estate are requested to make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This the 5th day of February, 2026.

Robert Price Sneed Jr., Executor
3407 Windsor Way
Durham, NC 27707
2/5, 2/12, 2/19, and 2/26/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division Before the Clerk File No: 26E000069-310

Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of SARAH KOPP SNEED, deceased, late of Durham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the Estate to present them to the undersigned, in writing, at the address shown below, on or before May 5, 2026, or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the decedent or the Estate are requested to make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This the 5th day of February, 2026.

Robert Price Sneed Jr., Executor
3407 Windsor Way
Durham, NC 27707

2/5, 2/12, 2/19, and 2/26/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS File No: 25E000975-310

Having qualified as Public Administrator of the Estate of GEORGIEON TISDALE STEELE, deceased, of 1011 Da Vinci St., Durham County, Durham, NC 27704, the undersigned does hereby notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the estate of said decedent to exhibit them to the undersigned in care of the attorney for the estate on or before May 6, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

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

This the 5th day of February, 2026.

Jeffrey L. Austin
Public Administrator
500 Westover Dr. #32043
Sanford, NC 27330

2/5, 2/12, 2/19, and 2/26/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division Before the Clerk File No: 26E000081-310

Having qualified as EXECUTRIX of the Estate of CHARLES JOSEPH OFSONKA, deceased, late of Durham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the Estate to present them to the undersigned, in writing, at the address shown below, on or before May 5, 2026, or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the decedent or the Estate are requested to make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This the 5th day of February, 2026.

Judit Benedek, Execurix, c/o
Richard F. Prentis, Jr., 4 Consultant
Pl., Durham, NC 27707
2/5, 2/12, 2/19, and 2/26/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS File Number 26E000089-310

ALL PERSONS, firms and corporations having claims against LINDA ANN NEAL-ANNANGENA A/K/A LINDA ANN NEAL, deceased, of Durham, Durham County, North Carolina, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before April 30, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the Decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This 29th day of January, 2026. Carima Eticha Neal, Administrator, c/o Caroline B. Denning, Esq., Womble Bond Dickinson (US) LLP, 555 Fayetteville Street, Suite 1100, Raleigh, NC 27601.

1/29, 2/5, 2/12, and 2/19/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS 26E000062-310

ALL PERSONS, firms and corporations having claims against LOTTIE MAE WALTON, of Durham County, N.C., are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before April 30, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This

the 29th day of January, 2026.

Lisa Bullard
1502 Pomona Drive
Durham, NC 27707
1/29, 2/5, 2/12, and 2/19/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division Before the Clerk File Number 26E000063-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 14th day of January 2026, as EXECUTOR of the Estate of ROBERT BRADSHAW JONES, SR., 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 30th day of April, 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 29th day of January, 2026.

Nichole J. DeWeese, Executor
212 Smith Dr.
Durham, NC 27712
1/29, 2/5, 2/12, and 2/19/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division Before the Clerk File Number 26E000044-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 14th day of January 2026, as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of PETER ALAN LODIEWICK, 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 30th day of April, 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 29th day of January, 2026.

Victoria A. Lodewick, Administrator
c/o Law Office of Anne Page
Watson, 3400 Croasdaile Drive,
Suite 205, Durham, NC 27705.

1/29, 2/5, 2/12, and 2/19/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division Before the Clerk File Number 26E000024-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 6th day of January 2026, as EXECUTOR of the Estate of SHARON J. SABRAW, 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 30th day of April, 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 29th day of January, 2026.

John Collier Sabraw II, Executor
74 S. Shannon Ave.
Athens, OH 45701
1/29, 2/5, 2/12, and 2/19/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division Before the Clerk File Number 24E002018-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 9th day of August 2024, as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of CAROL JEAN MORRISON, 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 30th day of April, 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 29th day of January, 2026.

Calvin Morrison, Administrator
3820 Vesta Dr.
Raleigh, NC 27603
1/29, 2/5, 2/12, and 2/19/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division Before the Clerk File Number 25E001416-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 6th day of January 2026, as CO-EXECUTORS of the Estate of HELEN R. GAMBLE, 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 30th day of April, 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 29th day of January, 2026.

Janie V. Harrell, Co-Executor
1915 Southview Road
Durham, NC 27703
Frances R. Mizzell, Co-Executor
2901 Blue Grass Lane
Decatur, GA 30034

1/29, 2/5, 2/12, and 2/19/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS File 25E001560-310

All persons, firms and corporations having claims against THOMAS THOMPSON WEAVER, deceased, of Durham County, NC, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before April 23, 2026 or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment.

