



High Gas Prices Are Forcing Many To Limit Their Usual Grocery Spending

Food Institute—Rising prices at the pump are creating headaches for many Americans. That was a key takeaway from a survey released this morning by Snipp Interactive, which found that nearly six in 10 shoppers — particularly regular grocery shoppers — have been impacted by rising gas prices.

According to AAA, a gallon of regular gas cost an average of \$3.99 in

the U.S. as of Monday. The national average for a gallon of gas has risen slightly more than a full dollar since late February.

The Snipp report revealed that higher gas prices are doing more than draining wallets at the pump. They're altering how Americans shop, spend, and plan.

"What stood out the most in this research is just how deeply rising

gas prices are reshaping everyday consumer behavior," Snipp CRO Chris Cubba told The Food Institute. "What's most surprising is that spending pullbacks are not just confined to discretionary goods and are now extending into essential goods, as well. While snacks, alcohol, and prepared foods are expected to face the sharpest cuts, pressure is also cascading into produce and dairy."

Earlier this month, Snipp surveyed 1,000 American grocery shoppers, gauging the behavioral consequences of rising fuel costs. The findings show that, as household budgets come under pressure, grocery shoppers are making noteworthy adjustments in how much they spend.

Nearly 12% of survey respondents said that recent gas-price increases have "extremely" impacted their household budget, while 19.4% gave an answer of "significantly." As a result, Snipp determined that tiered value is essential in the months ahead.

"Nearly six in 10 shoppers feel fuel prices to some degree," the Snipp report noted. "One-size-fits-all promotional strategies will underperform in this environment."

There were a few other eye-opening findings from the report, such as: 63.6% of consumers said they're dining out less these days

38.5% have delayed a major purchase due to higher fuel costs

21.6% said their weekly grocery spending has "decreased somewhat"

"The squeeze is real," Snipp wrote.

"Over two in three shoppers have adjusted spending patterns. This signals an urgent need to anchor promotional strategy in everyday essentials and to activate loyalty mechanisms that retain wallet share."

Some 35.8% of consumers indicated they're trading down and/or buying less at grocers in 2026. Somewhat surprisingly, the top category that consumers are spending less on is "snacks and beverages" (51.7%), followed by alcohol (38.1%) and prepared deli items (32.9%).

As prices at the pump rise, more than a quarter (26.1%) of American adults are shopping at retailers "closer to home."

Roughly 40% of shoppers are actively switching to private label products, which creates an opportunity for retailers to expand their store-brand assortments.

Americans don't envision prices dropping anytime soon, either. Nearly half (46%) of survey respondents are very or extremely concerned about continued grocery cost increases over the next six months.

The survey delivers a clear sign, according to Snipp: rising fuel prices are a material force reshaping how Americans shop for groceries. And the behavioral changes seem unlikely to reverse in the near-term.

"These findings underscore the need for brands to prioritize awareness, value, and timely offers to protect share, reinforcing the importance of targeted, value-driven marketing in a prolonged cost-conscious environment," Cubba told FI.



GOVERNOR STEIN OUTLINES PRIORITIES TO SUPPORT RURAL NORTH CAROLINIANS AT NC RURAL SUMMIT

(RALEIGH) Today Governor Josh Stein joined the NC Rural Center's 2026 Rural Summit to highlight his commitment to investing in the infrastructure and resources North Carolina's rural communities need to thrive. Governor Stein also marked the third anniversary since North Carolina passed Medicaid expansion, which has provided more than 720,000 North Carolinians, including 250,000 rural North Carolinians, with affordable health care.

"Our state is home to more than 3.5 million rural North Carolinians, the second-largest rural population in the country," said Governor Josh Stein. "In North Carolina, where you come from should never limit how far you can go. We must strengthen infrastructure, including broadband, expand access to affordable health care, and invest in workforce development so that rural North Carolina is part of the state's success story."

Governor Stein is committed to investing in rural North Carolina. This week, Governor Stein visited Sampson County for his second of a series of Rural Listening Sessions. Earlier this month, the Governor kicked off his Rural Listening Tour, where he and cabinet secretaries are traveling throughout the state to meet with community leaders to hear their concerns and priorities for strengthening rural communities. The tour represents the Stein administration's whole-of-government approach to rural development. In the coming weeks and months, cabinet secretaries will host listening sessions across the state, focusing on health care, economic development and jobs, infrastructure, and more. Click here to learn more about upcoming Rural Listening Sessions. Last month, Governor Stein and the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) announced more than \$472 million in funding for drinking water and wastewater infrastructure projects in 66 of North Carolina's 100 counties. These funds will help support healthy cities and towns by upgrading aging water infrastructure to better withstand storms and improve communities' drinking water systems. In December, Governor Stein also announced that the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) approved North Carolina's proposal to bring more than \$300 million in high-speed internet projects to homes and communities across the state, primarily in rural areas, through the federal Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program.

In December, Governor Stein and the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) secured \$213 million from the federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services through the Rural Health Transformation Program to improve health care access for the more than 3.5 million people living in rural communities. These funds will support more than 400 rural health care facilities and invest in strengthening the rural health care workforce through rural residency programs, incentives, and innovative career pathways. Earlier this week, Governor Stein joined the groundbreaking ceremony for AdventHealth Weaverville's new hospital. The new hospital will create 1,300 jobs and provide a closer hospital option for those living in Madison and Yancey counties.

RALEIGH TEEN COULD GET FIVE YEARS IN ALLEGED MINORITIES MURDER PLOT

By Cash Michaels

Contributing Writer

A white Raleigh teenager could face five years in federal prison for allegedly threatening on Instagram to kill African-American and Hispanic people in a mass shooting, federal authorities say.

Eric Constantine Byrd, 19, made his first appearance in federal court last week where he sat handcuffed in his street clothes. Byrd is charged with transmitting a threat in interstate commerce to injure another person.

The FBI Raleigh Joint Terrorism Task Force was alerted by officials in Washington, DC after Meta, the social platform company, forwarded several of Byrd's threatening posts to them.

The charge results from threats Byrd allegedly made online between Feb. 9th and March 6th using the hashtag signal #active to indicate his intention to become an active shooter. Prosecutors say during that time, Byrd posted his white supremacist/neo-Nazi intentions to murder blacks, Hispanics, homosexuals among others, and become a well-known mass shooter.

"Planning on getting #active on my local [slur against Black people] and [slur against Hispanic people]," one post reads. "I'm just trying to find the time to do it which idk when yet [shrugging emoji]. I'm not a p—y I will record it! #NOLIVESMATTER," he allegedly posted.

Byrd also promoted the prospect of killing himself after a racial mass shooting, if not killed by "someone else". Several of the young white supremacist's posts feature pictures of him holding guns, according to court documents.

Reportedly, when the FBI began investigating Byrd and went to his home in Raleigh, the teen's parents admitted that their son, who lived with them, "had issues." Subsequent to that, according to a criminal complaint, his parents revealed that he did purchase a firearm, but didn't "have access to it."

"After some hesitation, Byrd's mother escorted an FBI [agent] to an upstairs bedroom," the complaint continues. "The firearm was located in a blue box in the closet of what was later determined to be Byrd's bedroom."

Raleigh police had to be called to the home in January because of an alleged incident after Byrd "lost his mind."

"Byrd admitted that if he had ammunition for his firearm during the aforementioned January 2026 incident with his parents, he would have 'probably' killed them," the complaint states. It was later determined in a search of the Raleigh teen's emails that he had purchased an AK-47 rifle in December (though the FBI believes he may have sold it), along with 1,000 rounds of 9 mm ammunition.

Byrd also admitted in online posts that he enjoyed watching other people suffer.

ATTORNEY GENERAL JEFF JACKSON WARNS NORTH CAROLINA VETERANS ABOUT RISING SCAMS

RALEIGH — Attorney General Jeff Jackson is warning veterans across North Carolina about a scam that offers veterans monthly payments and free dental coverage through a Veteran Savings Program. No such program exists. The scam uses high-pressure tactics and urges recipients to "call within five days" for more information. If people call the number listed, scammers will

(See STATE BRIEFS P. 2)



Going To An HBCU Has Been Linked To Better Health For Black Students

THE GUARDIAN - Attending a historically Black college or university (HBCU) as a young adult may be linked with better later-life cognitive outcomes for Black Americans, according to a recent study. The authors sampled 1,978 Black American adults who attended college between 1940 and 1980 (35% attended an HBCU), and who attended a high school in a state with an HBCU. The conclusion? There may be a correlation between collegiate environment and long-term wellness.

During that time frame of attendance, two major policy implementations shaped schooling in the country: first, in 1952, Brown v Board of Education ruled that racial segregation in schools was unconstitutional; and second was the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which barred racial discrimination in school.

Dr Marilyn Thomas, an assistant professor of medicine at the University of California, San Francisco, was interested in whether or not the cohort would show different out-



comes between HBCU graduates and graduates of predominantly white institutions (PWIs). The study mined differences between Black students who attended college during a time when they were largely prevented from attending white colleges and Black students who attended college after segregation was outlawed.

The study, published last month in Jama Network Open with co-authors from Rutgers University, the University of Alabama at Birmingham, Columbia University, Boston University and Harvard University, found that differences in when or how participants were exposed to "state-sanctioned racialized education policies" had an impact on later life.

"HBCU attendees had better cognition across all three of those different time periods," Thomas said. At age 62, Black adults who had attended an HBCU had better memory and cognitive function than those who attended a predominantly white

(See BETTER HEALTH P. 2)

US Votes Against UN Resolution Labeling Slavery 'Gravest Crime Against Humanity'

THE HILL - The U.S., Israel and Argentina on Wednesday voted against a United Nations resolution led by Ghana to label the international slave trade as the "gravest crime against humanity" and call for reparations.

The resolution received 123 votes from the U.N. General Assembly in favor and 52 countries abstained, including all 27 European Union members, the United Kingdom, Australia, Oman and Japan.

It states that the "trafficking of enslaved Africans and racialized chattel enslavement of Africans as the gravest crime against humanity by reason of the definitive break in world history, scale, duration, systemic nature, brutality and enduring consequences that continue to structure the lives of all people through racialized regimes of labor, property and capital."

The resolution also focused on the need to address historic wrongs toward Africans and people of the diaspora, and it placed emphasis on claims for reparations.

Diplomats cheered and some danced over the resolution's adoption

Deputy U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Dan Negrea called the resolution's text "highly problematic in countless respects." Negrea said in a statement that the U.S. "does not recognize a legal right to reparations



for historical wrongs that were not illegal under international law at the time they occurred."

"The United States also strongly objects to the resolution's attempt to rank crimes against humanity in any type of hierarchy," he said. "The assertion that some crimes against humanity are less severe than others objectively diminishes the suffering of countless victims and survivors of other atrocities through history."

Ghanaian President John Dramani Mahama, who led the resolution effort, said he was "overjoyed" by the resolution's passage. Ahead of the

vote, he noted that it was being held on the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

"I cannot think of a better way to honor our forebears on the day of remembrance than to have the majority of the world's countries affirm that the trafficking and enslavement of nearly 13 million human beings is, indeed, the gravest crime against humanity," Mahama wrote on the social platform X.

"One of those forebears, François-Dominique Toussaint L'Ouverture, who was born into slavery but be-

came one of the architects of Haiti's liberation, the first independent nation in Latin America and the Caribbean, said: 'The greatest weapon against oppression is unity,'" he added.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres also praised the resolution's passage and called for the removal of "persistent barriers that prevent so many people of African descent from exercising their rights and realizing their potential."

The resolution's adoption is not legally binding, as U.N. Security Council resolutions are.

AI Cameras Have Quietly Appeared In Thousands Of American Cities

THE CONVERSATION - For decades, cars dictated urban planning in the United States.

Few could have predicted that they would one day also double as nodes for surveillance.

In thousands of towns and cities across the U.S., automatic license plate readers have been installed at major intersections, bridges and highway off-ramps.

These camera-based systems capture the license plate data of passing vehicles, along with images of the vehicle and time stamps. More recently, these systems are using artificial intelligence to create a vast, searchable database that can be integrated with other law enforcement data repositories.

As a scholar of technology policy and data governance, I see the expansion of automatic license plate readers as a source of deep concern. It's happening as government authorities are seeking ways to target immigrant and transgender communities, are already using AI to monitor protests, and are considering deploying AI systems for mass surveillance.

Eyes on the road
Using cameras to track license plate dates to the 1970s, when the U.K. was embroiled in a long-simmering conflict with the Irish Republican Army.

The Met, London's police force, developed a system that used closed-circuit television cameras to monitor and record the license plates of vehicles entering and exiting major roads.

The system and its successors were seen as useful crime fighting tools. Over the next two decades, they expanded to other cities in the



U.K. and around the world. In 1998, U.S. Customs and Border Protection implemented this technology. By the 21st century, it had started appearing in cities across the U.S.

There are different ways for a jurisdiction to implement these systems, but local governments usually sign contracts with private companies that provide the hardware and service.

These companies often entice authorities with free trials of surveillance equipment and promises of free access to their data in ways that bypass local oversight laws.

AI thrown into the mix
Recently, AI has been incorporated into these camera systems, significantly increasing their reach.

The vehicle information that's captured is typically stored in the cloud, creating a massive web of

data repositories. If a camera collects information from a suspect's car or truck – say, one also listed in the National Crime Information Center – AI can flag it and send an instant alert to local law enforcement.

In fact, that's a selling point of Flock Safety, one of the biggest providers of automatic license plate readers. The company uses infrared cameras to capture images of vehicles. AI then analyzes the data to identify subjects and quickly alert local authorities.

On the surface, automatic license plate readers seem like a logical way to fight crime. More information about the whereabouts of suspects can potentially help law enforcement. And why worry about cameras if you're following the law?

A spokesperson for Flock told The

Conversation that their technology has helped reduce crime, including violent crime, in cities that use their cameras, such as San Francisco and Oakland.

But there are few peer-reviewed studies on their effectiveness. Those that exist find little evidence that they've led to reductions in violent crime rates, though they seem to be helpful in solving some crimes, like car thefts.

Furthermore, installation and maintenance are costly.

For example, Johnson City, Tennessee, signed a 10-year, US\$8 million contract with Flock in 2025. Richmond, Virginia, paid over \$1 million to the company between October 2024 and November 2025 and recently extended its contract, despite opposition from some residents.

Erosion of civil liberties in plain sight

The technology seems to highlight the pitfalls of what scholars call "technosolutionism," the belief that complex issues like crime, poverty and climate change can be solved by technology.

Even more disquieting, to me, is the fact that these camera systems have created a mass location tracking infrastructure knitted together by artificial intelligence.

The U.S. doesn't have a federal law like the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation that meaningfully limits the collection, retention, sale or sharing of location and mobility data.

As a result, data gathered through surveillance infrastructure in the U.S. can circulate with limited transparency or accountability.

License plate readers can easily be accessed or repurposed beyond their original goals of managing traffic, meting out fines or catching fugitives. All it takes is a shift in enforcement priorities – or a new definition of what counts as a crime – for the original purpose of these cameras to recede from view.

Civil liberties groups and digital rights organizations have been sounding the alarm about these cameras for over a decade.

In 2013, the American Civil Liberties Union published a report titled "You are Being Tracked: How License Plate Readers Are Being Used To Record Americans' Movements." And the Electronic Frontier Foundation has decryed them as "street-level surveillance."

A counter-camera movement emerges

The promise of these cameras was simple: more data, less crime.

But what followed has been murkier: more data, and a significant expansion of power over the public.

Without robust legal safeguards, this data can possibly be used to target political opposition, facilitate discriminatory policing or chill constitutionally protected activities.

This has already happened during the current administration's aggressive deportation efforts. Automatic license plate reader databases were shared with federal immigration agencies to monitor immigrant communities. Recently, Customs and Border Protection was granted access to over 80,000 Flock cameras, which have also been used to surveil protests.

Then there's reproductive health

care. After the Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade in 2022, there were fears that people traveling across state lines to get an abortion could potentially be identified through automatic license plate reader databases. In Texas, authorities accessed Flock's surveillance data as part of an abortion investigation in 2025.

Flock told NPR in February 2026 that cities control how this information is shared: "Each Flock customer has sole authority over if, when, and with whom information is shared." The company noted that it has made efforts to "strengthen sharing controls, oversight and audit capabilities within the system." But NPR also reported that many city officials around the U.S. didn't realize how widely the data was being shared.

In response, some states have sought to regulate the technology.

Washington state lawmakers are deliberating the Driver Privacy Act. The legislation would prohibit agencies from using the surveillance technology for immigration investigations and enforcement, and from collecting data around certain health care facilities. Protests would also be shielded from surveillance.

Meanwhile, grassroots initiatives such as DeFlock have also emerged.

DeFlock's online platform documents the spread of automatic license plate reader networks in order to help communities resist their deployment. The movement frames these systems not merely as traffic technologies, but also as linchpins of an expanding government data dragnet – one that demands stronger democratic oversight and community consent.

NASA Is Shooting For The Moon: The Artemis II Mission

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — It's humanity's first flight to the moon since 1972.

In a throwback to Apollo, NASA's Artemis II mission will send four astronauts on a lunar fly-around. They'll hurtle several thousand miles beyond the moon, hang a U-turn and then come straight back. No circling around the moon, no stopping for a moonwalk — just a quick out-and-back lasting less than 10 days.

NASA promises more boot prints in the gray lunar dust, but not before a couple practice missions. The up-

coming test flight by Artemis astronauts Reid Wiseman, Victor Glover, Christina Koch and Jeremy Hansen is the first step in settling the moon this time around.

Here's a snapshot of the Artemis II mission.

The moon is about to welcome its first woman, first person of color and first non-American.

Koch already holds the record for the longest single spaceflight by a woman. During her 328-day mission at the International Space Station spanning 2019 and 2020, she took

part in the first all-female spacewalk.

Glover, a Navy test pilot, was the first Black astronaut to live and work aboard the space station in 2020 and 2021. He also was one of the first astronauts to launch with SpaceX.

The Canadian Space Agency's Hansen, a former fighter pilot, is the lone space rookie. Their commander is Wiseman, a retired Navy captain who lived aboard the space station in 2014 and later headed NASA's astro-

naut corps. They range in age from 47 to 50.

NASA's new Space Launch System rocket stands 322 feet (98 meters), shorter than the Apollo program's Saturn V rocket but more powerful at liftoff thanks to a pair of strap-on boosters. Atop the rocket is the Orion capsule carrying the astronauts.

Made of salvaged space shuttle engines and other parts, the SLS uses

the same fuel — liquid hydrogen — as the shuttles did. Hydrogen leaks repeatedly grounded the shuttles as well as the first SLS rocket test without astronauts aboard in 2022. More than three years later, Artemis II suffered the same hydrogen leaks during a February fueling practice run, missing the first launch window. A repeat of helium-flow issues bumped the mission into April.

After liftoff, the astronauts will

spend the first 25 hours circling Earth in a high, lopsided orbit. They'll use the separated upper stage as a target, steering their Orion capsule around it as docking practice for future moonshots. Instead of fancy range finders, they'll rely on their eyes to judge the gap, venturing no closer than 33 feet (10 meters) to the stage.

"Sometimes simple stuff is the best," Wiseman said.

STATE BRIEFS

Continued from page 1

ask for their personal and financial data.

"Veterans deserve our respect and support, not scams that try to take advantage of their service," said Attorney General Jeff Jackson. "If it sounds like someone is offering you free money — it's probably a scam. Please report them to my office immediately."

"North Carolina's veterans have earned our deepest gratitude, and we will not tolerate schemes that target their service or their benefits," said Secretary Jocelyn Mitnaul Mallette, North Carolina Department of Military and Veterans Affairs. "Protecting our veterans from fraud is a responsibility we take seriously."

What to do if you encounter this scam:

Throw the card away. Don't call the number. Government agencies will not call, text, or email you to get your personal information, or demand money, and they won't take payment through a prepaid gift card, wire transfer, cryptocurrency, or a payment app.

If someone is offering you free money or savings with no strings attached, be skeptical and ask more questions.

Verify any benefits directly through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs or an official government website.

Monitor your bank accounts and credit reports regularly for any unauthorized activity. If you believe your information has been compromised, consider placing a fraud alert or credit freeze with the major credit bureaus.

By Jordan Meadows

Staff Writer

Lawmakers on the North Carolina Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee spent Tuesday morning grappling with how best to measure student success, modernize curriculum, and address challenges in the state's teacher pipeline, with members raising pointed questions about both instructional methods and long-term outcomes.

A recurring theme throughout the meeting was how students are being taught, particularly in early grades. Rep. David Mills of Union County suggested the state may need to revisit more traditional approaches to instruction.

"We should take a look at going back to textbooks in k-5. I think we have too much choice and flexibility in content...what the concrete vetting of what thinking behind these things are," Mills said.

But others pushed back on the idea that traditional tools alone reflect how students learn today.

Sen. Gladys A. Robinson of Guilford County questioned whether current reforms align with modern learning styles and national trends.

"Kids aren't using textbooks. They're using models and machines, that's how they learn. I know my grandchildren use all the technology, and that's how they're learning. What is the national trend... you're comparing the recent math proficiency scores with—relative to



what?" Robinson said.

Sen. Robinson also raised concerns about implementation, asking, "Where will teachers get the preparation necessary to learn the new curriculum and skills being implemented in the math courses?"

State education officials said districts will have time to adjust, pointing to face-to-face and hybrid options over two full years to allow school systems to develop plans and train teachers on what they described as a "crosswalk," a tool designed to help educators understand where and how standards are changing across grade levels.

Officials from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction acknowledged that while test scores show some improvement, there is still significant room for growth.

Better Health For Black —CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

institution (PWI).

Study participants who attended HBCUs also tended to have different early life experiences, leading to some "pretty striking" characteristics, Thomas said, including receiving encouragement to attend school.

"Participants who attended HBCUs were more likely, for example, to have mothers or female caregivers that had a college education," she said. "They were also more likely to have reported being shown affection when they were growing up, love and affection."

Thomas has been interested in studying the impacts of an HBCU experience since the early part of her career. Her dissertation looked at the association between structural racism and various outcomes. For the last several years, she has looked at various forms of racial experiences or exposures to racism and a variety of health outcomes that are correlated with the stress regulation system, like hypertension, allostatic load, which is the cumulative measure of stress on the body, telomere lengths, which are associated with ageing and

age-related diseases, and accelerated aging.

"It didn't matter what form of racism I was looking at, whether it was everyday racism or country-level anti-Black bias — the beginning of my work showed that exposure to racism was associated with worse health," she said.

Higher educational attainment is associated with an ability to mitigate some of the impacts of exposure to racism — keeping the amount of exposure to chronic racism the same, those with higher education had better health outcomes than those with lower levels of education. Thomas decided to look at that association and shifted her scholarship towards "finding sources of resilience against the negative or adverse effects of racism on later life health for Black adults."

The study was "exploratory," Thomas said, and one of the first of its kind — most studies have looked at the effect of years at schooling on cognition, while this one specifically looked at the environment of the

school.

"There's a growing body of evidence demonstrating that those years of schooling differently impact people by race," Thomas said. Instead of measuring only the number of years of collegiate attendance, this study measured whether or not any attendance at an HBCU was impactful.

"There are people in the sample that could have attended an HBCU the first year of college and then switched to a PWI," Thomas said. "Our question was, 'Is any exposure to an HBCU going to have a later life impact on your cognition?' And the answer was yes."

As an exploratory study, it didn't look at certain nuances like, for instance, someone who attended a predominantly white institution for undergraduate school, but then attended an HBCU for graduate school. Thomas believes additional analysis can unpack the difference for people with distinct trajectories.

Thomas said the study was "a first step."

"What's really important about this finding is that it suggests that, yes, culturally affirming spaces actually can help promote and protect cognitive health," she said. "It's even more than that because it doesn't just demonstrate that it's protective against cognitive health, but the benefits to this exposure last well beyond graduation — these are people at mean age 62. These benefits are long lasting."

For non-scientists and non-academics, studies can sometimes be opaque. Thomas hopes that even people who are not in the research world glean from the study the importance of preserving and supporting spaces like HBCUs.

"There's an attack right now on DEI programs, promoting diversity, bringing people in from different backgrounds and different ideologies — all that is under scrutiny right now," she said. "But what this [study] does is it shows us actually when you do create environments where socially marginalized people feel more welcome or feel more affirmed, they live healthier lives."

The Carolinian

(ISSN 00455873)

1504 New Bern Ave, Raleigh, North Carolina 27610

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 25308

Raleigh, North Carolina 27611

Periodical Postage Paid at Raleigh North Carolina 27611

Warrenton Address: P.O. Box 536

Warrenton, NC 27589

Rocky Mount Address: 120 N Franklin St

Rocky Mount, NC 27804

Postmaster

Send all address changes to:

The Carolinian

1504 New Bern Avenue

Raleigh, NC 27610

PUBLISHED SIX TIMES MONTHLY

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

One Year \$45.00

Payable in advance. Address all communications and make all checks and money orders payable to The Carolinian.

Founded by P.R. Jervay, Sr. in 1940

The Carolinian Newspaper, Inc. of Raleigh

Publisher.....Adria Jervay

Sales Consultant.....Paul R. Jervay, Jr.

Circulation Manager.....Andrew Alston

Jervay Agency, National Advertising Representative

www.TheJervayAgency.com

Member:

North Carolina Black Publishers Association

National Newspaper Publishers Association

HUB Certified MWBE

The Publisher is not responsible for the return of unsolicited news, pictures or advertising copy unless necessary postage accompanies the copy.

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Business & Finance

Gov. Stein Hosts Women's History Mo. Event, Highlights Economic Opportunity

(RALEIGH) Governor Josh Stein hosted a reception at the North Carolina Executive Mansion to celebrate Women's History Month. Governor Stein also hosted a roundtable to discuss the North Carolina Council for Women's latest report and share his commitment to promoting economic opportunity for all North Carolinians.

"Women's History Month is a time to celebrate the women who have shaped our state and commit to building a future where every woman has a chance to succeed," said Governor Josh Stein. "Investing in women's economic security strengthens communities across the state."

"The North Carolina Council for Women is proud to highlight both the progress we've made and the work that remains," said Annette Taylor, Chair of the NC Council for Women. "This report demonstrates the importance of removing barriers to economic opportunity and ensuring women across our state have access to the resources they need to succeed."

"We've made some progress, but there's more work to do to achieve equal pay for equal work in North



Carolina," said NC Department of Administration Secretary Gabriel J. Esparza. "Women are essential providers — and sometimes the only earner — for North Carolina families. Closing the gender pay gap will help strengthen families and communities across our state."

"North Carolina has never been

short on talented women leaders. I'm proud to stand on the shoulders of those extraordinary women who led our state with courage and conviction — often without recognition and always without enough support," said Senate Minority Leader Sydney Batch. "This Women's History Month, we can honor their legacy by

opening more doors for the next generation of women leaders, because our state is strongest when every voice has a seat at the table."

"This month is about honoring the women who came before us, but it's also about asking what we do with that legacy, and how we carry it forward," said Lieutenant Governor Rachel Hunt.

The Council for Women, housed within the NCDOA's Division for Women and Youth, advises the Governor, General Assembly, and state agencies on issues impacting women. Through research, advocacy, and grants, the Council works to drive policies and promote education, safety, health, and social and economic justice for the women of North Carolina. The North Carolina Council for Women's latest report, Status of Women in North Carolina: Investing in Economic Opportunity, explores disparities in access to child care and barriers to women's economic security. The report recommends policy and programmatic changes, such as addressing the gender pay gap to create better outcomes for women and families across the state.



EXPLORE A CAREER IN PUBLIC SERVICE WITH CLAYTON'S PAID SUMMER INTERNSHIPS

CLAYTON, NC — The Town of Clayton is now accepting applications for multiple paid internship positions for summer 2026. These temporary roles give students and young adults the opportunity to work alongside professionals, gain hands-on experience, and explore career paths within local government.

With National Internship Awareness Month coming up in April, communities across the country are highlighting the important role internships play in helping individuals build professional skills, gain real-world experience, and better understand their future career options. Research from the National Association of Colleges and Employers shows that most college graduates complete at least one internship before graduating.

In recognition of this, Clayton is offering several internship opportunities across a variety of departments. The Town is currently accepting online applications for the following positions:

- Budget and Performance Intern
- Communication and Outreach Intern
- Criminal Justice (Police) Intern
- Document and Digitization Specialist
- GIS and Asset Management Intern
- Engineering Intern
- Inspections Intern
- Planning Intern
- Town Clerk Intern
- Data Analyst (Fire) Intern

Some positions are open to individuals ages 16 and up while others are available to college juniors or seniors. Applicants are encouraged to review the requirements for each internship before applying.

"These internships give participants a chance to see how local government operates while contributing to projects that serve the Clayton community," said Human Resources Technician Anthony Brown-Davis. "It's a great way to build practical experience and learn directly from professionals in the field."

Internships can also create lasting professional connections that help launch future careers.

"Internships are often the first step toward a long-term career," Brown-Davis said. "The relationships interns build and the experience they gain here can open doors for future opportunities, including careers in public service."

According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers, about six in 10 interns receive full-time job offers from their employers.

The deadline for applying is Tuesday, March 31. To learn more about internship opportunities and other careers with the Town of Clayton, visit townof-claytonnc.org/humanresources.

Applications Open for Goldman Sachs One Million Black in Business Cohort

RALEIGH — Applications are now open for the Fall 2026 cohort of the Goldman Sachs One Million Black Women: Black in Business program, a free initiative designed to help sole proprietors expand their businesses and drive economic growth in their communities.

The program aims to equip entrepreneurs with the tools, resources, and connections needed to transform

business potential into measurable growth. Open to sole proprietors across the country, the initiative specifically supports business owners committed to creating jobs, opportunities, and long-term economic impact.

Eligible applicants must operate as sole proprietors with no full-time employees, have generated at least \$25,000 in revenue over the past

12 months, and have maintained a revenue-generating business for a minimum of one year.

Participants selected for the program will take part in a 12-week online business education curriculum, paired with in-person learning opportunities hosted by Goldman Sachs, with all travel expenses covered. In addition to coursework, participants will gain access to a national network

of fellow entrepreneurs and receive guidance from strategic advisors focused on scaling and sustainability.

Organizers say the program is part of a broader effort to invest in Black women entrepreneurs and strengthen pathways to business ownership and economic mobility.

Applications are currently open, and interested applicants are encouraged to apply soon.

Verdicts Against Social Media Co Carry Consequences, But Questions Linger

SANTA FE, N.M. (AP) — Two landmark jury verdicts against social media companies have arrived at the front of a wave of lawsuits alleging that the popular platforms endanger the mental health of children.

Financial penalties total \$381 million in the two cases involving tech giant Meta in New Mexico and both Meta and YouTube in California. The verdicts highlight a growing shift in the public perception of social media companies and their responsibilities toward child safety.

But it may be too soon to tell whether litigation will change the way popular social media and messaging platforms function — or influence the complex algorithms that deliver content to billions of users worldwide.

Here are looming questions as related lawsuits approach trial.

Will these verdicts harm Meta's business?

The answer is not really — or, at least, not yet. Meta — the owner of Instagram, Facebook and WhatsApp — says it had \$201 billion in sales last year. That revenue stream dwarfs the \$375 million in civil penalties imposed on Tuesday by a jury in New Mexico with a verdict that Meta knowingly harmed children's mental health and

concealed what it knew about child sexual exploitation on its social media platforms.

Meta said it disagrees with the verdicts and plans to appeal the jury's finding that it violated the state Unfair Practices Act.

And tech companies still are shielded from legal responsibility for posted content, based on Section 230 of the 1996 Communications Decency Act. Investors are shrugging off the verdicts. Meta's stock closed slightly higher Wednesday, although it is down about 8% year-to-date.

Does Meta have to make changes now to its design or algorithm?

The verdicts this week don't mandate specific changes to the design of social media platforms, nor to the algorithms that make them tick.

But a second phase of the New Mexico trial in May, before a judge with no jury, could spell out changes for Meta's platforms for local users by court order.

A state district court judge will determine whether Meta created a public nuisance — and could impose restrictions and order the company to pay for programs that remedy potential harms to children.

New Mexico Attorney General Raúl Torrez, who filed the lawsuit against

Meta in 2023, says his office wants improvements to Meta's enforcement of minimum age limits and removal of sexual predators — in part by lifting encryption on communication that can interfere with police work.

Meta says it continuously works to improve safety and already has made changes that phase out encryption on Instagram and limit access to explicit content by teenagers, block unsolicited messages to children from adults and help young users manage time spent on its platforms and avoid sleep disruptions.

Both the California and New Mexico trials highlighted the additive properties of platform algorithms and the negative impacts on child mental health.

How much money do Meta and YouTube have to pay?

In New Mexico, a jury in Santa Fe arrived at the \$375 million fine against Meta by endorsing the maximum penalty of \$5,000 per violation of state consumer protection law — multiplied by thousands of social media accounts for children under 18. Prosecutors intend to pursue more damages in that trial's second phase, while an appeal could delay payment — or reverse penalties.

In California, the jury ruled that

Meta and Google's video streaming platform YouTube must pay at least \$3 million in damages to a 20-year-old woman who says she became addicted to social media as a child, exacerbating her mental health struggles. TikTok and Snap settled before the trial began.

California jurors recommended an additional \$3 million in punitive damages pending a judge's final review.

Google defends YouTube as a responsibly built streaming platform, and not a social media site.

More trials to come on social media safety

The California verdict has much broader legal and financial implications. The case was designated as a bellwether test that might guide the resolution of other lawsuits. There are thousands of those lawsuits pending, including hundreds in California. The New Mexico verdict may be an early indicator for lawsuits brought by other publicly elected prosecutors.

Attorneys general in more than 40 states have filed suit against Meta, claiming it is contributing to a mental health crisis among young people. Most are pursuing remedies in U.S. federal court.



NC Sustainable Business Council Awarded City of Raleigh Impact Partner Grant

RALEIGH — The North Carolina Sustainable Business Council has been selected as a recipient of the City of Raleigh Impact Partner Grant, joining a cohort of six organizations that will launch new programs over the next year aimed at advancing economic prosperity and environmental resilience across the city.

The initiative, led by the City of Raleigh, is designed to support organizations working at the intersection of sustainability, economic development, and community impact. As part of the program, selected partners will collaborate to implement innovative solutions that strengthen Raleigh's local economy while promoting environmentally responsible practices.

"We're honored to be included among this year's Impact Partner Grant recipients and excited about the work ahead," representatives from the Council shared. "This opportunity allows us to deepen our commitment to building a more sustainable and inclusive economy where businesses of all sizes can thrive."

ICE Eyes Multiple NC Site For Migrant Detention Centers

By Jordan Meadows

Staff Writer

A growing national debate over immigration detention has found a focal point in eastern North Carolina, where federal officials and private prison operators are exploring new sites for expanded Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) facilities.

The long-shuttered Rivers Correctional Institution in Hertford County, a 257-acre private prison complex, could soon be repurposed into a detention center for immigrants awaiting deportation. The facility, owned by The GEO Group, closed in 2021 after the Biden administration ended federal contracts with private prisons, citing dangerous conditions that included violence, contraband, and reports of inmate sexual abuse. Newly released documents obtained by the American Civil Liberties Union through a Freedom of Information Act request indicate that the company is in negotiations with ICE to reopen the site as a roughly 1,300-bed detention center, part of a broader federal effort to expand immigration detention capacity nationwide.

That expansion effort is backed

by significant federal investment, including \$45 billion approved by Congress last year to scale up detention infrastructure. As a result, North Carolina has emerged as a key target, with multiple cities and rural communities under consideration for new or expanded ICE operations.

In Hertford County, the proposal has drawn both support and opposition. The closure of Rivers in 2021 resulted in approximately 300 job losses in a region grappling with population decline, and some local officials and residents have expressed interest in reopening the facility to restore employment opportunities.

Those concerns have sparked an unusual wave of public protest in the small town of Ahoskie. Dozens of residents recently gathered at the intersection of First and Academy Streets. The protest, organized in part by local advocacy groups such as The Cultivator, reflects a broader grassroots campaign aimed at preventing the facility's reopening. Nearby residents, including those from Murfreesboro, have voiced similar objections.

The history of the Rivers facility adds another layer of complexity to the debate. Built on land that was



The current Rivers Correctional Institute in Winton, NC is closed but is actively maintained, according to its owner The GEO Group. (Aaron Sanchez-Guerra / WUNC News)

once a cotton plantation belonging to the Meherrin Indian Tribe, the site still contains antebellum-era graves of the Vann family, a legacy that researchers say symbolically ties past systems of exploitation to present-day incarceration practices. The prison previously operated as a Criminal Alien Requirement facility, housing noncitizens serving federal sentences, and its potential transformation into an ICE detention center

would mark a continuation of that role under a different legal framework.

In Greensboro, ACLU documents identified the city as a potential site for another detention center. The proposal, submitted by the private firm The Baptist Group, would convert the former American Hebrew Academy, a 100-acre boarding school campus, into a large-scale detention facility.