This the 22nd day of January, 2026.

JONI PIERCE, EXECUTOR, C/O
BETH W BOWEN, BOWEN LAW
FIRM PC 590 New Waverly PI Ste
120 Cary, NC 27518

1/22, 1/29, 2/5, and 2/12/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division Before the Clerk File Number 25E001585-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 30th day of December 2025, as EXECUTOR of the Estate of JOHN THOMAS GRAY, 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 23rd day of April, 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 22nd day of January, 2026.

Faye Harris Gray, Executor
4621 Holloman Road
Durham, NC 27703

1/22, 1/29, 2/5, and 2/12/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division Before the Clerk File Number 25E001375-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 29th day of October 2025, as EXECUTOR of the Estate of JAMES DAVID LORE, 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 23rd day of April, 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 22nd day of January, 2026.

John C. Wainio, Executor
109 Presque Isle Lane
Chapel Hills, NC 27514

1/22, 1/29, 2/5, and 2/12/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division Before the Clerk File Number 26E000052-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 13th day of January 2026, as EXECUTOR of the Estate of BARBARA A. REED, 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 16th day of April, 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 15th day of January, 2026.

Elizabeth Gualtieri-Reed, Executor
105 Hogan Glen Ct.

Chapel Hill, NC 27516
1/15, 1/22, 1/29, and 2/5/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF DURHAM

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division FILE NO: 24SP001412-310

IN THE MATTER OF THE
FORECLOSURE OF A DEED
OF TRUST EXECUTED BY
ANGELA RENEESIMPSON
DATED JANUARY 13, 2004 AND
RECORDED IN BOOK 4248 AT
PAGE 641 IN THE DURHAM
COUNTY PUBLIC REGISTRY,
NORTH CAROLINA.

TO: Jennifer Simpson-Rogers
3004 Ivey Wood Lane
Apt. 219
Durham, NC 27703; and
Jamie Allen Bowen
2001 Keotuk Court
Apex, NC 27523

Take notice that a pleading seeking relief against you has been filed in the above action. The nature of the relief being sought is as follows: Petitioner has filed a Petition to for Surplus Funds.

You are required to make defense to such pleading no later than the 24th day of February, 2026, which is 40 days from the first publication of this notice. Upon your failure to file a pleading by the above date, party seeking service against you will apply to the Court for the relief sought.

This the 15th day of January, 2026.

Thomas K. Reardon attorney for
Robert E. Levin, Petitioner
Haywood, Denny & Miller, L.L.P.
P.O. Box 51429
Durham, NC 27717
Telephone: 919-403-0000

The Carolinian: 1/15, 1/22, 1/29,
and 2/5/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS FILE NO: 25E001317-310

In The General Court Of Justice
Superior Court Division
Before The Clerk

ESTATE OF AURIEL CIMONE LOWE
ADMINISTRATORS NOTICE TO
CREDITORS

THE UNDERSIGNED having qualified as Administrator of the Estate of AURIEL CIMONE LOWE, Deceased, in the Office of the Clerk of Superior Court of Durham County, does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against the said Decedent to present the same to the undersigned on or before April 17, 2026, said date being at least three months from the date of the first publication or posting of this Notice as indicated below, or the same will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said Estate, please make immediate payment.

This Notice is given pursuant to the provisions of G.S. 28A-14-1.

This 15th day of January, 2026.

Name and Address of Administrator
Stephanie Thomas
29237 Garnet Canyon Drive
Santa Clarita, CA 91390

Name and Address of Attorney:
Steven Lundberg
1155 Kildaire Farm Rd, Ste. 204
Cary, NC 27511

Date of Publication: January 15,
22, 29 and February 5, 2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

The undersigned, Carl A. Harris, having duly qualified as Executor of the Estate of ANNIE H. COOPER, deceased, late of Durham County, North Carolina, hereby notifies all persons, firms and corporations having claims against the Estate to present them to the undersigned in care of Ronald G. Coulter, Attorney for the Estate, 3400 Croasdaile Dr., Ste 205, Durham, NC 2770

DURHAM COUNTY

Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. Dated January 15, 2026. Ashley Ascott Ahlers, Administrator c/o Attorney Heather Hazelwood PO Box 61182 Durham NC 27715 1/15, 1/22, 1/29, and 2/5/2026 STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA COUNTY OF DURHAM **NOTICE TO CREDITORS** All persons, firms and corporations having claims against KATHLEEN DIANE CALLAHAN, deceased, of Durham County, NC, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before the 16th day of April 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment.