In response, city leaders amended zoning regulations to impose stricter requirements on detention facilities, including a mandate that such sites be located at least 2,500 feet away from neighborhoods, hospitals, schools, and parks.

In the rapidly growing town of Cary, the debate has centered less on detention facilities and more on ICE's potential administrative expansion. Reports that the federal government had leased office space in the area triggered widespread public concern and protests. Mayor Harold Weinbrecht has stated that the town lacks legal authority to prevent such expansion and has cautioned against drawing attention that could invite further federal involvement.

Similar uncertainty surrounds reported plans for a new ICE office in Charlotte, where lease agreements through the U.S. General Services Administration suggest a growing federal presence.

Elsewhere in the state, ICE is reportedly considering additional detention capacity, including a warehouse in Concord, outside Charlotte, that could hold up to 1,500 detainees. The Alamance County Detention Center previously housed ICE de-

tainees until Sheriff Terry Johnson ended the agreement in late 2025, though negotiations are underway to potentially resume cooperation at a nearby former state prison. The New Hanover County Detention Center continues to hold detainees through an arrangement with the U.S. Marshals Service, illustrating the patchwork nature of detention operations across North Carolina.

Beyond dedicated facilities, ICE maintains a network of field offices in Charlotte, Cary, and Hendersonville, each equipped with temporary "hold rooms" that have housed detainees in recent years. Data from the Deportation Data Project shows that these short-term detention spaces were actively used throughout much of 2025.

Additionally, more than 25 local law enforcement agencies in North Carolina have entered into 287(g) agreements with ICE, allowing officers to enforce federal immigration laws and, in some cases, detain individuals on behalf of the agency. These partnerships were further reinforced by the passage of House Bill 318 in 2025, which mandates increased cooperation between local sheriffs and federal immigration authorities.

North Carolina Farms To Be Featured During Action Tour

CONSERVATION TECHNOLOGY INFORMATION CENTER - Innovation, profitability, and technology in conservation agriculture will be showcased during the 19th annual Conservation in Action Tour June 3-4 in and around Raleigh, N.C.

The Conservation Technology Information Center's flagship event brings farmers, agriculture professionals, and conservation leaders together for immersive learning and producer perspectives focused on systems that reduce soil erosion, improve water quality, and remain productive and profitable.

On June 4, the on-farm experience begins at Leggett Farming Partnership near Nashville, showcasing diverse rotations and cropping systems that produce cotton, soybeans, corn, tobacco, strawberries, sweet potatoes, peanuts, and watermelon. Brent and Sue Leggett, along with their sons, Colin and Carter, are also partners in an integrated sweet potato packing/shipping operation. The family serves 800 people per day at Strawberry City during harvest.

Lunch will be at the Upper Coastal Plain Research Station near Rocky Mount, experiencing North Carolina's unique research partnership among state agencies and universities and its cutting-edge trials on varieties, disease pressure, crop protection innovation, and production methods.

The afternoon visit to Z3 Agriculture in Scotland Neck features producer Zeb Winslow's 100% no-till and cover crop system and his innovative equipment modifications for planting into high-residue covers. One of two finalists for the 2025 Carolinas Leopold Conservation Award, Winslow designs his on-farm research plots he designs and has tracked data from the plots during the past seven years to dial in his fertility program and varieties.

In addition to our host farmers, other area producers will be running stations at the morning and afternoon stops so attendees can learn from more than 10 farmers' perspectives and operations during the full day.

The day will conclude with a clos-



ing reception to recognize inductees into the CTCIC Hall of Fame.

Behind-the-Scenes Industry Stops
The Conservation in Action Tour is a two-day celebration that kicks off June 3 with behind-the-scenes industry stops to showcase how value chains are supporting producers with programs and tools for sustainable production and demand creation. This year's stops include:

BASF Center for Sustainable Agriculture: Explore our education and innovation hub with interactive exhibits highlighting sustainable agriculture, fiber, biofuels, conservation, and biodiversity. In addition, tour a large sustainable greenhouse and

stroll in the pollinator garden with more than 100 plant species.

Cotton Incorporated: Engage with interactive demonstrations showcasing the latest innovations in cotton production, fiber quality research, and sustainability tools that help growers optimize yield and environmental outcomes — all designed to bridge on-farm practice with market and supply chain insights.

NC State Plant Sciences: See cutting-edge research infrastructure and hear from plant scientists about advances in crop genetics, data-driven trait development, and interdisciplinary work that connects fundamental plant science to real-world farm pro-

ductivity and sustainability.

These optional tours are included in the registration rate but are space-limited.

Celebration of Conservation Agriculture Banquet

The Celebration of Conservation Agriculture Banquet will be held the evening of June 3 in downtown Raleigh. The event features keynote speaker Vivian Howard, an award-winning cookbook author, TV personality, chef, restaurateur, and a farm kid from Deep Run, N.C. She will be putting her personal stamp on the banquet menu to ensure attendees can enjoy traditional dishes that celebrate the North Carolina's farming families and agricultural heritage.

Why North Carolina?

The rotating Conservation in Action Tour highlights diverse production systems and regions, and North Carolina's varied topography, climate, and food production makes it critically important to the nation's agriculture economy. North Carolina ranks first in the U.S. in sweet potato production, second in Christmas

trees, turkeys, and trout, and third in hogs and pigs and cucumbers.

North Carolina was also home to Hugh Hammond Bennett, the foremost expert and advocate for soil conservation of the 20th century. His efforts drove the establishment of what is now the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service in 1935, and his home county is part of the Brown Creek Soil and Water Conservation District, the first SWCD in the country that set the stage for more than 3,000 nationwide.

The Conservation in Action Tour is co-located with the Field to Market Annual Meeting and Farmers for Soil Health State Partner Education Meeting. Programming for both events will run all day on June 2 and during the morning of June 3, allowing participants to attend the full program of the Conservation in Action Tour beginning at 1:30 on June 3.

Registration is currently open and sponsorship opportunities are still available. To register and see the full agenda, visit CTCIC's Conservation in Action Tour webpage at ctcic.org/tour.



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Health and Wellness

NCDHHS Secretary Pays A Visits Eastern North Carolina

RALEIGH — North Carolina Health and Human Services Secretary Dev Sangvai, and NCDHHS Deputy Secretary for Opportunity and Well-Being Michael Leighs, traveled to eastern North Carolina this week to meet with leadership and participate in discussions with the Dare County Department of Health and Human Services, Chowan County Department of Social Services (DSS) and ECU Health Chowan Hospital.

During this trip, Secretary Sangvai discussed the current state of North Carolina Medicaid amid state budget uncertainty, impacts of federal legislation H.R. 1 on the state's Medicaid program, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and implementation of the Rural Health Transformation Program.

Dare County Health and Human Services

Secretary Sangvai began his trip the afternoon of Thursday, March 26, where he met with Social Services staff at the Dare County Department of Health and Human Services in Manteo, North Carolina. There, he spoke with staff members, highlighting the valued leadership of the county and their work to cultivate services that best meet the needs of the North Carolinians they serve.

During his visit, Dare County officials discussed the evolving needs of their community. Approximately 24% of permanent residents in Dare County are adults aged 65 and older. They discussed the ongoing challenges of serving an aging and growing population, particularly with the implementation of Medicaid and SNAP changes required by federal legislation H.R. 1.

Under the new federal legislation, Medicaid expansion and SNAP beneficiaries face expanded work requirements. In addition, the Medicaid expansion population will be subject to more frequent eligibility redeterminations. These changes create additional obstacles for rural populations and areas with unique geography such as Dare County to receive these essential benefits. In order to implement the federal changes, there will be increased administrative burden on county departments of health

and human services across North Carolina.

Dare County Health and Human Services staff are continuously working to provide comprehensive care despite staff turnover and amidst challenges like limited access to health care, including mental health and substance use services. County staff expressed excitement for opportunities to improve automation with the integration of new technology that will improve the function of services.

Dare is one of the 11 counties that will go live in PATH NC in April 2026 for Intake and Assessments as well as Ongoing Case Management modules, meaning all 100 counties will now be live in PATH NC for Intake and Assessments. These 11 are the first counties in the state to onboard into PATH NC for Ongoing Case Management.

"County DSS agencies are vital to the areas they serve and ensure their neighbors and communities get the necessary services and resources they need to thrive," said Secretary Sangvai. "I am grateful to our county social services staff whose dedication is critical in our mission to improve the health and well-being of all North Carolinians."

Chowan County Department of Social Services

Following his visit in Dare County, Secretary Sangvai travelled to Edenton, North Carolina, on Friday, March 27, to meet with Chowan County DSS staff. During the visit, he spoke with county staff on NCDHHS' priorities supporting children and families, and the potential for operational uncertainties in the coming years from federal policy changes to SNAP and Medicaid in H.R. 1.

Secretary Sangvai and county staff also discussed impacts to NC Medicaid if the NC General Assembly funding shortfall continues. The North Carolina General Assembly must allocate \$319 million to fund this year's NC Medicaid program. Without this funding, the program is projected to run out of money before the end of the fiscal year, putting health care access for more than 3 million North Carolinians at risk. Funding impacts at the state level are separate



from those at the federal level.

Chowan County DSS staff also discussed challenges facing their community, including staff retention and training, and ongoing innovative solutions they have implemented successfully. Notably, Chowan County DSS offers flexible hours to help staff perform efficiently and encourages staff to collaborate with community stakeholders to develop resources

for their clients. These efforts have helped stabilize and support the workload for county staff.

Secretary Sangvai also provided Chowan DSS updates on PATH NC, the modernized child welfare information system that equips DSS staff with real-time data and decision-making tools to better protect and serve the children and families in their counties. For smaller counties

like Chowan, PATH NC allows staff balancing multiple responsibilities to access timely data and resources, identify trends and work seamlessly with neighboring counties through a centralized data system.

"We launched PATH NC with the goal to create better outcomes for children and families in North Carolina," said Secretary Sangvai. "Over the last year, PATH NC has successfully launched in a majority of North Carolina's counties, and we are eager to continue our collaboration to build a stronger child welfare system across the state."

ECU Health Chowan Hospital

Secretary Sangvai concluded his trip Friday with a visit to ECU Health Chowan Hospital for a tour of their facilities and a roundtable discussion on the state of rural health care and the unique challenges facing rural hospitals.

During this stop, Secretary Sangvai toured the Emergency Department and Outpatient Services Center at ECU Health Chowan to see and learn more about how the ECU Health system addresses workforce and retention challenges and the successes they've achieved with patients in the community.

Throughout his conversations with staff at ECU Health Chowan Hospital, Secretary Sangvai highlighted the positive impacts of public health partnerships as well as the persistent need to strengthen and retain North Carolina's rural workforce. NCDHHS has expanded loan repayment programs for nurses and mental health professionals who practice in rural communities.

Secretary Sangvai also discussed North Carolina's participation in the Rural Health Transformation Program. North Carolina received \$213M in RHTP funding to improve the health and well-being of more than 3 million people who live in rural communities in North Carolina.

"Our goal is to optimize the funding awarded by our federal partners to North Carolina to implement the Rural Health Transformation Program," said Secretary Sangvai. "We will continue to collaborate with counties and stakeholders as we work together to address the growing needs of the nearly 3 million residents living in rural areas. Together, we will strengthen and improve outcomes for our rural communities in support of a healthier North Carolina for all."

Behind the Scenes: Black Issues Forum Bridging the Gap in Autism Advocacy



By Jheri Hardaway

Staff Writer

RTP, NC - PBS NC Black Issues Forum in its 40th year continues to do the work tackling important topics as a fixture of national Black media. We were given behind the scenes access on an essential conversation on neurodiversity, specifically focusing on the landscape of autism support within North Carolina. Hosted by Kenia Thompson, the segment featured insights from Nicole Harris of the Autism Society of North Carolina and Felicia Williams-Brown of Pioneering Change Consulting. The discussion pulled back the curtain on the triumphs and systemic hurdles facing families today. The numbers and the need were quite striking. North Carolina is currently home to approximately 186,000 individuals living with autism. While the Autism Society helps more than 40,000 families receive services annually, a significant gap remains. While 67% of those diagnosed are receiving some form of service, the remaining third of the population highlights a pressing need for expanded reach and resources.

The conversation, available via YouTube on PBS NC this Friday, emphasized that "awareness" is only the first step; the true goal is providing comprehensive support for: Families, navigating the initial diagnosis and long-term care. Teachers, equipping educators with the tools for inclusive classrooms. Finally, communities, fostering environments where neurodivergent individuals can thrive.

One of the most enlightening revelations from the forum was the intersection of race and developmental diagnosis. While autism is a distinct developmental disability, data show that 38% of people with autism also receive an intellectual disability diagnosis. Within the Black community, that number jumps to 50%. Panelists noted that determinations often come from clinical observation, a process that can be susceptible to inherent bias. This underscores the necessity for early intervention and accurate, culturally competent assessments to ensure that Black children are not being mislabeled or underserved.

For those seeking help, the forum highlighted several vital lifelines:

* CDSA (Children's Developmental Services Agency): The primary point for early intervention referrals.

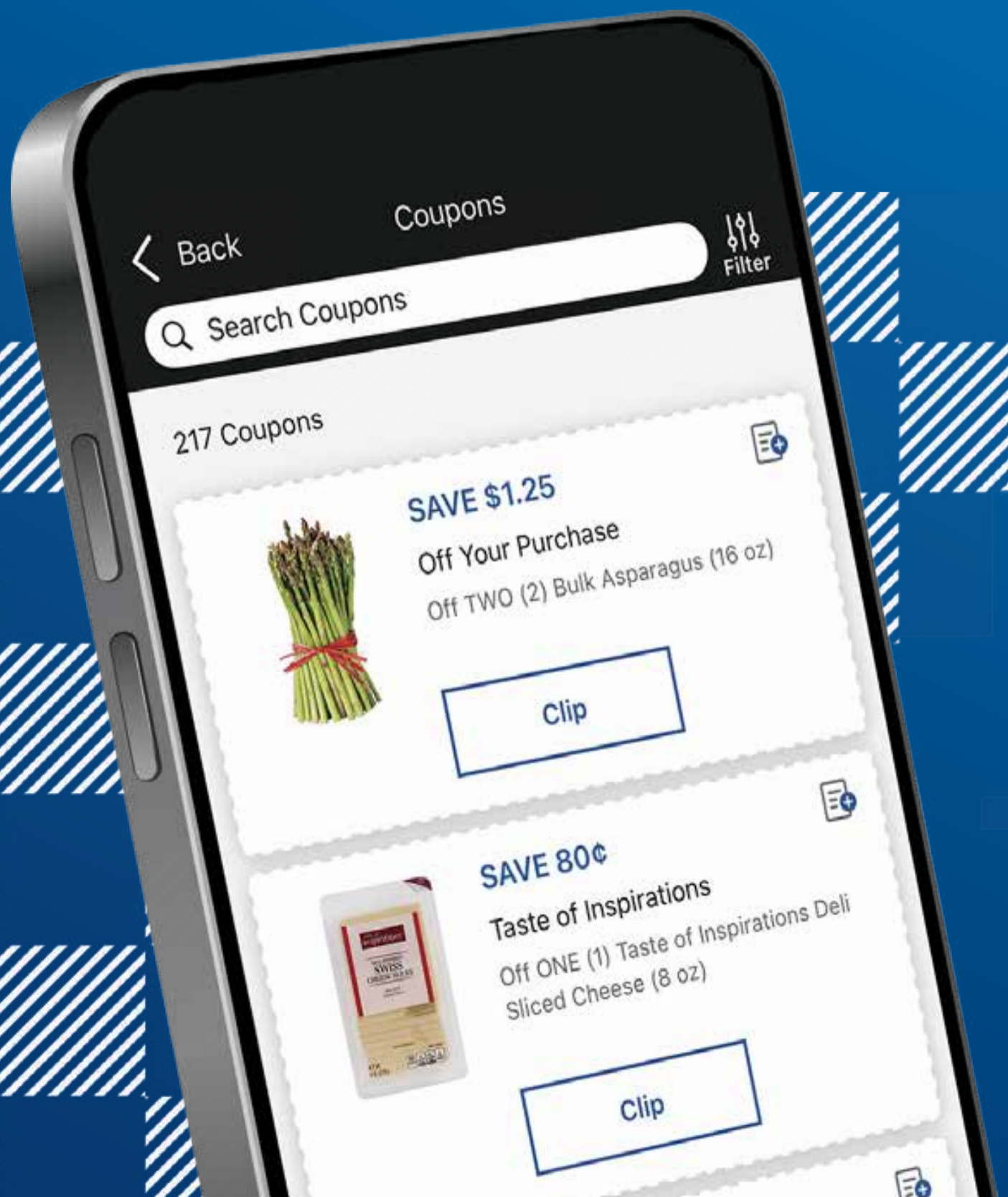
* Autism Resource Specialists: These experts provide free guidance to help families identify exactly how the community can best support their specific needs.

* Therapeutic Pillars: The importance of a "wrap-around" approach involving speech therapy, occupational therapy, parent coaching, and consistent social support.

The takeaway from the Black Issues Forum was clear: support is available, but advocacy and systemic change are required to ensure that access is equitable for every North Carolinian. Additionally, the importance of Black Issues Forum for making space for this conversation and moving forward a focus on Black mental health and accessibility.

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Arts & Culture

'History Is Repeating Itself': Rep. Clyburn's Call To Action

By Jheri Hardaway

Staff Writer

Monday night at Artspace in Raleigh, a palpable sense of history filled the air as Congressman Jim Clyburn (D-SC) took the stage to discuss his latest book, "The First Eight," with a packed audience that included dignitaries and local leaders. The event began with a warm welcome from former Congresswoman Eva Clayton. Clyburn's message was not merely a historical recap, but a poignant and urgent warning about the current political landscape, drawing direct parallels between the post-Civil War Reconstruction era and today's challenges to voting rights.

He began by emphasizing the deep historical significance of North Carolina, particularly in Raleigh, noting that thirteen African American men had convened in 1865 for the State's Constitutional Convention, following an initial conviction at their home church St. Paul AME Church. He singled out Bishop James Walker Hood as a "luminary participant" in

this convention, highlighting Hood's mission to establish the AME Zion church in North Carolina and his work with the Masons.

Clyburn then linked this historical moment to the broader national context, specifically the 15th Amendment, which became part of the Federal Constitution on March 30, 1870—exactly 156 years prior to his speaking yesterday. He noted that eight months later, South Carolina led the way by electing African American men to Congress, emphasizing the power of the newly secured right to vote. This historical groundwork set the stage for the core thesis of his talk and his book: the enduring importance of understanding and actively participating in the political process to safeguard hard-won rights.

Clyburn's speech was less a typical book talk and more a compelling historical narrative with profound contemporary relevance. He argued that the pivotal moments in African American history following the Civil War—the 13th Amendment freeing

the enslaved, the 14th guaranteeing due process and equal protection, and the 15th securing the vote—were met with fierce resistance, culminating in the assassination of Abraham Lincoln when he began to advocate for the right to vote for former slaves. Clyburn asserted that it was the right for the negro vote that pushed John Wilkes Booth to take the life of President Lincoln.

He further illustrated the fragility of progress by highlighting how single votes shaped critical events during Reconstruction. Andrew Johnson's acquittal during his impeachment trial, which preserved his presidency and allowed him to undermine Reconstruction efforts, hinged on a single vote. Similarly, the 1876 presidential election between Samuel Tilden and Rutherford B. Hayes was decided by a 15-person commission by a narrow 8-7 vote. This decision, which awarded the disputed 20 electoral votes to Hayes, led to the "Compromise of 1877" and the subsequent withdrawal of federal troops from the South, effectively

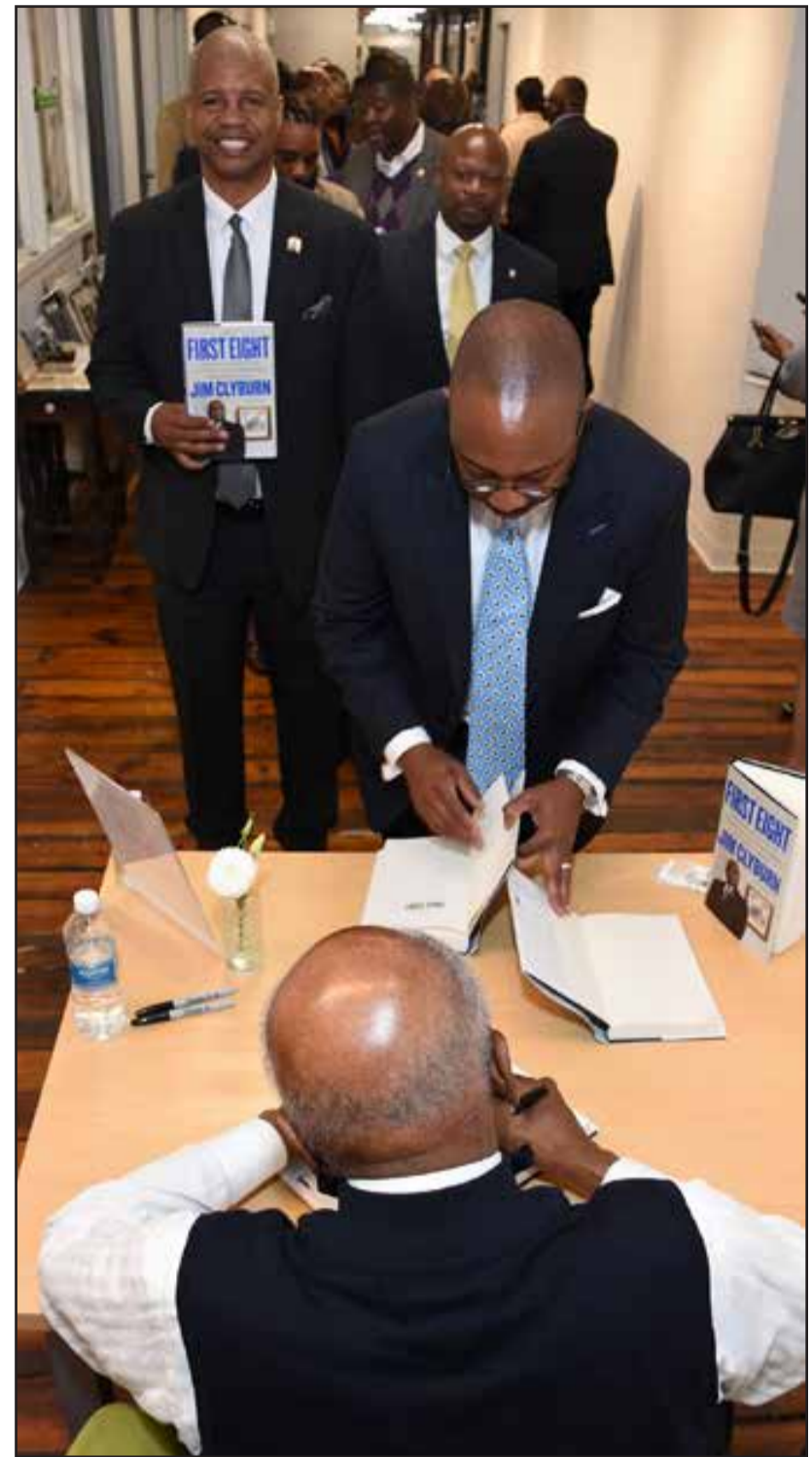
ending Reconstruction and ushering in the oppressive Jim Crow era.

The most potent part of Clyburn's address came when he connected these historical events to the present day. He explicitly referenced pages 175 and 176 of his book, which describe the emergence of "creative devices" designed to disenfranchise Black voters after the end of Reconstruction. He forcefully argued that the contemporary debate over legislation like the "Save Act" is a direct prologue to this dark chapter, with current efforts to restrict voting echoing those from over a century ago. "If I were to rename it or put a time-stamp on this book today, the subtitle would be different," Clyburn said. "It would be 'The First Eight, whose lives and experiences shaped the nation and serve as a foretelling of today's political condition.' We have to learn from this history, or we are bound to repeat it."

He provided concrete statistics to underscore his point, noting that in 1880, South Carolina had approximately 91,000 votes cast by Black people. Ten years later, that number plummeted to around 13,000. He also pointed out that in 1880, South Carolina's state legislature had 93 members, while in the 20 years following, that number dropped to zero. He warned that if legislation like the "Save Act" becomes law, the number of current members of the Legislative Black Caucus could dwindle rapidly, similar to the historical precedent following the end of Reconstruction. He noted that following the Supreme Court's ruling in *Shelby County v. Holder*, which gutted Section 4 of the Voting Rights Act, 30 states immediately changed their election laws to make it harder to register and vote, with North Carolina and South Carolina being among them with Voter ID laws.

When asked if history is repeating itself, Clyburn responded with a definitive "Yes," but added an important caveat: "Just because history

(See **CLYBURN'S CTA**, P. 14)



The Durham Beta Phi Chapter of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity hosted its 49th Mardi Gras Scholarship Gala on March 7, 2026, at Embassy Suites in Cary, featuring a Harlem Nights theme, live music by Envision, and fundraising for the Brother John H. Scott Scholarship Fund and youth programs with Uplift Project Inc.

Arrested for Reading: The Untold Story of Nine Black Students in 1961

By Kayla Randall

The Smithsonian Magazine

When nine Black college students walked into a segregated public library in Mississippi on March 27, 1961, they knew what to expect next: Staff would call the police, and they would probably be arrested if they refused to leave. According to local laws, being Black in a space designated only for the white public constituted a breach of peace. By stepping through the doors of the Jackson Municipal Library, they would be risking physical harm and verbal abuse. They might even face an angry crowd.

But the students, from the historically Black Tougaloo College, had trained for this moment. This was a sit-in, a nonviolent direct-action protest, and they were prepared. They'd been guided by the likes of Medgar Evers, the NAACP's first Mississippi field officer, who was known for his

public investigation into the murder of Emmett Till and his fight against Jim Crow laws in the state; Ernst Borinski, a Jewish lawyer who'd fled Nazi Germany, then accepted a position teaching sociology at Tougaloo after World War II; and Tougaloo chaplain John Mangram.

The civic-minded students wanted to effect change in Mississippi. Entering that library would boldly oppose the state's unyielding system of segregation and highlight the disparities they experienced as Black residents.

The Tougaloo Nine's demonstration would etch their names in Mississippi history: Meredith Anding Jr., James Bradford (better known as Sammy), Alfred Cook, Geraldine Edwards, Janice Jackson, Joseph Jackson Jr., Albert Lassiter, Evelyn Pierce and Ethel Sawyer. Nationally, though, their story is "often overlooked" in the broader civil rights narrative, says historian Daphne Chamberlain, chief

program officer at the Emmett Till Interpretive Center in Mississippi and a Tougaloo College alumna.

At the library, most of the students found the books they were looking for and sat down to read. As expected, a librarian called the police. Despite the presence of law enforcement, the Tougaloo Nine didn't move. Eventually, the officers told them they were under arrest.

"Why can't I go in and read a book? It comes back to that, the simplicity of it all," says Tony Bounds, an archivist and institutional historian at Tougaloo College. The response to this question at the time was, "Well, you have a Black library across town," he adds. But the Tougaloo Nine had done their homework. They'd specifically requested texts that weren't available at the Black library.

Following their arrest, the students were held in jail for more than 30 hours. Behind bars that night, Jack-

son Jr. reflected "on Emmett Till, the history of lynching connected with Mississippi," as he told *OC Weekly* in 2015. "The later it got that night, I was in fear of my life."

Black community members, particularly students at Jackson State College (now Jackson State University), a nearby historically Black public school, rallied around the Tougaloo Nine and began protesting in support of them. Although authorities had arrested the Tougaloo students without resorting to violence, the Jackson State students' demonstrations sparked a brutal crackdown. As the young people marched, police officers armed with billy clubs, tear gas and dogs forcefully dispersed their gathering.

When the Tougaloo Nine appeared in court on March 29, police beat a crowd of Black onlookers, including Evers, who had gathered outside the courthouse. They also attacked the group with dogs.

Law enforcement officers had recruited canines for policing long before 1961, but their use in Jackson represented what the author and researcher M.J. O'Brien, in his book *The Tougaloo Nine: The Jackson Library Sit-In at the Crossroads of Civil War and Civil Rights*, describes as "the first attacks by police dogs on nonviolent crowds during the civil rights era, two years before the more sensational attacks in Birmingham grabbed national headlines."

The students pleaded not guilty to the breach of peace charge, but a judge found them guilty anyway. As first-time offenders, they were each fined \$100 and sentenced to 30 days in jail, although the court ruled that this time would be suspended if they pledged to avoid participating in other protests. They all agreed.

In a letter to NAACP leader Roy Wilkins, Evers wrote, "These young people exhibited the greatest amount of courage in the face of mounting tension and were reported in our local newspapers as being 'orderly, intelligent and cooperative.'"

The Black community's embrace helped keep the students afloat in the aftermath of their sit-in. While they were in jail, this assistance "was demonstrated most tangibly in the cookies, cakes, hot food and snacks that individual families, mostly Black women, brought to the jail to help support this newly forming resistance movement," O'Brien writes.

The college's leadership also supported the Tougaloo Nine. "After they're released from jail, they go back to class," Bounds says. "They're not expelled." All eventually went on to earn bachelor's degrees, most from Tougaloo but some from other institutions. Their sit-in and the protests that followed had reverberated in Jackson. College students were helping the NAACP lead the fight against segregation and anti-Black discrimi-

(See **BLACK STUDENTS** P. 14)



The Tougaloo Nine: Joseph Jackson Jr., Geraldine Edwards, James Bradford, Evelyn Pierce, Albert Lassiter, Ethel Sawyer, Meredith Anding Jr., Janice Jackson and Alfred Cook (Courtesy: Tougaloo College Archives)



Ernst Borinski (right) with students at Tougaloo College, 1960 (Courtesy: University Press of Mississippi)



Surviving members of the Tougaloo Nine were honored at Trustman Park in Pearl, Mississippi, in 2022. Kaotata via Wikimedia Commons under CC BY-SA 4.0

1850's Photos Of Enslaved People Head Home From Harvard To SC

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP) — Descendants of a father and daughter featured in what are believed to be the first photographs taken of enslaved people say they are happy their family members are finally going back to South Carolina.

Harvard University turned the photos over to the International African American Museum in Charleston after a seven-year legal fight, the museum announced Wednesday.

The 1850 daguerreotypes, a precursor to modern-day photographs, are of an enslaved man named Renty, his daughter Delia and five others known as Jack, Drana, Alfred, Fassena and Jem. The photos were taken from several angles and the subjects were shirtless. The images were commissioned by a Harvard

University biologist conducting racist research, which was used by slavery supporters before the Civil War.

The museum plans to preserve the daguerreotypes and display photos made from them to anchor an exhibit detailing the lives of the seven enslaved people from South Carolina.

Harvard was sued by Tamara Lanier, who said the man she calls "Papa Renty" was her great-great-great-grandfather. Lanier wanted the photos brought to the South Carolina museum because it is in the state where he was enslaved and the photos were taken, said Lanier's attorney Joshua Koskoff.

"It's almost spiritual they are coming home. They can breathe at the museum," Koskoff said.

The legal fight between Lanier and

Harvard wound through courts in Massachusetts before the two sides reached a deal in 2025. Harvard said it had always been eager to get the pictures to a museum but fought the lawsuit because Harvard couldn't confirm Lanier was related to the people in the photos.

Lanier's lawyer said Harvard made money off the photos by licensing the images.

"Slavery robbed Renty and Delia of their humanity. But it was Harvard who robbed them of their story," Koskoff said.

The International African American Museum was recently built at Gadsden's Wharf in downtown Charleston where almost half of all enslaved people brought to the U.S. first stepped foot in North America.



Community

Durham Tenants Unionize To Fight For Repairs, Respect

NC NEWSLINE - Residents of Willard Street Apartments and nearby Ashton Place in downtown Durham formed tenant unions Thursday to fight against what they contend are poor management and shoddy building maintenance practices.

The newly formed Willard Street United and Ashton Seniors in Action tenant unions held a joint press conference to demand that their shared landlord formally recognize the unions and commit to quarterly meet-and-confer sessions.

"All we're asking for is more clear, transparent communication, and security for the ladies," said Bill Thompson, an Ashton Place tenant.

Both apartment complexes are owned by Downtown Home Improvement Corporation Inc. (DHIC), a Raleigh-based nonprofit affordable housing developer, and managed by Community Management Corporation.

Yolanda Winstead, president of DHIC, said the nonprofit is "committed to open and ongoing dialogue with residents."

"We welcome opportunities to listen, learn, and work together on



issues affecting the community," Winstead said in an email to NC Newsline.

"Representatives of any association that residents choose to form" are welcome to take part in residents' meetings, she said, "as members of the tenants' union did earlier this month."

During Thursday's press confer-

ence, tenants from both apartment buildings shared longstanding grievances against DHIC and the buildings management company. They complained the management company is slow to make repairs, and when they do, it is usually poorly done.

Cleanliness and safety are also concerns, the tenants said.

"We all worked our long lives to get

to where we are and to live safe and clean," said Cynthia Hoskins, a Willard Street Apartment resident. "We shouldn't have to worry about whether this is gonna be fixed or whether that's gonna be fixed."

Debra Davies, an Ashton Place resident, said that if she hears management say they'll "look into it" one more time, she's going to scream.

"It's been a battle to get the basic things done," Davies said. "We're not asking for huge issues. It's just the basics and that's what we're having problems with."

Davies contends shoddy maintenance contributed to her son's death.

As NC Newsline previously reported, Davies' son, Jason Pulliam, died in an incident in the apartment building after suffering heart failure. An electronic door to a laundry malfunctioned, which slowed tenants' ability to render aid, Davies contends. When emergency responders arrived, it was too late to save Pulliam.

The new unions will be part of the North Carolina Tenants Union, which is a statewide union of local unions.

C.R. Clark with the Triangle Tenant Union, which is also part of the state

union, helped tenants organize.

"They have spent years suffering mismanagement, disrepair, deterioration, mistreatment by staff and ongoing threats to their health and safety in these two publicly subsidized buildings," Clark said.

Nick MacLeod, who leads the statewide union, said the group is organizing similar unions in 15 buildings across the state.

"Tenants are forming these unions to protect themselves and their families from dangerous conditions caused by landlords' lack of repairs, dramatically rising rents

and unprecedented displacement pressure," MacLeod said.

MacLeod noted that the state's landlord-tenant laws lack basic protections. He said tenants are sometimes forced to pay rent even when living in dangerous, uninhabitable conditions, and sometimes face evictions without cause and "rent gouging" without recourse.

"By working together with their neighbors and leveraging their political and economic power, tenants can win the repairs they need and the stability they and their families deserve," MacLeod said.

SE Raleigh Community Voices Concerns Over Lack Of Park Input



By Jordan Meadows

Staff Writer

Southeast Raleigh residents are calling out city officials over a series of long-planned parks bond projects that community members say are drifting away from their original vision.

At the center of the dispute are several initiatives tied to the South Park neighborhood, including the John P. "Top" Greene African American Cultural Center, the South Park Heritage Trail, Heritage Plaza, and Phase II of the John Chavis Memorial Park master plan. Residents who have worked on these projects for decades say a lack of transparency and limited public input now threaten both the projects' integrity and their cultural significance.

"This was supposed to be the heart of the project," one resident of Southeast Raleigh said of Heritage Plaza. "It was meant to represent the endurance of those who've historically lived there, to remind people and give them an experience of what life was like earlier in this community."

The conflict traces back to a 2007 neighborhood-led planning effort known as the South Park Heritage Walk Revitalization Strategy. Developed through the South Park-East Raleigh Neighborhood Association (SPERNA) and the Central Citizens Advisory Council, the plan aimed to preserve and highlight the history of the East Raleigh-South Park National Historic District—an area anchored by Shaw University and St. Augustine's University.

By that time, the district had already been recognized as one of the most prominent historically Black residential areas in Raleigh, listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Residents say the revitalization strategy was comprehensive, involving local artists, architects, engineers, and institutions such as North Carolina State University College of Design. The goal was cultural preservation—telling the stories of people and places that shaped the community.

"We were focusing on the stories of Southeast Raleigh," one resident said. "It's too big to be general—there needs to be a focus on this area."

The South Park Archives initiative, first proposed in the late 1990s, was built and maintained by volunteers for years inside the cultural center. Programming and staffing were minimal, according to residents.

Despite those challenges, residents eventually helped secure millions in parks bond funding approved in 2022. Approximately \$9 million was allocated for renovations and expansion of the Top Greene Cultural Center, with an additional \$3 million designated for the South Park Heritage Trail.

Now, residents argue that the implementation phase has sidelined their input.

"The staff decided how the money would be spent to implement these projects without any community input," one resident said. "We did all the work—designing the programs, building support, getting public buy-in—yet we've never had an opportunity to talk directly with city staff about how the money would actually be used."