This the 15th day of January 2026. Peggy K. Callahan, Limited Personal Representative c/o Trusts and Estates Law Group 4141 Parklake Avenue, Suite 310 Raleigh, NC 27612 1/15, 1/22, 1/29, and 2/5/2026 STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA COUNTY OF DURHAM

NOTICE TO CREDITORS The undersigned having qualified as Limited Personal Representative of the Estate of JOHN PHILLIP BENNETT, Deceased, late of Durham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against the Estate to Exhibit them to the undersigned at the office of IDOL LAW, PLLC, PO Box 51759, Durham, North Carolina 27717, on or before the 17th day of April, 2026, or this Notice will be in bar of their recovery.

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

This is the 15th day of January, 2026.

Simone Bennett, Limited Personal Representative Estate of John Phillip Bennett, Deceased Robert A. Idol, Esquire IDOL LAW, PLLC Attorney at Law PO Box 51759 Durham, NC 27717 (919)401.5151 1/15, 1/22, 1/29, and 2/5/2026 STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA DURHAM COUNTY

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

File Number 25E001163-310 THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 3rd day of September 2025, as EXECUTOR of the Estate of GEORGE WHITLEY BOLDEN, 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 16th day of April, 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 15th day of January, 2026. Lesley Ruth Bolden, Executor 620 Wellingham Drive Durham, NC 27713 1/15, 1/22, 1/29, and 2/5/2026 STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION In the Superior Court File Number 25CV013616-310 KATRINA BROWN, Plaintiff v. MELVIN SIMMS and wife LENA SIMMS, Defendants. TO MELVIN SIMMS AND LENA SIMMS:

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: To quiet title and for adverse possession of the property located at 1008 Lancaster Street, Durham, North Carolina, parcel identifier 100419. You are required to make defense to such pleading no later than forty (40) days after the date of the first publication of the notice of service of process. Upon your failure to do so, Plaintiff will apply to the court for the relief sought.

This the 15th of January, 2026. Christopher M. Vann Vann Law Firm, P.A. 9912 Monroe Road, Suite 201 Matthews, NC 28105 Telephone: (704) 845-6050 Facsimile: (704) 845-1662 E-mail: chris@vannlawfirm.com 1/15, 1/22, 1/29, and 2/5/2026

LENOIR COUNTY

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA LENOIR COUNTY

RE: THE ESTATE OF CHARLES COLE – 25E001580-530

Having qualified as Administrator of the Estate of CHARLES COLE, deceased, Lenoir County, North Carolina, the undersigned does hereby notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the day of 15th day of April, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. This the 15th day of January, 2026. David Scott Russ, Administrator DSR Legal, PLLC PO Box 51596 Durham, NC 27717 1/15, 1/22, 1/29, and 2/5/2026

ON SLOW COUNTY

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA ON SLOW COUNTY

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

File No: 25E002681-660 Having qualified as Administrator CTA of the Estate of PHILLIP GLENN CHRISTMAN, deceased, late of Onslow County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned, in writing, at the address shown below, on or before May 5, 2026, or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the decedent or the Estate are requested to make immediate payment to the undersigned. This the 5th day of February, 2026. Phillip Scott Christman Administrator CTA 267 Pleasant Rd. Griffin, GA 30224 2/5, 2/12, 2/19, and 2/26/2026

ORANGE COUNTY

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA ORANGE COUNTY

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

File Number 25E000780-670 THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 5th day of January 2026, as EXECUTOR of the Estate of SANDRA SNEED JOSEPH, late of Orange 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 16th day of April, 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 15th day of January, 2026. Bruce Michael Joseph, Executor c/o Richard F. Prentiss, Jr. 4 Consultant Pl. Durham, NC 27707 1/15, 1/22, 1/29, and 2/5/2026

WAKE COUNTY

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA WAKE COUNTY

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION In the District Court Division File No. #25CV037546-910

To: CINDY CARYLE JEREW, 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 Complaint for Divorce and Equitable Distribution. You are required to make a defense to such pleading no later than March 17, 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, MICHAEL JEREW, will apply to the court for the relief sought.