A key frustration is the structure of communication. Concerns must be routed through city staff before reaching administrators or elected officials, creating what some describe as a disconnect between the community and decision-makers.

According to residents, plans now include converting the Top Greene Cultural Center building's primary meeting space into a recording studio—something they say was never requested or discussed publicly. They argue this would significantly reduce the room's capacity and eliminate its use for exhibitions and community gatherings.

Other concerns include the removal of a kitchen stove, changes to exhibition space plans, and the elimination of a proposed memorial garden designed to educate visitors about the neighborhood's history. Residents also worry these changes could undermine the facility's financial sustainability by reducing its ability to host events and generate rental income.

Beyond any single project, residents say the issue reflects a broader pattern of stalled or incomplete initiatives. Some projects tied to the revitalization strategy have yet to begin, while others remain unfinished.

They also note that turnover on the City Council has created an additional challenge.

"Most of the current council members weren't here when this started," one resident said. "They're not even aware that we've already done most of the planning work. We began this with NC State back in 2007 and completed the initial documentation by 2010."

Some residents have begun reaching out directly to elected officials, including Jonathan Lambert-Melton, in an effort to pause current plans and reopen the process for public input.

"I actually facilitated a meeting with the City Manager, our staff working on the project, and [residents] for next week." Council Member Melton said via email on Tuesday morning.

As the city moves forward with implementing its parks bond projects, the dispute highlights an ongoing tension between long-term community planning efforts and the realities of municipal decision-making.

NC State Hires Former Wolfpack Player, Justin Gainey As Men's Basketball Coach

(AP)—N.C. State moved quickly to hire one of its own to lead the Wolfpack men's basketball program.

The school announced the hiring of Tennessee assistant coach and former Wolfpack player Justin Gainey as head coach on Tuesday. That came five days after the departure of Will Wade after one season for a second stint at LSU.

N.C. State had an agreement in place with the 49-year-old Gainey to start the week, then its board of trustees approved the deal in an emergency meeting Tuesday afternoon to make the hiring official. The school will hold its introductory news conference Wednesday for Gainey, who signed a five-year deal.

"This university helped build me as a player and as a person," Gainey said in a statement. "To now lead it as head coach is truly a full-circle moment."

"There's a responsibility that comes with leading your alma mater, and I embrace it fully. We're going to honor our tradition, represent this university the right way, and build a program our Wolfpack family can be proud of."

Athletic director Boo Corrigan passed on hiring a search firm to assist on his second coaching search in as many years, promising to hire someone who "wants to be at N.C. State for a long time." Ultimately, that meant bringing in an instate na-



tive and Wolfpack guard from 1996-2000.

"Not only are we welcoming back one of our own, but we are welcoming a tough, tenacious and experienced coach who I am confident is the right fit for our program and will continue to position the Pack for success on the national stage," Corrigan said in a statement.

N.C. State also talked with Saint Louis coach Josh Schertz, who guided the Billikens to the second round of this year's NCAA Tournament. Schertz and athletic director Chris May both told local reporters that

Schertz had talked with N.C. State, though Schertz posted a statement on social media Sunday saying he was returning.

Gainey served as the Volunteers' associate head coach under Rick Barnes since the 2022-23 season, when he also took over as the team's defensive coordinator.

Defense was a key piece of Tennessee's run to the Elite Eight for three straight seasons, with the Volunteers ranking third, third and 14th in KenPom's adjusted defensive efficiency metrics.

Gainey started his coaching career

at N.C. State as an administrative coordinator and later as director of basketball operations. He was also an assistant at Marquette, Arizona, Santa Clara, Appalachian State and Elon.

Gainey inherits a program with tradition highlighted by winning national titles in 1974 and 1983 — the latter being the famed "Cardiac Pack" run helmed by the late Jim Valvano — as well as an unlikely run to the Atlantic Coast Conference Tournament title followed by the Final Four just two years ago.

Still, consistent success has been tricky to maintain.

The remarkable 2024 run under Kevin Keatts marked the program's first wins in the NCAA Tournament since a Sweet 16 appearance in 2015 under Mark Gottfried, with the Wolfpack missing five of seven tournaments and experiencing a pair of first-round exits in 2018 and 2023. Keatts was fired after the Wolfpack crashed to 12-19 following the Final Four run.

Wade's bravado-filled arrival last year included promises of a "reckoning" for the ACC and nationally. N.C. State started 18-6 before collapsing, with a First Four loss to Texas sending the Wolfpack into the offseason with eight losses in 10 games.

Then came Wade's abrupt departure, exactly two weeks after he proclaimed he was determined to win big with the Wolfpack amid speculation about a possible LSU return.

Alpha South Regional HBCU College Fair

By Jordan Meadows

Staff Writer

The 2026 Alpha South Regional Convention and FOCUS HBCU College Fair brought more than 1,500 students to the Raleigh Convention Center last Thursday. Running from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., the annual event connected students from across North Carolina with representatives from historically Black colleges and universities throughout the Southeast region of the U.S., offering information on admissions, scholarships, academic programs, and extracurricular opportunities.

In addition to traditional college outreach, the fair featured resources for ACT and SAT preparation, military recruitment, and exposure to programs in band, cheer, arts, and choir. Organizers and partners, including the College Foundation of North Carolina, described the event as one of the largest of its kind in the state, with educators, college presidents, deans, and recruiters all in attendance to guide students through the transition to higher education.

The Raleigh event is part of a broader, growing effort to expand access to HBCUs at a time when such initiatives face increased scrutiny nationwide. The Alpha Phi Alpha-led fair builds on a longstanding mission to connect Black students and other



underrepresented groups with institutions that have historically played a critical role in American higher education.

For colleges like Alabama State University, the Raleigh fair represents a key recruiting opportunity in a region where many students may not be familiar with out-of-state HBCUs.

Gregory Clark, the V.P. for Institutional Advancement and President of FAMU's National Alumni Association, said the event has proven to be an effective way to introduce North Carolina students to the school's academic

offerings and campus culture.

"A lot of students here haven't heard much about Alabama State before they attend this fair," Clark said. "But once we start talking about our business programs, internships, and the overall experience, you can see that interest build."

Clark noted that the connections made at previous fairs have already led to increased enrollment.

"Last year, we met several students right here in Raleigh who are now freshmen at Alabama State," he said. "A couple of them are thriving in the

marching band, fully involved on campus, and doing exactly what we hoped they would—finding their place and succeeding."

The fair also incorporated interactive elements designed to engage students and test their knowledge of HBCU history and culture. Trivia questions—such as how many HBCUs are located in North Carolina or where Martin Luther King Jr. attended college—were used to spark conversation and encourage deeper exploration of historically Black institutions.

The event follows a similar HBCU-focused initiative held earlier in March in Charlotte, where the National Coalition of 100 Black Women hosted a free college fair at First Baptist Church West. That gathering brought together students and families from across the region to explore post-secondary options, including four-year universities and trade schools, while also connecting them with local college and career planning organizations.

The growing network of outreach efforts aimed at strengthening the pipeline between North Carolina students and HBCUs across the country extends far beyond a single day. For students, it offers a chance to envision new possibilities; for colleges, it provides a direct line to prospective applicants; and for communities, it reinforces the enduring importance of HBCUs as engines of opportunity and advancement.



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Church

SERMON of the WEEK



FROM START TO FINISH Bishop-Elect William Eli Ratcliff

About 70 years ago, when I was just a young boy here at Lincoln Park, I remember the Sunday I got to wear a little cross made from a palm. It was Palm Sunday.

Back then, Palm Sunday was just another Sunday where I added a little cut plant to my outfit. But as I grew older and started studying the Word, Palm Sunday became more than decoration. It became REVELATION.

TEXT: Zechariah 9:9 (NKJV)
"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, Lowly and riding on a donkey..."

When you rightly divide this Word, you'll discover something powerful—Palm Sunday was not random. It was prophesied over 500 years before it happened—not just mentioned by the Prophet Zachariah, but detailed.

And we don't just find it in this one place—but all four Gospels recorded it too. And that tells me something: this wasn't just breaking news, this was mainstream Gospel news; to the people then and now.

Moreover, all four Gospels talked about this event. Matthew, Mark, and Luke are called Synoptic Gospels because they share a similar view. John stands a little differently, writing a universal message to everybody.

Matthew wrote to the Jews, Mark to the Romans, Luke to the Greeks, and John writes so the world would believe that Jesus was and is the Son of God. They wrote to different audiences, but it was all about the same Jesus! Furthermore, when God starts

something, HE WILL finish it!

FIRST note that: THE PLAN WAS SET FROM THE START

Before Jesus ever rode into Jerusalem, God had already spoken it through this prophet Zechariah. This wasn't a last-minute decision, this was a divine appointment, not on a horse of war, but a donkey of peace. Not a conquering general, but a humble Savior.

Now let me say this to you: God had your story planned before you ever had a problem. One songwriter sang, "If I never had a problem, how would I know that God could solve them, how would I know what FAITH in GOD could do?"

And some of us need to hear this today. What you're going through did not catch God by surprise because He's working it out! I know He's working it out because I've learned to TRUST in JESUS and DEPEND upon HIS WORD. How about you?

But still, let's not forget that the Gospel writers let us know that: SECONDLY, THE PRAISE WAS LOUD—BUT NOT LOYAL.

When Jesus came riding in, the people shouted: "Hosanna! Blessed is the King!" They laid down palms, took off their coats, and rolled out, IMAGINATIVELY, what I would call a BEAUTIFUL carpet of praise! But here's the problem—The same crowd that cried "Hosanna" on Sunday. Would cry "Crucify Him" by Friday. That's why I always say, when preaching around this text, there's a thin line between love and hate.

Let me make it plain: Everybody shouting with you ain't standing with you. Some folks will praise you when you're blessing them but turn on you when you stop meeting their expectations. Let me bring it into today's terms—Some people are like Wi-Fi, with a strong connection in one room, but as soon as you move, they drop off!

But I'm glad about this—Jesus didn't change His mission based on our inconsistencies. He didn't turn around because of our moods or our mess. "Zech" said in the Old Testament that the Messiah would be HUMBLE and bring SALVATION to us. In spite of us, aren't you glad He stayed committed to saving us?

THIRTY: THE FINISH WAS ALREADY DECIDED

Palm Sunday is not the end—it's the beginning of Holy Week; and He came to do what nobody else could do. He went from the parade to the pain, from palm branches to the cross, and from hearing the cheers to the banging of nails through His hands and feet into the cross.

But hear this: The cross was not an accident—it was a FULLFILLED ASSIGNMENT! And yes, we too will sometimes suffer, and storms will come, but storms don't always last! Weeping may endure for a night, but let's not forget that joy is on the way! We often say it's not how you start—it's how you finish. But the truth is—in life, you still will have to go from start to finish. So don't get discouraged in the middle of your journey.

Be encouraged that God will be with you all the way—until you safely arrive at your final destination with a complete final and Everlasting Victory. But don't forget: before we arrive, we must go through a process. And that's why I titled this message: From Start to Finish. Because Jesus started with a prophecy, He walked through a process, but He finished with power!

And I want you to know right now that if God started something in your life, if He made you a promise, and if He brought you this far, He's not going to stop now! I want you to know today that He's gonna finish it!

The devil wants you to think YOU are finished—but tell yourself: "God is not through with me yet!" I want you to know right now: if He healed you, He'll finish it! If He saved you, He'll finish it! If He brought you out, He'll finish it! Tell somebody: "I don't believe He brought me this far... to leave me now!"

That's why we should sing that song, I feel like going on, trials may come on every hand, but I feel like going on; and with this life that God gave me, I'm going to go from START TO THE FINISH!

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

BILLIE MORRIS BATTLE

On March 20, 2026 Billie Morris Battle, at the age of 87, advised that he had moved. His new address was complete: Golden gate Ct., Gods Town, Heaven 32026.

Billie, the second oldest child of Joe Rome Battle and Catherine Battle, was born on March 6, 1939, in Wendell, NC. He graduated from James E. Shepard High School in Zebulon, NC. He later united in Holy Matrimony with Doris Perry battle on July 15, 1961. To this union, three children were born: Jimmy Marshall Battle, Billie Battle, and Christopher L. battle.

Billie gave his life to Christ at an early age, joining Pleasant Grove Baptist Church in Wendell, NC. He later united with First Cosmopolitan Baptist Church in Raleigh, NC. After he and Doris moved to Greensboro, NC for a few years, he joined Cedar Gove Missionary Baptist Church. Upon returning to Raleigh, he reunited with First Cosmopolitan Baptist Church, where he sang with the Gospel Choir for many years and later with the Senior Choir. He also served on the Trustee Board. He loved to travel to various tennis tournaments and venues as far as

Obituaries



New York and even Paris, France.

Billie worked in his early years at NC State University as a cook and baker and later became a North Carolina Correctional Officer at the men's prison in Raleigh, NC. Billie later pursued his aspirations of entrepreneurship by starting Busy Bee Cleaning Services, and then Busy Bee Plumbing Co., serving the Wake Co. area of 47

years.

He loved his community as well. He was co-founder of the Ebony Racquet Club, where he served as President for many years, and he was an active member of the Biltmore Hills Neighborhood Association.

Billie was preceded in death by his parents; his wife, Doris Perry Battle; his son, Jimmy Marshall Battle; and two brothers, Jimmy Battle and Joe Kelly Battle.

Billie will forever remain in the hearts of his family. He leaves to cherish his memory: his daughter, Billiette Battle (Anthony C. Walker), and his son, Christopher L. battle (Paulette), both of Raleigh, NC; his brother, Macon battle; his grandchildren, Antoine J. Battle of Raleigh, NC, Nakwan Walker (Ashley) of Garner, NC, Isiah Walker, Paul Battle, Lincoln Battle, Jane Battle, Ellen Battle, and Catherine Battle, all of Raleigh, NC and his great-grandchildren, Nakwan Walker Jr., Chayse Walker, Elyias Walker, Austin Walker, and Maximus Walker, all of Garner, NC; Antoine Battle Jr., Amora R. Battle, and Madison Neal, all of Raleigh, NC; Natalie Battle of Durham, NC; along with a host of cousins, relatives and special friends.

Obituaries



In Loving Memory of Cassianna "Cassie" Yvonne Brown Ray

Mrs. Cassianna "Cassie" Yvonne Brown Ray, age 36, peacefully transitioned to eternal rest on Friday, March 20, 2026, at the Hock Family Pavilion in Durham, North Carolina, surrounded by her loving family. Cassie was preceded in death by her grandparents: Willie Brown, Sr., Shirley Perry Brown, and Ruth Dennis Deas.

Cassie was born on August 22, 1989, in Columbia, Maryland, at Johns Hopkins Howard Medical Center (formerly Howard County General Hospital). At the age of seven, Cassie accepted Christ as her Savior and was baptized at Mt. Calvary Baptist Church in Rockville, Maryland. Cassie was a joyful child with a hunger for learning. At just two years old, eager to attend school with her older sister, she hid in the car to hitch a ride. Soon after, she began her educational journey at Norbeck Montessori Preschool. She later attended Cashell Elementary School, Redland Middle School, and Col. Zadok Magruder High School in Rockville, Maryland. In the fall of 2004, her family relocated to Raleigh, North Carolina, where she graduated from Leesville Road High School in 2007.

Cassie continued her education at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, where she earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Laboratory Animal Science, along with a certificate in Biotechnology. While in college, she became a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated, in the spring of 2009, serving as Historian. She also held

leadership roles in several organizations, including Senator of the Student Government Association, Vice Chairperson of the Elections Committee, College Ambassador for Green For All, and Fundraising Chairperson for the Society for Human Resource Management, among others.

Cassie's professional career in laboratory animal science began in medical research and spanned 13 years. Her work included infectious disease research at the National Institutes of Health, as well as project management roles at Duke University and Marken Health Sciences.

As she continued to grow, so did her creativity, curiosity, and drive. From an early age, Cassie expressed herself through art—her drawings, paintings, and sculptures were showcased throughout her schools. She also performed in school plays and sang in the choir, which later performed at the White House. Her passion for the arts evolved into successful entrepreneurial ventures in adulthood. While in college, she began selling cupcakes and cookies, eventually founding Cassianna Confections (formerly Classy Cass Cakery), Revery—an organization focused on creating diverse social events—and Party Lab Rentals and Design.

Cassie's love story with her husband, Rodney, began like a romantic comedy. They met while working in clinical research during the COVID-19 pandemic, and their first interaction sparked a lively debate that left them unsure of one another. However, through shared experiences—including comforting each other after the loss of a coworker—their connection deepened into a beautiful relationship. They quickly became best friends, spending countless hours talking by phone and Zoom, including a memorable 16-hour virtual date in the spring of 2021. As they traveled, dined, and shared life's adventures, their bond grew stronger. By summer, their connection was undeniable. They were united in marriage during an intimate courthouse ceremony in 2024, surrounded by family. Their relationship, built on grace and friendship, was filled with a lifetime of love and cherished memories.

In 2026, Cassie was diagnosed with stage IV small bowel cancer.

On March 20, 2026—the first day of spring—she was called home to be with the Lord. Throughout her life, Cassie touched countless hearts. She expressed her love not only through words but through thoughtful actions—hosting beautiful events, baking for others, and creating handcrafted décor, often putting others before herself. Her attention to detail, eye for beauty and fashion, and deep capacity for love are qualities that will continue to inspire all who knew her.

She leaves to cherish her memory: her loving husband, Rodney Ray, Jr.; her parents, Willie Brown, Jr. and Jacqueline Deas-Brown; her sisters, Tabitha Brown (Jerome Jones) and Samara Domanski (Joseph); her nieces and nephews, Willie Brown, III, Trevor Stark, and Josephine Domanski; her mother-in-law, Delaina Ray; her grandparents, Whitt Deas, Sr., Lawrence Robinson, and Charles and Bertha McClora; her aunts and uncles, Rev. Whitt Deas, Jr. (Persephone), Naomi Deas Boyle (Andrew), Kennard Brown, Angela Bryant, and Vincent Deas (Jovana); her great-aunt and great-uncles, Mamie Stephens, Jerry Perry, and Rev. James Wilson; cousins, Edward Kirven (Melissa), Jessica Newsome Potts, Tiphane Deas, Whitney Knight (Kevin, Sr.), Stephane Deas (Stephen), Victoria Deas, Maya Brown, Sebastian Deas, Jordan Deas, Sydney Brown, Ava Brown, Whitt Deas, III, and Vincent Deas and a host of extended family members, and friends.