This, the 8th day of January, 2026. Michael Jerew, Plaintiff c/o New Direction Family Law 150 Fayetteville St., Suite 500, Raleigh, NC 27601 2/5, 2/12, and 2/19/2026 STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA WAKE COUNTY

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION In the District Court Division File No. 25CV007590-910 To: STACI BYRD 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 a defense to such pleading no later than March 17, 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, JAMES STREET III, will apply to the court for the relief sought. This, the 5th day of February, 2026. James Street III, Plaintiff 623 Pony Club Circle Cary, NC 27519 2/5, 2/12, and 2/19/2026 STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA COUNTY OF WAKE

NOTICE TO CREDITORS In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division Before the Clerk File No: 25E002109-910 Having qualified as Administrator of the Estate of MAY SADAK, deceased, late of Wake County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the Estate to present them to the undersigned, in writing, at the address shown below, on or before April 30, 2026, or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to the decedent or the Estate are requested to make immediate payment to the undersigned. This the 27 day of January, 2026. Fida Sadak Nehme, Administrator 4020 Woodbine RD Raleigh, NC 27612 1/29, 2/5, 2/12, and 2/19/2026 STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA WAKE COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division Before the Clerk File Number 25E004552-910 THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 5th day of January 2026, as EXECUTOR of the Estate of JAMES LOVELACE BULLOCK, 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. This, the 29th day of January, 2026. Bethel Clay Bullock, Executor 2521 Sweetgum Drive Apex, NC 27539 1/29, 2/5, 2/12, and 2/19/2026 STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA WAKE COUNTY


NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION In the General Court of Justice District Court Division File No: 25CV033894-910 To: WILBER MACHADO, 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 March 3rd, 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, ERIKA PINEDA, will apply to the court located at 300 S. Salisbury St., Raleigh, NC, 27601, for the relief sought. This, the 22nd day of January 2026. Erika Pineda, Plaintiff 7803 S. Arizona Dr. Raleigh, NC 27616 1/22, 1/29, and 2/5/2026 STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA COUNTY OF WAKE

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION In the General Court Of Justice

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION In the General Court Of Justice

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION In the General Court Of Justice

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION In the General Court Of Justice


ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS
The North Carolina Department of Adult Correction has the following contract in Wake County out for bid: C- 11838 Central Prison Steam Leak Repairs . The bid opening is scheduled for: Tuesday, 02/24/2026 . To obtain the Notice to Bidders, any Pre-Bid Requirements, and any Addenda visit: <https://evp.nc.gov/solicitations/details/?id=674d8d1f-ebf2-f011-8406-001dd8003962>

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 **Orpin Court Culvert Replacement project for New Hanover County** which bids on **February 9, 2026, at 3:00 PM**. Plans and specifications for this project are available at the following locations: T. A. Loving Company; 400 Patetown Road; Goldsboro, NC 27530. Potential subcontracting opportunities include but are not limited to surveying, asphalt paving, traffic control, erosion control, and seeding. 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.

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 **Courtney Pines Road Water Main Relocation project for New Hanover County** which bids on **February 9, 2026, at 3:00 PM**. Plans and specifications for this project are available at the following locations: T. A. Loving Company; 400 Patetown Road; Goldsboro, NC 27530. Potential subcontracting opportunities include but are not limited to surveying, traffic control, erosion control, directional drilling, and dewatering. 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.

Superior Court Division File No. 25CV030600-910 MARINE FEDERAL CREDIT UNION, Plaintiff, v.

JUSTIN SHARMA, Defendant. To: Justin Sharma

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 the collection of money owed, as more fully described in the Complaint filed in Wake County Superior Court, File Number 25CV030600-910.

You are required to make a defense to such pleading no later than March 2, 2026, which is forty (40) days from the first date of publication reduces. Upon your failure to do so, the party seeking service against you will apply to the Court for the relief sought. This the 22nd day of January, 2026. MEWBORN & DESELMs, ATTORNEYS AT LAW Brett J. DeSelms Michael Tuton Attorneys for Plaintiff 829 Gum Branch Road, Suite C Jacksonville, NC 28540 Telephone: (910) 455-9755 Publication Dates: January 22, January 29, and February 5, 2026 STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA WAKE COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS All persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the HILDA JANE HARPER, deceased, of Wake County, NC are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before April 20, 2026 or this notice will be pleaded in bar or recovery. Debtors of the decedent of the Estate are asked to make immediate payment. This the 20th day of January, 2026. Gwendolyn Kathy Riggs, Executor Estate of Hilda Jane Harper 5050 Pender Road Shallotte, NC 28470 JAN 22, 29, Feb 5, & 12, 2026 STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA COUNTY OF WAKE

NOTICE TO CREDITORS All persons, firms and corporations having claims against the HILDA JANE HARPER, deceased, of Wake County, NC are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before April 20, 2026 or this notice will be pleaded in bar or recovery. Debtors of the decedent of the Estate are asked to make immediate payment. This the 20th day of January, 2026. Gwendolyn Kathy Riggs, Executor Estate of Hilda Jane Harper 5050 Pender Road Shallotte, NC 28470 JAN 22, 29, Feb 5, & 12, 2026 STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA COUNTY OF WAKE

NOTICE TO CREDITORS All persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the HILDA JANE HARPER, deceased, of Wake County, NC are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before April 20, 2026 or this notice will be pleaded in bar or recovery. Debtors of the decedent of the Estate are asked to make immediate payment. This the 20th day of January, 2026. Gwendolyn Kathy Riggs, Executor Estate of Hilda Jane Harper 5050 Pender Road Shallotte, NC 28470 JAN 22, 29, Feb 5, & 12, 2026 STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA COUNTY OF WAKE

NOTICE TO CREDITORS All persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the HILDA JANE HARPER, deceased, of Wake County, NC are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before April 20, 2026 or this notice will be pleaded in bar or recovery. Debtors of the decedent of the Estate are asked to make immediate payment. This the 20th day of January, 2026. Gwendolyn Kathy Riggs, Executor Estate of Hilda Jane Harper 5050 Pender Road Shallotte, NC 28470 JAN 22, 29, Feb 5, & 12, 2026 STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA COUNTY OF WAKE

ESTATE OF JAMES RANDOLPH FULLWOOD FILE NO 25E004348-910

All persons, firms and corporations having claims against JAMES RANDOLPH FULLWOOD, deceased, of Wake County, NC, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before April 16, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This the 15th day of January, 2026. Ernest B. Fullwood, Jerelene Fullwood-Carver, and Lorenzo Keith, Co-Executors, c/o Blue LLP, 205 Fayetteville St, Suite 300, Raleigh, NC 27601. The Carolinian, 1/15, 1/22, 1/29, and 2/5/2026.

MECKLENBURG COUNTY

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA MECKLENBURG COUNTY

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

File Number 25E004303-590 THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 13th day of January 2026, as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of BARBARA JONES HANKS, late of Mecklenburg 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 16th day of April, 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 15th day of January, 2026. Thomas Myers, Administrator 30 North Gould Street, Suite R Sheridan, WY 82801 1/15, 1/22, 1/29, and 2/5/2026

Submit your bid, job and recruitment advertising to ads@caro.news

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS
Town of Lucama P.O. Box 127 Lucama, NC 27851 Separate sealed BIDS for the construction of 2021 Water Line Replacement Contract No. 7 - Water Line Replacement will be received by the ENGINEER at the Lucama Town Hall, 111 South Main Street, Lucama, NC 27851 until 2:00 PM Eastern Standard Time, March 3, 2026, and then at said office publicly opened and read aloud. The CONTRACT DOCUMENTS may be examined at the following locations: Lucama Town Hall, 111 South Main Street, Lucama, NC 27851 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) Physical 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 \$157.00 for each set. The OWNER reserves the right to reject any and all BIDS. BIDDER shall be properly licensed under Chapter 87, General Statutes of North Carolina. Small, minority, women's, and disadvantaged businesses and labor surplus area firms are encouraged to submit BIDS. This PROJECT is subject to the good faith efforts and goals for participation by minority businesses required by G.S. 143-128.2. The OWNER has adopted a verifiable ten percent (10%) goal for participation by minority businesses in the total value of the WORK. BIDDERS shall, within the time frames specified in the BID documents, submit all required affidavits and documentation demonstrating that the BIDDER made the required good faith effort in compliance with G.S. 143-128.2. Failure to file all required affidavits and documentation within the required time frames is grounds for rejection of the BID. Prospective BIDDERS who have been found guilty of discrimination within the last two (2) years are debarred from bidding. A preBid conference will be held at 10:00 AM on February 11, 2026 in the Lucama Town Hall, 111 South Main Street, Lucama, NC 27851. Prospective BIDDERS are encouraged to attend this prebid conference as part of their good faith efforts. January 30, 2026 Matt Creech Mayor Town of Lucama

Sports

Classifieds

Women's Basketball: Shaw 66, Livingstone 58



Shaw's women leaned on poise, pressure defense, and timely scoring to secure a 66-58 victory over Livingstone. The Bears controlled the tempo down the stretch, answering every Livingstone push with composed offensive execution.