On a personal note, Cassianna and I met in high school and became linesisters in spring 2009 when we became members of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Incorporated in the Alpha Phi Chapter on the campus of North Carolina A&T State University. She was number 48 and I number 49 on our line, Cassianna will always be my front. From the moment I met Cassie her energy and smile were infectious. Her natural excitement for life made her so extremely fun to be around, near, or even in touch with. She would always make things around us more beautiful. She would whip a flower arrangement into shape, or decorate a cookie to the point where you wouldn't want to eat it but keep to look at. A friend to everyone she will be deeply miss and her memory always celebrated.

Practical Biblical Principles

WORTHY IS THE LAMB

PART 2

Revelation 8:1-6

By John L. Caldwell, Pastor
New Jerusalem Baptist Cathedral

It was after Jesus had broken the sixth broken seal of the scroll that the 144,000 Jewish preachers and two witnesses, Moses and Elijah were set loose to evangelize the remaining Jewish people on the earth. This appears to be God's last effort to show His mercy and grace upon His chosen people to save them. Thus, keeping to His promise to Abraham and Elijah, the prophet said that He would save a remnant of His people in the end (1King 19:18; Isaiah 10:21).

When Jesus broke the seventh and last seal, there was a silence in heaven. During this silence God heard the prayers of the saints as indicated by the angel with the golden censer. The angel then threw the censer, filled with fire, from the altar to the earth. There were noises, thunderings, lightning, and an earthquake. This silence represents the time when God called the 144,000 Jewish preachers and the two prophets to evangelize the Jewish nation left on the earth. This God did before He released the judgments of the seven trumpets upon the earth.

John then saw seven angels each with a trumpet in hand. The trumpets indicate God is ending His wrath upon the earth, also the trumpets are God's last judgments upon the earth.

All the trumpets sounded in order resulting in hail and fire mingled with blood falling to the earth and a third of the trees burned up and all the grass. Then a great burning mountain was thrown into the sea. And a third of the sea became blood. And a third of all living creatures in the sea died and a third of all ships were destroyed.

Then a great star (Wormwood) fell from heaven burning like a torch fell upon a third of the rivers and waters. The waters were poison and men died. Then a third of the sun was struck along with the moon and stars resulting in a third of the day being darkened.

Then the fifth trumpet sounded and John heard another angel flying through the midst of heaven loudly saying, "Woe, woe, the worst is yet to come. This is the start of the great tribulation period (Revelation 8:13).

A star (Satan, Apollyon) fell from heaven and was given the key to the bottomless pit. Out of that pit came demons, as if they were locust, swarming over the Jews and Gentiles and killing those who had yet to accept Jesus as Lord. The Jews and Gentiles who were sealed by the gospel of the 144,000 preachers and two witnesses were saved.

The sixth trumpet sounded and the four angels previously holding back the great destruction for a third of the people let loose their judgments and killed a third of the remaining mankind. Some men still did not repent. This ushers in the beginning of the Battle of Armageddon, the last war fought between good and evil upon the earth.

Prior to the seventh trumpet sounding, a mighty angel came down from heaven in the appearance of Jesus with an open scroll in His hand. He then set His right foot on the sea and His left foot on the land and cried out in the middle of seven thunderings as John was about to write. The thundering voice told John to seal up his writing and write no more. That great angel raised His hand and declared that time will be no more upon the earth.

The voice John heard from heaven

told him to go and take the open book (it is finished) out of the hand of the great angel and eat it. This, John did. Then the voice told John he must continue to prophecy to many nations and kings.

Before the seventh trumpet is sounded the beast from the bottomless pit will rise up and kill the two witnesses who had finished their evangelistic work. Their bodies will lie in the street of Jerusalem for three and a half days. There will be rejoicing and sending gifts over the deaths of these saints.

Then God resurrected the two prophets and commanded that they come up to heaven. Fear fell on those who watched the prophets rise to heaven in a cloud. An earthquake came and killed seven thousand people. Some gave glory to God. The third Woe, which is the sounding of the seventh trumpet, now ushers in the coming of God's Kingdom on the earth. There were lots of worshiping and giving God glory and honor at this time. The temple of God was opened in Heaven, and the Ark of His Covenant was seen in His temple representing the certainty of God's Word, provision, and life among men. God is about to end the last of His wrath, but not just yet. This trumpet sound ends with much lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake and great hail upon the earth.

Now the Antichrist is soon exposed along with his ugly, dirty work towards God's people. This is the beginning of the great tribulation period, the last three and a half years of sorrows upon the earth. The dragon (the Antichrist) now starts his fight against the last remnants of God's people, Israel (Revelation 12:1-2).evil, the battle of Armageddon.



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Editorials

Editorial Policy

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

D.A.R.E. Failed, D.E.A.R. Succeeded: Reading Is Liberation

By Jheri Hardaway

Staff Writer

Last week, in reference to the Afroman trial, there was a mention of the D.A.R.E. program. The emphasis was on the fact that his hit song, “Because I Got High,” did more for drug awareness than its contemporary program D.A.R.E., which has recently come under fire. According to a 2023 NPR report, “numerous studies published in the 1990s and early 2000s concluded programs like D.A.R.E. had no significant impact on drug use. And one study actually found a slight uptick in drug use among suburban students after participation in D.A.R.E.” Several reports regarding the program suggest that the program operated similarly to a multi-level marketing (MLM) scheme, where officers allegedly received financial incentives or “kickbacks” for recruiting other officers to the program.

For me, D.A.R.E. actually educated me on different drugs, and on how and where to hide them. I was made aware of a world I knew nothing about by participating in this program. We were given a free t-shirt and a slice of pizza for our participation. Around this same time in elementary and middle school, we religiously participated in D.E.A.R., which stands for “drop everything and read.” We were encouraged to read whatever we wanted from magazines, books, news articles it didn’t matter as long as we were reading. I remember a student bringing in a manual for a lawnmower and being captivated. At times there would be a visible timer, but I began to realize teachers would wait for us to be engaged and then turn the timer off empowering us to get lost in the text as long as we were all quiet and focused. Several of our teachers would give us activities to do with the material we read. For example, writing a summary and presenting to the class. There were even teachers over the years who would share reading materials they had set aside just for me based on my interests. D.E.A.R. is a direct reason for my love of reading today.

I fear that students today are not experiencing reading as a priority; it is more of a task. As a career educator I’ve seen a variety of lesson plans and substitute plans and D.E.A.R. no longer appears to be a priority. It is essential that we encourage and develop a love of reading in our youth. Reading encourages ideas, increases vocabulary, and can empower future generations with historic insights to take our society to new heights.



PLAYING WITH THE TRUTH

As a woman who has lived long enough to see rotary phones turn into smartphones and encyclopedias replaced by Google, I’ve learned one thing for sure: the truth hasn’t changed, but the way people play with it certainly has. And nowhere is that more obvious than on the internet.

Many of us grew up in a world where news came from a handful of trusted places — the evening broadcast, the local paper, maybe a national magazine. If something was printed or aired, it had gone through editors, factcheckers, and lawyers. Today, anyone with a phone can publish anything, anytime, with no filter and no accountability. And that shift has forced our laws — and our common sense — to evolve.

Let me start with the legal side, because the rules really have changed. The Federal Trade Commission (FTC), which has always been responsible for making sure advertising is truthful, now has to police a digital Wild West. The same laws that once applied to print ads now apply to Instagram posts, YouTube videos, and those “sponsored” messages that pop up when you’re just trying to read the news.

One of the biggest changes is around influencers — those folks online who hold up a product and tell you it changed their life. Today, if someone is being paid or receiving free products, they must disclose it clearly. No tiny print. No hiding it in a hashtag. The law says they have to be honest about their relationship with the company.

Another major shift is the rise of fake reviews. Many of us rely on online reviews before buying anything — from vitamins to vacuum cleaners. But companies have been caught paying for glowing reviews or punishing customers who leave negative ones. That’s why the Consumer Review Fairness Act now protects your right to speak honestly about your experience.

And then there’s the INFORM Consumers Act, which requires online marketplaces to verify high-volume sellers. That’s meant to cut down on scams — something that disproportionately targets seniors, especially African American seniors who may already be navigating financial vulnerabilities.

But even with these laws, the internet remains a place where misinformation spreads faster than the truth. And that brings me to the heart of the matter: how we, the people, perceive digital content today.

Most Americans — nearly all of us — say we regularly come across information online that we believe is inaccurate. And more than half say it’s hard to tell what’s true anymore. I hear this from friends, church members, and neighbors all the time. We scroll through Facebook or watch a video someone forwarded, and suddenly we’re not sure what to believe.

Part of the problem is that social media rewards emotion, not accuracy. The more outrageous or dramatic a post is, the more likely it is to go viral. And once something spreads, it becomes harder to correct, even when it’s false.

For seniors, especially African American seniors who have lived through decades of being misled or underinformed by mainstream institutions, this environment can feel especially confusing. We know what it means to be cautious. We know what it means to doublecheck. But the digital world moves so fast that even the most careful among us can get caught off guard.

So where do people turn when they want the truth? Interestingly, surveys show that the most trusted news sources in America today aren’t the loudest or the flashiest. The top three are:

1. The Weather Channel — Yes, the place we check for hurricanes and heat waves. People trust it because it sticks to facts and avoids political drama.
2. BBC — An international broadcaster known for calm, measured reporting.
3. PBS — Our own public broadcasting system, respected for its depth and lack of sensationalism.

Notice what these three have in common: they don’t shout, they don’t scare, and they don’t sensationalize. They inform.

As seniors, we have a responsibility — to ourselves, to our families, and to our communities — to stay informed without being misled. That means slowing down before we share something. Checking the source. Asking whether the information is designed to enlighten us or excite us.

The internet has changed the rules, but it hasn’t changed our wisdom. We’ve lived long enough to know that truth may not always be loud, but it is always steady. And in this digital age, steady is exactly what we need.



PROTECTING OUR BLACK LEGACY AS A FAMILY UNIT

We can do this as an organized family effort, with all members participating. Don’t let geographic distance, age, educational attainment, or financial position be a barrier — everyone can give. The main ingredients to a family legacy giving program are commitment, leadership, and consistency.

As with other cultures, we have a history of combining our resources to support what is important to us as a people. We need to continue and amplify this history to ensure our giving persists into future generations.

We need to take advantage of our personal and collective resources to support our historic Black institutions and those that are emerging.

The idea is to bring the family together to identify a nonprofit that is in line with your values, your history, or what you want to establish as a family legacy. Maybe you want to support a local childcare center, your church, an HBCU attended by family members, or a museum focused on Black history or promoting Black artists. Maybe it’s the NAACP, or a Black-led health clinic. The choices are endless. Hopefully, your commitment will be longstanding.

Here are a few things to consider. Consider an annual financial goal for the family. Agree upon a number of hours each family member will volunteer. Tell everyone you know about the institution you are supporting, why you are doing so, and encourage them to join you. Provide in-kind services based on your experiences and connections. These can include clerical support, social media, marketing, transportation, research, and more. Host an annual fundraising event. Visit the organization you are supporting, attend their events, or ask a representative to attend a family gathering, share an update, and make an appeal for continued support.

Here are more things to consider. Encourage a family member to serve in a leadership role with the organization. Encourage the family to address a long-term project, perhaps with the option of a naming opportunity. As your family grows in size, take time to let new members know about the project. And as families grow in their financial abilities, encourage them to give more. In terms of the business side of your giving, we recommend the following: Create a written pledge with the nonprofit to document your family’s involvement and financial commitment. Do the same within the family. Ask the nonprofit to provide an annual family report on the family’s giving and engagement. Gain an understanding of how the family will be acknowledged and recognized by the institution. In terms of your family legacy: create a record of the family’s engagement for all to share and keep as part of history. There is always something we can do to protect, promote, and support Black history.



EASTER SUNDAY

This week, for Christians, is a celebration. Believe it or not, it is also a march toward what looked like capital punishment.

As a child, I remember Easter as a time of excitement. It meant getting dressed up and looking forward to an Easter basket filled with colorful sugar eggs, marshmallows, chocolate bunnies, and pastel candies you can still find today. My favorite color was red.

For a short time in my childhood, I even had a real bunny and hatched real chickens for a science project. I remember dyeing those little chicks in bright colors. Sadly, they did not live long. I often wondered if the dye had something to do with it.

At church, we would march around in our Easter clothes while “Easter Parade” played. The adults would smile, admire us, and tell us how cute we looked. The girls wore bonnets, and the church was always full. The adults were dressed up too. At that age, Easter felt like it was about looking good, sweets, and celebration.

As I grew older, I realized Easter was about much more. I learned that Holy Week is, in many ways, a journey toward a tomb, but also a story about purpose, love, sacrifice, and meaning.

Palm Sunday marked the arrival of a man who came to teach us the true purpose of life. The palm leaves symbolized victory before the victory had even happened. It was faith in action.

On Monday, Jesus went into the temple and drove out those who had turned it into a place of profit and exploitation. On Tuesday, he returned to continue teaching, just as he had done for years.

By Wednesday, human ego entered the story. Judas, who believed he understood Jesus’ purpose better than God did, betrayed him for thirty pieces of silver. He valued money and control over truth and loyalty.

Then came what we call Maundy Thursday. At the Last Supper, Jesus broke bread, shared wine, and washed the feet of his disciples. He humbled himself before them. Many churches still remember the meal, but fewer practice the act of washing feet. Perhaps it feels too humbling, too real.

Afterward, Judas left, knowing what he had done. He later felt shame and regret but never found his way back. Before judging him too quickly, we should pause. Many of us try to write our own scripts instead of trusting God with our lives. We sometimes choose gain over purpose and loyalty.

On Good Friday, Jesus carried his cross up the hill. A man stepped in to help him along the way. He was crucified, nails through his hands and feet, left to suffer and die. Those who condemned him believed they had ended his story.

But this was the same man who healed the sick, raised the dead, fed the hungry, calmed storms, and walked on water. In their arrogance, they believed they could destroy what God had ordained.

On Saturday, his body lay in the tomb. Many thought it was over. They still did not understand who he truly was.

Then Sunday came. The women, faithful to their tradition, went to the tomb to anoint his body. But the tomb was empty. There was no body, no burial as expected, no ending as they had imagined.

What a story. What a lesson. And we are still telling it today. It is called Easter.

Recently, a mother told me her son asked why we do not talk about the real meaning of Easter more often. I told her to listen to him. I told her to open her Bible and read the story again.

So yes, celebrate Easter. Enjoy the traditions, the food, and the joy of the day. But go deeper. Understand the purpose. Understand the story. Understand the sacrifice. Because his life, and what it represents, was not in vain.

Other Viewpoints

AI Bias In Healthcare: When Algorithms Erase Black professionals

By Seleipiri Akobo

a physician executive

I was trying to be cool, so I recently joined a social media challenge with a simple prompt: “Create a caricature of me and my job based on everything you know about me.”

As a hospitalist, physician executive, and burnout architect, my digital footprint is deep. I talk about systemic health care reform, the psychology of exhaustion, and the structural “blueprints” needed to save our healers. I expected my AI algorithm to render a sharp professional landscape, perhaps someone surrounded by blueprints, sterile walls, and stethoscopes.

The result? The AI depicted me correctly, in my aspired kingdom, a dreamer and creator with so many books to boot and my favorite substance of choice, also known as coffee. The only but very overt omission, however, was that I was depicted as a white woman named Anna. This made me smile hard, shaking my head at the same time. I did the same with my work computer, and this time I was a middle-aged unnamed white male.

When I corrected the prompt to include my race and gendered, well-kept long locs, the pendulum swung to the other extreme: I was not just a professional anymore; I was rendered as a “superhero.” Who no longer was Zen and at peace in my kingdom but had to be in a capacity of expected servitude.

While being called a hero is flattering, this experience highlighted a jagged truth about the tools we are increasingly relying on to build our future.

For many, AI feels like a neutral arbiter of truth. But AI does not think; it predicts based on the data it has been fed. When an AI assumes a specialist or a “physician burnout architect” who loves travel, yoga, classical music, and jazz, has an eclectic taste in art and food, is white by default, it is not just making a creative choice. It is reflecting a data-driven erasure.

The erasure of identity

If the “standard” professional in a database is white, anyone else becomes an “exception” or a “specialty” category. In my case, once my race was identified, the AI moved me from “Professional” to “Icon.” By making me a superhero, it inadvertently stripped away my human identity as a working architect of change and career growth/development and replaced it with a caricature of “Black Girl Magic” that, while well-intentioned, still misses the mark of everyday professional representation.

This is not just about an avatar on a screen. The “freedom keys” to a more equitable society depend on recognizing how these biases manifest in daily outcomes:

- Health care disparities: If diagnostic AI tools are trained primarily on one demographic, they miss the nuances of skin conditions or symptom presentations in others, leading to delayed diagnoses in a system already rife with racial and socioeconomic disparities.

- Professional gatekeeping: If hiring algorithms equate “leadership” with the traits of a specific demographic, qualified Black and Brown professionals are filtered out before a human ever sees their resume, further deepening the schism of professional connectedness and lack of meritocracy that already exists.

- The burden of correction: Just as I had to manually “fix” my prompt, marginalized people are constantly forced to perform the extra labor of correcting the systems that should be serving them.

As someone who designs systems to prevent burnout and optimize utilization and quality, I know that you cannot fix a structure if the foundation is cracked.

We cannot “engineer” our way out of bias by simply adding a few more diverse images. We need to interrogate the datasets, diversify the engineering rooms, and, most importantly, be willing to challenge the “defaults” the digital world hands us.

AI is a mirror. Right now, that mirror is warped. It is time we demand a reflection that captures the full, complex, and diverse reality of the people doing the work.

Have you ever seen yourself “filtered” or misrepresented by an automated system? How do we ensure the tools of the future do not repeat the prejudices of the past?

Classifieds

DURHAM COUNTY

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 10th day of March 2026, as Executor of the ESTATE OF SALLY ALENE FURR STAUNTON, 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 3rd day of July 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 2nd day of April 2026. Jacquelyn Staunton Pergerson
Executor

ESTATE OF SALLY ALENE FURR STAUNTON

c/o E. Jack Walker, Jr., Attorney
Walker Lambe, PLLC
Post Office Box 51549

Durham, North Carolina 27717
4/2, 4/9, 4/16, and 4/23/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 27th day of March, 2026, as Executor of the ESTATE OF ROSE ANNE WALLACE AKA ROSEANNE HESTON WALLACE, 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 3rd day of July, 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 2nd day of April, 2026. ABBY BEVAN, EXECUTOR
ESTATE OF ROSE ANNE WALLACE
AKA ROSEANNE HESTON WALLACE

c/o Shirley M. Diefenbach, Attorney
Walker Lambe, PLLC
Post Office Box 51549

Durham, North Carolina 27717
4/2, 4/9, 4/16, and 4/23/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 27th day of March 2026, as Executor of the ESTATE OF MARGARET MARY ASHWORTH, AKA MARGARET M. ASHWORTH, AKA PEGGY ASHWORTH, 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 3rd day of July 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 2nd day of April 2026. SHIRLEY MEILER DIEFENBACH
EXECUTOR

ESTATE OF MARGARET MARY ASHWORTH
Walker Lambe, PLLC
Post Office Box 51549

Durham, North Carolina 27717
4/2, 4/9, 4/16, and 4/23/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File No.: 25E001515-310

Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of KATHY HAY, 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 July 3, 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 2nd day of April, 2026. Danielle Hay, Executor

508 Crestview Dr.
Durham, NC 27712

4/2, 4/9, 4/16, and 4/23/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 26th day of March 2026, as Administrator of the Estate of CAROLE CHRISTINE CROTTY, 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 3rd day of July

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 2nd day of April 2026.

BONNIE CROTTY NELSON
ADMINISTRATOR

ESTATE OF CAROLE CHRISTINE CROTTY c/o Jennifer Dalman,
Attorney

Walker Lambe, PLLC
Post Office Box 51549

Durham, North Carolina 27717
4/2, 4/9, 4/16, and 4/23/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

The undersigned, having qualified as Executor of the Estate of SHIRLYN ROBINSON STANBACK aka SHIRLYN R. STANBACK aka SHIRLYN STANBACK, of Durham County, North Carolina, does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said estate to present them to the undersigned on or before July 3, 2026 be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons, firms or corporations indebted to said estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This the 2nd day of April, 2026.

Shonness Diane Stanback
Executor of the Estate of Shirlyn Robinson Stanback aka Shirlyn R. Stanback aka Shirlyn Stanback

1114 Vermillion Drive
Durham, NC 27713

Leigh Anne Kasias
Wyatt Early Harris Wheeler LLP
1114 Vermillion Drive

Durham, NC 27713
4/2, 4/9, 4/16, and 4/23/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Having qualified as Administrator CTA the Estate of Elva Ann Utley, deceased, this is to notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the Estate of ELVA ANN UTLEY to present them to the undersigned on or before July 3, 2026, or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons, firms, and corporations indebted to said Estate, please make immediate payment.

This the 2nd day of April, 2026.

Maurice McKellar Jr., Administrator
CTA c/o John W. Perry
Attorney of the Estate of Elva Ann Utley Post Office Drawer 2051

Durham, North Carolina 27702
Telephone: (919) 683-8685

4/2, 4/9, 4/16, and 4/23/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File No.: 26E000336-310

Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of BETTYE EVELYN SMITH KELLY, 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 July 3, 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 2nd day of April, 2026.

Sharon Denise Smith-Knox
Executor

3000 Moss Stone Ln
Marietta, GA 30064

4/2, 4/9, 4/16, and 4/23/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File No.: 26E000351-310

Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of MARY CHAMPAGNE, 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 July 3, 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 2nd day of April, 2026.

Christopher Champagne, Executor
1120 Governess Lane
Morrisville NC, 27560

4/2, 4/9, 4/16, and 4/23/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS: The undersigned, having qualified as Administrator of the Estate of PAUL ISAAC HOLMES, Deceased, late

of Durham County, North Carolina, does hereby notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the estate to exhibit the same on or before July 1, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment.

Dated April, 4, 2026.

Steven Philip Holmes, Administrator
c/o Attorney Heather Hazelwood
PO Box 61182

Durham NC 27715
4/2, 4/9, 4/16, and 4/23/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File No.: 26E000349-310

Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of PATRICIA ANN NELSON, 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 July 3, 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 2nd day of April, 2026.

Leann Nelson, Executor
2404 Indian Trail
Durham NC 27705

4/2, 4/9, 4/16, and 4/23/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

The undersigned having qualified as Executor of the Estate of JEWEL BRANCH RICH a/k/a JEWEL B. RICH, 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 5th day of July, 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 2nd day of April, 2026.

Jo Ann Rich McBride, Jeanine Rich
Yates, Co-Executors

Estate of Jewel Branch Rich a/k/a Jewel B. Rich, Deceased

Robert A. Idol, Esquire
IDOL LAW, PLLC
Attorney at Law

PO Box 51759
Durham, NC 27717
(919) 401.5151

4/2, 4/9, 4/16, and 4/23/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Having qualified as Administrator of the Estate of DELORES DUKES-LEE, deceased, this is to notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the Estate of Delores Dukes-Lee to present them to the undersigned on or before July 3, 2026, or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons, firms, and corporations indebted to said Estate, please make immediate payment.

This the 2nd day of April, 2026.

James Lee, Jr., Administrator
c/o John W. Perry, Attorney for the Estate of Delores Dukes-Lee

Post Office Drawer 2051
Durham, North Carolina 27702

Telephone: (919) 683-8685

4/2, 4/9, 4/16, and 4/23/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION

FILE NO.: 26CV003377-310

Meylin Naomi Perez Rivas
v. John Doe

To: John Doe
Take Notice that a Complaint has been filed against you in the Civil Action described above, in the General Court of Justice, District Court Division, by the plaintiff herein, the nature of which is as follows: The Complaint seeks an ORDER OF PERMANENT CUSTODY of your minor child, Genesis Loani Rivas.

You are required to file an Answer including any defenses to this pleading within forty (40) days from the date of first publication of this Notice with the Clerk of Court of Durham County. If you fail to do so, you may not receive further notices, and the plaintiff will seek the relief sought herein.

This is the 2nd day of April 2026.

Yesenia L. Polanco-Galdamez,
Attorney for Plaintiff

411 Andrews Road, Suite 130
Durham, NC 27705
(919) 294-8032

4/2, 4/9, and 4/16/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION

FILE NO.: 26CV003377-310

Meylin Naomi Perez Rivas
v. John Doe

To: John Doe

Take Notice that a Complaint has been filed against you in the Civil Action described above, in the General Court of Justice, District Court Division, by the plaintiff herein, the nature of which is as follows: The Complaint seeks an ORDER OF PERMANENT CUSTODY of your minor child, Genesis Loani Rivas.

You are required to file an Answer including any defenses to this pleading within forty (40) days from the date of first publication of this Notice with the Clerk of Court of Durham County. If you fail to do so, you may not receive further notices, and the plaintiff will seek the relief sought herein.

This is the 2nd day of April 2026.

Yesenia L. Polanco-Galdamez,
Attorney for Plaintiff

411 Andrews Road, Suite 130
Durham, NC 27705
(919) 294-8032

4/2, 4/9, and 4/16/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File No.: 26E000339-310

Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of CARL DENNIS PARKER, 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 June 29, 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 26th day of March, 2026.

Annette P. Adkins, Executor
2613 Fitzford Ct.

Durham, NC 27712
3/26, 4/2, 4/9, and 4/16/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File No.: 26E000216-310

Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of DOVIE LEE GADDY, 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 June 29, 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 26th day of March, 2026.

Valerie Gaddy Terrell, Executor
3915 Wake Forest Hwy
Durham NC 27703

3/26, 4/2, 4/9, and 4/16/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File No.: 26E000306-310

Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of BARBARA J. PIERCEY, 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 June 29, 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 26th day of March, 2026.

Bruce Piercey, Executor
728 S Lee St
Alexandria, VA 22314

3/26, 4/2, 4/9, and 4/16/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File No.: 26E000305-310

Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of FLOYD HARRIS, 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 June 29, 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 26th day of March, 2026.

Cornelia J. Harris, Executor
1 Brightfield Ln.

Durham, NC 27712
3/26, 4/2, 4/9, and 4/16/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File No.: 25E001210-310

Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of KATHLEEN ANN SMITH, 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 June 29, 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 26th day of March, 2026.

Eric Tanuan, Executor
c/o Monks Law Firm, Steve Monks,
Attorney,
Monks Law Firm

6613 Speight Circle
Raleigh, NC 27616

3/26, 4/2, 4/9, and 4/16/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA COUNTY OF DURHAM

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION

In the General Court of Justice
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

RESOLUTION CAPITAL GROUP VS.
MARGARET D. YOUNG, ET AL.

To Celester Jackson:

Take notice that a pleading seeking relief against you has been filed in the above entitled action. The nature of the relief being sought against you is as follows: Petition to Partition or Sell Property in Lieu of Partition.

You are required to make such defense to such pleading not later than May 5, 2026, and upon your failure to do so the party seeking service against you will apply to the court for the relief sought.

This the 26th day of April, 2026.

Daron D. Satterfield
Satterfield Law, PLLC
307 Meadowlands Drive, Suite 101

Hillsborough, NC 27278
Published: 3/26, 4/2, and 4/9/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File No.: 26E000085-310

Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of JEAN HOWELL REESE, 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 June 22, 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 19th day of March, 2026.

Cheryl Messer, Executor

DURHAM COUNTY

of their recovery.

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

This the 12th day of March, 2026.

Maxine Graham, Administrator
c/o Floyd B. McKissick, III, Esq.
McKissick & McKissick
835 N Mangum Street
Durham, NC 27701

3/12, 3/19, 3/26, and 4/2/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

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

File No.: 26E000282-310
Having qualified as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of ERIC RASHARD BANKS, 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 June 22, 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 19th day of March, 2026.
Bonswa D. Banks, Administrator
c/o Floyd B. McKissick, III, Esq.
McKissick & McKissick
835 N Mangum Street
Durham, NC 27701

3/19, 3/26, 4/2, and 4/9/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

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

File No.: 26E000263-310
Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of LINDA BARNETT, 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 June 22, 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 19th day of March, 2026.
Vanessa Barnett-Loro, Executor
4100 Thetford Rd.
Durham, NC 27707

3/19, 3/26, 4/2, and 4/9/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

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

File No.: 26E000262-310
Having qualified as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of ELIZABETH OLDHAM MESSER, 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 June 22, 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 19th day of March, 2026.
William Robert Oldham, III, Executor
c/o Ethan C. Timmins
Patrick Law, PLLC
3805 University Drive, Suite A
Durham, NC 27707

3/19, 3/26, 4/2, and 4/9/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
ESTATE OF WALTER JOSEPH
PSOTER AKA WALTER J. PSOTER
FILE NO. 26E000234-310

ALL PERSONS, firms, and corporations having claims against WALTER JOSEPH PSOTER aka WALTER J. PSOTER, deceased, of Durham County, N.C., are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before June 19, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This the 19th of March, 2026. Jodi A. Psoter, Executor of the Estate of Walter Joseph Psoter aka Walter J. Psoter, c/o Amanda Honea, Attorney, 1255 Crescent Green, Suite 200, Cary, NC 27518.

3/19, 3/26, 4/2, and 4/9/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
ESTATE OF WALTER JOSEPH
PSOTER AKA WALTER J. PSOTER
FILE NO. 26E000234-310

ALL PERSONS, firms, and corporations having claims against WALTER JOSEPH PSOTER aka WALTER J. PSOTER, deceased, of Durham County, N.C., are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before June 19, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This the 19th of March, 2026. Jodi A. Psoter, Executor of the Estate of Walter Joseph Psoter aka Walter J. Psoter, c/o Amanda Honea, Attorney, 1255 Crescent Green, Suite 200, Cary, NC 27518.

3/19, 3/26, 4/2, and 4/9/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
ESTATE OF WALTER JOSEPH
PSOTER AKA WALTER J. PSOTER
FILE NO. 26E000234-310

ALL PERSONS, firms, and corporations having claims against WALTER JOSEPH PSOTER aka WALTER J. PSOTER, deceased, of Durham County, N.C., are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before June 19, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This the 19th of March, 2026. Jodi A. Psoter, Executor of the Estate of Walter Joseph Psoter aka Walter J. Psoter, c/o Amanda Honea, Attorney, 1255 Crescent Green, Suite 200, Cary, NC 27518.

3/19, 3/26, 4/2, and 4/9/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

Estate/Creditor Notices
ESTATE OF PANDORA FRAZIER
26E000261-310

All persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the Estate of Pandora Frazier, deceased, are hereby notified to present said claims to the undersigned Co-Executors of the estate on or before the date required by law, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the estate are requested to make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This the 12 day of March, 2026.

Teresa Crumpler, Co-Executor
1423 Copper Creek Dr.
Durham, NC 27713
Diane Voss, Co-Executor
1825 Old Red Mountain Rd.
Rougemont, NC 27572

3/12, 3/19, 3/26, and 4/2/2026

WAKE COUNTY

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

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

FILE NO. 25CV045563-910 &
25CV045564-910

IZABELLE M OROZCO HERWICK,
Plaintiff VS LUIS SUASTEGUI
GARCIA, Defendant

TO LUIS SUASTEGUI GARCIA:
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: Absolute Divorce & Child Custody.

You are requested to make defense to such pleading no later than forty (40) days after the first date of publication of this notice, exclusive of such date, and upon your failure to do so, the party seeking service against you will apply to the Court for the relief sought.

This, the 2nd day of April, 2026.

Isabelle Marie Orozco Herwick
Plaintiff
714 Copperline Dr.
Garner, NC 27529
4/2, 4/9, and 4/16/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

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

File No.: 26E000188-910
Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of EILEEN DALY HOWARD A/K/A EILEEN D. HOWARD, 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 July 3, 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 2nd day of April, 2026.

Dan Ross Howard Jr., Executor
1008 Starita Court
Apex, NC 27502
4/2, 4/9, 4/16, and 4/23/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

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

File No.: 25E004567-910
Having qualified as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of FLETCHER BURNETTE JR, 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 July 3, 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 2nd day of April, 2026.

Charlie Burnette, Executor
c/o Monks Law Firm, Steve Monks,
attorney
Monks Law Firm
6613 Speight Circle
Raleigh, NC 27616
4/2, 4/9, 4/16, and 4/23/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

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

File No.: 25E004791-910
Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of JAMES MONROE, 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 June 29, 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 26th day of March, 2026.

Mary Ann Monroe Williams
Executor
1324 Wrentree Circle
Raleigh, NC 27610
3/26, 4/2, 4/9, and 4/16/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

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

FILE NO.: 25CV023263-910
DESTINY DUPREE, Plaintiff v.
JOSHUA PELLOTT, Defendant

TO: JOSHUA PELLOTT
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: child custody and child support, including temporary and permanent custody,

requested to make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This the 2nd day of April, 2026.

Janet Robinson, Administrator
c/o Monks Law Firm, Steve Monks,
attorney
Monks Law Firm
6613 Speight Circle
Raleigh, NC 27616
4/2, 4/9, 4/16, and 4/23/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

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

File No.: 26E000869-910
Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of JOYCE WILSON HAWLEY, 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 July 3, 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 2nd day of April, 2026.

Christina Jane Pressley, Executor
3209 Landing Falls Lane
Raleigh, NC 27616
4/2, 4/9, 4/16, and 4/23/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

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

FILE NO.: 20CVD013438-910
IN THE MATTER OF: WILLIAMS
AND WILLIAMS v. WILLIAMS AND
UNKNOWN FATHER

To: Unknown Father of M. M. W, a male child born of Morgan Brittany Williams on 09/23/2016 in Wake County, NC.

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 child custody. You are required to make defense to such pleading within 40 days of service on or before May 12, 2026. If you fail to respond, the party seeking service against you will apply to the court for the relief sought.

This, the 2nd day of April, 2026.

Dewey O. Hedgepeth, Plaintiff
530 June Lane
Raleigh, NC 27610
4/2, 4/9, and 4/16/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File No.: 25CV039346-910
To: DEBRA D. POOLE
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 Absolute Divorce. You are required to make a defense to such pleading no later than May 12, 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, DEWEY O. HEDGEPATH, will apply to the court for the relief sought.

This, the 2nd day of April, 2026.

Dewey O. Hedgepeth, Plaintiff
530 June Lane
Raleigh, NC 27610
4/2, 4/9, and 4/16/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File No.: 25E004791-910
Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of JAMES MONROE, 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 June 29, 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 2nd day of April, 2026.

Charlie Burnette, Executor
c/o Monks Law Firm, Steve Monks,
attorney
Monks Law Firm
6613 Speight Circle
Raleigh, NC 27616
4/2, 4/9, 4/16, and 4/23/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

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

File No.: 25E004791-910
Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of JAMES MONROE, 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 June 29, 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 26th day of March, 2026.

Steven J. Elliott, Plaintiff
P.O. Box 323
Fuquay Varina, NC 27526
3/26, 4/2, and 4/9/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File No.: 25CV021563-910
TO: MARLA FERNANDA
PARRAL-GOMEZ and UNKNOWN
FATHER

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: custody of a minor child, including temporary and permanent custody.

You are required to make defense to such pleading no later than 40 days after the first publication of this notice, and upon your failure to do so, the party seeking service against you will apply to the Court for the relief sought.

Further, take notice that a Custody Mediation Orientation and Parenting Education session has been scheduled for:

Date: April 29, 2026
Time: 10:00 AM
Location: Via Zoom (Wake County Custody Mediation)

Failure to comply with the Court's orders may result in sanctions, including contempt of court.

visitation, and support obligations for a minor child.

You are required to make defense to such pleading no later than 40 days after the first publication of this notice, and upon your failure to do so, the Plaintiff will apply to the Court for the relief sought.

Further, take notice that this matter has been scheduled for hearing:

Date: April 29, 2026
Time: 9:00 AM
Location: Wake County
Courthouse, Courtroom 2B

This case has involved multiple attempts at service, including alias and pluries summons issued and returned unserved.

This, the 26th day of March, 2026.

Destiny Dupree
Plaintiff, Pro Se
3/26, 4/2, and 4/9/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

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

FILE NO.: 14-CVD-7000
ANTHONY STEWART, Plaintiff v.
CICELY CRUTCHFIELD, Defendant
and ANTONIO TURNER, Defendant
(Address Unknown)

TO: ANTONIO TURNER
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: a Motion to Intervene in a child custody matter, including the addition of Cicely Crutchfield as a party and issues related to the custody of a minor child.

The Plaintiff asserts that the minor child desires to reside with his mother and that circumstances regarding care and custody have changed.

You are required to make defense to such pleading no later than 40 days after the first publication of this notice, and upon your failure to do so, the Plaintiff will apply to the Court for the relief sought.

Further, take notice that a hearing on this matter has been scheduled as follows:

Date: May 18, 2026
Time: 9:00 AM
Location: Wake County
Courthouse, Courtroom 2C
316 Fayetteville Street,
Raleigh, North Carolina

This the 26th day of March, 2026.

Anthony Stewart
Plaintiff
3/26, 4/2, and 4/9/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

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

FILE NO.: 24CV035824-910
STEVEN J. ELLIOTT, Plaintiff v.
TIFFANY L. ELLIOTT, Defendant

TO: TIFFANY L. ELLIOTT
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: absolute divorce.