Guard Ashara Spruill set the tone in the second half, repeatedly attacking the lane and battling through contact. Her aggressive drives forced defensive rotations and opened space for teammates, while her hustle on loose balls underscored Shaw's



physical edge. Leasia Matthews added another spark, slicing into the paint and finishing through traffic to help the Bears maintain separation late.

Defensively, Shaw disrupted Livingstone's rhythm with active hands

and strong rebounding, limiting second-chance opportunities and closing out possessions. The balanced effort allowed the Bears to hold on comfortably in the final minutes and protect their home court.

(Photos: Steve Worthy)

Men's Basketball: Shaw 66, Livingstone 58



The men's game followed with a higher-scoring affair, as Shaw pulled away for an 87-75 win behind energy, depth, and sustained offensive pressure. From the opening half, the Bears attacked the basket and controlled the boards, setting the tone for the rest of the contest.

Isaiah Buckley was effective at-

tacking the defense, finishing plays inside and drawing contact, while Justin Harris helped anchor Shaw's intensity with physical play and effort on loose balls. Shaw's ability to convert in transition and capitalize on defensive stops allowed the Bears to steadily build their lead.

Livingstone showed flashes behind



strong interior play and contested shots, but Shaw's consistency on both ends proved decisive. The Bears closed the game with confidence,

executing down the stretch to secure the doubleheader sweep.

(Photos: Steve Worthy)

D/M/WBE

SUBCONTRACTORS/SUPPLIERS WANTED

Pipeline Utilities, Inc. (NC General Contractor License No. 325) is seeking certified DBE, MBE, and WBE subcontractors and suppliers for the Walmart Pump Station Abandonment & Gravity Sewer Extension project for the Town of Clayton which bids on February 12, 2026, at 2:00 PM. Plans and specifications for this project are available at the following locations: Pipeline Utilities, Inc.; 2204-F Associate Drive; Raleigh, NC 27603 * Town of Clayton - Engineering Department; 111 East Second Street; Clayton, NC 27520.

Potential subcontracting opportunities include but are not limited to surveying, demolition, clearing and grubbing, hauling, erosion control, seeding, electrical, linework/pipe installation, jack & bore, bypass pumping, and manhole lining. Please contact Ethan Grissom (egrissom@pui-nc.com) if you are interested in submitting a proposal on any portion(s) of this project. Contact via phone 919-772-4310; fax: 919-772-3261; or email. All quotations will be accepted up to the closing time of the bid date. Pipeline Utilities, Inc. 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.

ENVIRONMENTAL RACISM

Continued from page 6

ties of color.

Instead of a hog slaughterhouse, the land once targeted by IBP was later developed into an eco-friendly QVC distribution center, powered in part by a solar farm and employing up to 2,000 people.

The Kingsboro fight has since been documented in We Can Do Better, a 30-minute documentary produced by Charlotte-based filmmaker Frederick Murphy in collaboration with East Carolina University Special Collections and the Phoenix Historical Society. The film was supported by a 2022-23 Institute of Museum and Library Services Library Services and Technology Act grant.

In April 2025, the Citizens for Responsible Zoning were honored with a North Carolina Highway Historical Marker, dedicated at the intersection of Kingsboro Road and Antioch Road. More than 125 people attended the unveiling ceremony, which recognized the contributions of 18 CRZ participants who have since died.

Community members and advocates continue to cite the Kingsboro campaign as a model for grassroots organizing and environmental justice, particularly in rural Black communities facing industrial development pressures. As resident Melvin Ray Hart said during the commemoration, "If those people hadn't stood together and spoken so forcefully, anything could have happened."



The Lottery Is Constructing Success.

The North Carolina Education Lottery has raised over \$12 billion to support our schools, staff, and students across the state. A portion of these funds are dedicated to building and repairing schools, creating modern spaces for our students to dream and learn.



Visit MovingNCStudentsForward.com or scan the QR code to see how lottery funds have impacted your community. If lottery funds have benefited you or your student, submit your story to be entered for a chance to earn \$2,000!