The Plaintiff alleges that you and the Plaintiff were married and thereafter separated and have lived continuously separate and apart for a period of at least one (1) year prior to the filing of this action.

You are required to make defense to such pleading no later than 40 days after the first publication of this notice, and upon your failure to do so, the Plaintiff will apply to the Court for the relief sought.

This, the 26th day of March, 2026.

Steven J. Elliott, Plaintiff
P.O. Box 323
Fuquay Varina, NC 27526
3/26, 4/2, and 4/9/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File No.: 25E004660-910
Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of CAROLYN DOLAN SMITH, 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 June 15, 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 12th day of March, 2026.

Leo Waffers Law Firm
PO Box 761
Raleigh NC 27602
3/12, 3/19, 3/26, and 4/2/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

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

File No.: 25E004660-910
Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of CAROLYN DOLAN SMITH, 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 June 15, 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 12th day of March, 2026.

Leo Waffers Law Firm
PO Box 761
Raleigh NC 27602
3/12, 3/19, 3/26, and 4/2/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
All persons, firms and corporations having claims against GWYNNEETH GAYLE BROOKS STANBACK, DECEASED, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before June 10, 2026, or this notice along with the appropriate general statute will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the deceased are asked to make immediate payment. This

This, the 26th day of March, 2026.

Lucero Gomez
Plaintiff, Pro Se
3/26, 4/2, and 4/9/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION
In the General Court of Justice,
District Court Division
File No.: 20CVD013438-910

IN THE MATTER OF: WILLIAMS AND WILLIAMS v. WILLIAMS AND UNKNOWN FATHER

To: Unknown Father of M. M. W, a male child born of Morgan Brittany Williams on 09/23/2016 in Wake County, NC.

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 child custody. You are required to make defense to such pleading within 40 days of service on or before April 28, 2026. If you fail to respond, the party seeking service against you will apply to the court for the relief sought. This, the 19th day of March, 2026. You should provide a copy of any response to the attorney for the Plaintiffs at Melissa Stuckey, McNeil Law Firm, PLLC; 226 W. Millbrook Road, Raleigh, NC 27609, 919-803-6778.

3/19, 3/26, and 4/2/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

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

File No.: 26E000411-910
Having qualified as ADMINISTRATOR CTA of the Estate of JOSANDRA MOUNT, 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 June 15, 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 12th day of March, 2026.

Daryl Tracy Mount
Administrator CTA
c/o Marion Law Office, PLLC
2741 University Drive
Durham, NC 27707
3/12, 3/19, 3/26, and 4/2/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

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

File No.: 25E004272-910
Having qualified as CO-ADMINISTRATORS of the Estate of HOPE YVETTE RAILLEY HOUSE, 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 June 15, 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 12th day of March, 2026.

Geneva Mizelle, Co-Administrator
3200 Stream Side Road, Apt 33
Raleigh, NC 27613
Cornelius Fayette, Co-Administrator
905 North Fayetteville Ave.<

Classifieds

FORECLOSURE

**NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE SALE**
Special Proceedings
No. 25SP001037-310
Substitute Trustee: Philip A. Glass
Date of Sale: April 8, 2026
Time of Sale: 3:00 p.m.
Place of Sale:
Durham County Courthouse
Description of Property:
See Attached Description
Record Owners: Jamilah Simon
Address of Property:
109 S. Maple Street
Durham, NC 27703
Deed of Trust:
Book : 9595 Page: 238
Dated: January 24, 2022
Grantors: Jamilah Simon, an unmarried person
Original Beneficiary: State Employees' Credit Union

CONDITIONS OF SALE:

This sale is made subject to all unpaid taxes and superior liens or encumbrances of record and assessments, if any, against the said property, and any recorded leases. This sale is also subject to any applicable county land transfer tax, and the successful third party bidder shall be required to make payment for any such county land transfer tax. It is the intent of the holder of the above Deed of Trust that the execution, delivery and recordation of a Trustee Deed to the holder as high bidder shall not merge with any superior Deeds of Trust held by the holder of the above Deed of Trust, and that the holder of said superior Deed of Trust shall continue to enjoy all rights and remedies set forth in said superior Deed of Trust, including the right to foreclose either by judicial action or under power of sale contained in the superior Deed of Trust.

The property to be offered pursuant to this Notice of Sale is being offered for sale "AS IS, WHERE IS." THERE ARE NO REPRESENTATIONS OR WARRANTIES relating to the title or to any physical, environmental, health or safety conditions existing in, on, at or relating to the property being offered for sale, and any and all responsibilities or liabilities arising out of or in any way relating to any such condition are expressly disclaimed.

A cash deposit of 5% of the purchase price will be required at the time of the sale. Remote bidding will not be accepted pursuant to North Carolina General Statutes Section 45-21.25 (a). Credit bids on behalf of the Noteholder will be accepted. Any successful bidder shall be required to tender the full balance of the purchase price so bid in cash or certified check at the time the Substitute Trustee tenders to him a deed for the property or attempts to tender such deed, and should said successful bidder fail to pay the full balance purchase price so

bid at that time, he shall remain liable on his bid as provided for in North Carolina General Statutes Section 45-21.30 (d) and (e). This sale will be held open ten (10) days for upset bids as required by law. Residential real property with less than 15 rental units, including single-family residential real property: an order for possession of the property may be issued pursuant to G.S. 45-21.29 in favor of the purchaser and against the party or parties in possession by the clerk of superior court of the county in which the property is sold. Any person who occupies the property pursuant to a rental agreement entered into or renewed on or after October 1, 2007, may, after receiving notice of sale, terminate the rental agreement by providing written notice of termination to the landlord, to be effective on a date stated in the notice that is at least 10 days, but not more than 90 days, after the sale date contained in the notice of sale, provided that the mortgagor has not cured the default at the time the tenant provides the notice of termination. Upon termination of a rental agreement, the tenant is liable for rent due under the rental agreement prorated to the effective date of the termination.

Dated: 3/11/2026

Philip A. Glass, Substitute Trustee
Nodell, Glass & Haskell, L.L.P.
Posted on 3/11/2026

Exhibit A

BEGINNING at a stake on the east side of Maple Street (formerly called North Street) 104 feet in a northerly direction from the north side of Hart Street and running thence in an easterly direction 187 feet to a stake; thence in a northerly direction 56 feet to a stake; thence in a westerly direction 187 feet to a stake on the east side of Maple Street; thence along and with the east side of said Maple Street South 1 def. 30 min. West 56 feet to a stake; the point of beginning and being a portion of Lot No.7 (also referred to as Lot No. 8 in an unrecorded map) in Block A of THE DRIVER LAND of Durham Land and Security Company as per plat and survey thereof now on file in the Office of the Register of Deeds of Durham County Plat Book 5, at Page 59, to which reference is hereby made for a more particular description of same. See Deed Book 162, Page 138, Durham County Registry.

Subject to easements, restrictions and rights of way of record, and utility lines and rights of way in existence over, under or upon the above-described property. PIN: 0831-53-4371

Property Address: 109 S. Maple St. Durham, NC 27703, which includes 109 S. Maple St. Unit A, Durham, NC 27703, and 109 S. Maple St. Unit B, Durham, NC 27703
March 26, 2026 and April 2, 2026.

FORECLOSURE

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF DURHAM
NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE SALE**
In The General Court of Justice
Superior Court Division
Before The Clerk
26SP000055-310
IN THE MATTER
OF THE FORECLOSURE OF A
DEED OF TRUST FROM KEVIN
D JONES AND MAYA T JONES,
HUSBAND AND WIFE TO THE
SOUTH MOUNTAIN GROUP, INC.,
TRUSTEE, DATED FEBRUARY 17,
2023, RECORDED IN BOOK 9878,
PAGE 194, DURHAM COUNTY
REGISTRY

Pursuant to an order entered February 19, 2026, in the Superior Court for Durham County, and the power of sale contained in the captioned Deed of Trust (the "Deed of Trust"), the Substitute Trustee will offer for sale at auction (the "Sale"), to the highest bidder for cash on:

APRIL 6, 2026, AT 11:00 A.M.
DURHAM COUNTY COURTHOUSE
510 SOUTH DILLARD STREET,
DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA
27701

the real estate and the improvements thereon secured by the Deed of Trust, less and except any of such property released from the lien of the Deed of Trust prior to the date of said sale, lying and being in Durham County, North Carolina, and being more particularly described as follows (the "Property"):

ALL THAT CERTAIN LOT OR PARCEL OF LAND SITUATE IN THE COUNTY OF DURHAM, STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA, AND BEING MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS:
BEING ALL OF LOT 2, BLOCK D, SECTION ONE, SOUTHERN TERRACE, AS SHOWN ON PLAT BOOK 42, PAGE 11, DURHAM COUNTY REGISTRY.

REAL PROPERTY
ADDRESS: 2405 SOUTHERN
DRIVE, DURHAM, NC 27703

The record owners of the Property not more than ten (10) days prior to the date hereof is Kevin D. Jones and Maya T. Jones. Parcel ID: 163272

Unless delayed by other sales held at the same place, the sale will be held at the fixed time, or as soon thereafter as practicable, but not later than 3 hours after the time fixed, as provided in Section 45-21.23 of the North Carolina General Statutes.

A five percent cash deposit, or a cash deposit of \$750.00, whichever is greater, will be required of the last and highest bidder. The balance of the bid

purchase price shall be due in full in cash or certified funds at a closing to take place within thirty (30) days of the date of sale. The Substitute Trustee shall convey title to the property by non warranty deed.

This sale will be made subject to all prior liens of record, if any, and to all unpaid (ad valorem) taxes and special assessments, if any, which became a lien subsequent to the recordation of the Deed of Trust. This sale will be further subject to the right, if any, of the United States of America to redeem the above-described property for a period of 120 days following the date when the final upset bid period has run.

The purchaser of the property described above shall pay the Clerk's Commissions in the amount of \$.45 per \$100.00 of the purchase price (up to a maximum amount of \$500.00), required by Section 7A-308(a)(1) of the North Carolina General Statutes. If the purchaser of the above-described property is someone other than the Beneficiary under the Deed of Trust, the purchaser shall also pay, to the extent applicable, the land transfer tax in the amount of one percent (1%) of the purchase price.

To the extent this sale involves residential property with less than fifteen (15) rental units, you are hereby notified of the following:

(a) An order for possession of the property may be issued pursuant to Section 45-21.29 of the North Carolina General Statutes in favor of the purchaser and against the party or parties in possession by the clerk of superior court of the county in which the property is sold; and

(b) Any person who occupies the property pursuant to a rental agreement entered into or renewed on or after October 1, 2007, may, after receiving the notice of sale, terminate the rental agreement upon 10 days' written notice to the landlord. Upon termination of a rental agreement, the tenant is liable for rent due under the rental agreement prorated to the effective date of the termination.

The 19th day of February 2026.

John W. Fletcher III, Substitute Trustee (NCSB No. 15503)
Fletcher, Tydings, Williams-Tracy & Gott, PLLC
100 Queens Road, Suite 250,
Charlotte, North Carolina 28204
704-334-3400
jfletcher@fletcher tydings.com
March 26 and April 2, 2026

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 **Huntingridge and West Lavender Stormwater Infrastructure Improvements** project for the City of Durham which bids on April 9, 2026, at 3:00 PM. Plans and specifications for this project are available at the following locations: Pipeline Utilities, Inc.; 2204-F Associate Drive; Raleigh, NC 27603 * City of Durham; 101 City Hall Plaza, Suite 3100; Durham, NC 27701 * City of Durham Public Works website.

Potential subcontracting opportunities include but are not limited to surveying, clearing and grubbing, hauling, asphalt paving, traffic control, erosion control, seeding, and fencing. 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.

FORSYTH COUNTY

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
FORSYTH COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS**
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File No.: 22 E 1060

Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of DEBORAH ANTOINETTE SMITH A/K/A DEBORAH A. SMITH, deceased, late of Forsyth 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 July 3, 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 2nd day of April, 2026.

William W. Smith, Executor
2227 Standing oak Lane
Pfaftown, NC 27040
3/26, 4/2, 4/9, and 4/16/2026

GUILFORD COUNTY

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
GUILFORD COUNTY**

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

File No.: 25E002482-400
Having qualified as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of JERRARD WHITTED, deceased, late of Guilford 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 June 15, 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 12th day of March, 2026.
Marnisha Drake, Administrator
83 Walker West Rd.
Fayetteville, NC 28312
3/12, 3/19, 3/26, and 4/2/2026

ORANGE COUNTY

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY**

NOTICE OF ACTION FOR PUBLICATION

In The Circuit Court Of The Eighteenth Judicial Circuit In And For Brevard County, Florida
In Re: Termination Of Parental Rights For The Proposed Adoption Of The Minor Child: Milaneé Mona Bell, Dob: 07/26/2008
CASE NO.: 05-2025-DR-037416-XXDR-BC, DIVISION: F
GEORGE BELL, Petitioner
TO: Gail Villanueva
Address: 447 Ballantyne Common Circle, Apartment 103, Hendersonville, North Carolina 28792

YOU ARE NOTIFIED that an action for the proposed adoption, including a claim for termination of parental rights, has been filed against you. You are required to serve a copy of your written defenses, if any, to this action on Jessica D. Thomas, Attorney for Petitioner, GEORGE BELL, whose address is 253 N. Orlando Ave., Suite 204, Maitland, FL 32751, on or before March 11, 2026, and file the original with the Clerk of this Court at 425 N. Orange Avenue, Orlando, Florida 32801, either before service on Petitioner's attorney or immediately thereafter; otherwise, a default will be entered against you for the relief demanded in the Petition.

WARNING: Rule 12.285, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure, requires certain automatic disclosure of documents and information. Failure to comply can result in sanctions, including dismissal or striking of pleadings.

DATED this 20th day of February, 2026.

CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT
By: Debbie Huff
Deputy Clerk

Published: 3/26, 4/2, 4/9, 4/16, 4/23, and 4/30/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
ORANGE COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
FILE NO. 26E000076-670

The undersigned, having qualified as Executor of the Estate of LINDA ANN DESROSIERS, Deceased, late of Orange County, North Carolina, does hereby notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the estate to exhibit the same on or before 6/17/26, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment.

This is the 19th day of March, 2026.

Julie Warwick, Executor
c/o Attorney Heather Hazelwood
PO Box 61182
Durham NC 27715
3/19, 3/26, 4/2, and 4/9/2026

WAKE COUNTY

the 12 day of March, 2026. All correspondence should be to the Estate of Gwynneth Stanback, c/o Florence A. Bowens, Attorney, P.O. Box 51263, Durham, NC 27717.
3/12, 3/19, 3/26, and 4/2/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION
In the District Court Division
File No. 25CV046587-910
MARCIAL V. TORRES

TO SILVANO DOMINGUEZ TORRES: 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 April 21, 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, LUCERO GOMEZ MARCIAL, will apply to the court for the relief sought.

This, the 12th day of March, 2026.

Yvonne Armendariz, Esq
Attorney for Plaintiff
Armendariz Law Office, PLLC
6110 Lake Wheeler Road
Raleigh, NC 27603
Office: (919) 656-1524
Yvonne@armendarizlaw.com
3/12, 3/19, and 3/26/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

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

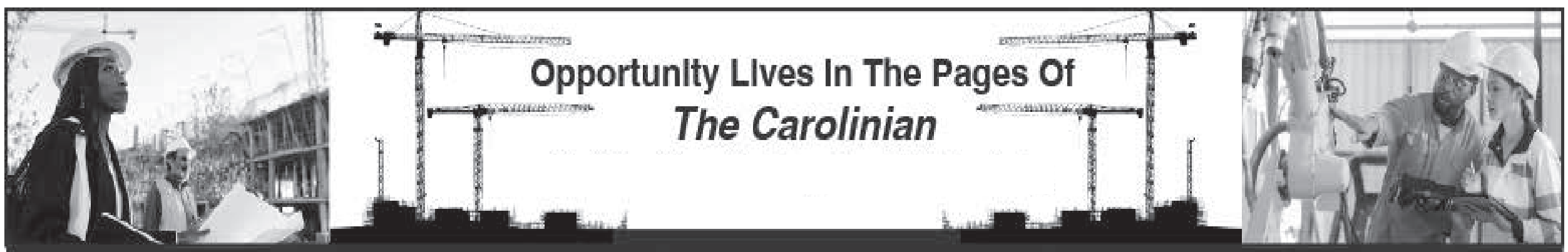
File No.: 20CVD013438-910
IN THE MATTER OF: WILLIAMS AND WILLIAMS v. WILLIAMS AND UNKNOWN FATHER
To: Unknown Father of M. M. W, a male child born of Morgan Brittany Williams on 09/23/2016 in Wake County, NC.

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 child custody. You are required to make defense to such pleading within 40 days of service on or before April 28, 2026. If you fail to respond, the party seeking service against you will apply to the court for the relief sought. This, the 19th day of March, 2026. You should provide a copy of any response to the attorney for the Plaintiffs at Melissa Stuckey, McNeil Law Firm, PLLC; 226 W. Millbrook Road, Raleigh, NC 27609, 919-803-6778.
3/19, 3/26, and 4/2/2026

**PAYING CASH AND BUYING
OLD CASSETTE TAPES CALL
MARVIN 919-268-7476 OR
EMAIL ME AT
WYCHEMARVIN4@GMAIL.COM**

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

**Opportunity Lives In The Pages Of
The Carolinian**



WANTED WBE, MBE & DBE BIDS

for the following job:

Town of Morrisville
FY26 Patching & Resurfacing Project

Wake Co. Bid Date: April 9th

These projects may involve some or all of the following aspects of construction: construction survey, clear and grub, trucking, drainage, milling, paving, incidental concrete, fence and guardrail, signs, structures, traffic control, utilities, signals, pavement marking, erosion control and seeding.

Bids can be emailed to stw.quotes@stwc Corp.com

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

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

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

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 **Cole Park Wastewater Treatment Plant (320 Plaza Drive; Chapel Hill, NC 27517) Improvements project for Aqua North Carolina, Inc.** which bids on **April 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 * W. K. Dickson & Co., Inc.; 720 Corporate Center Drive; Raleigh, NC 27607 * Duncan-Parnell bid room.

Potential subcontracting opportunities include but are not limited to surveying, demolition, clearing and grubbing, hauling, earthwork, erosion control, seeding, sodding, electrical, masonry, roofing, HVAC, flatwork, CIPC, concrete forms, concrete rebar, painting, plumbing, and fencing. Please contact **Tyler Sutton (tsutton@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

Pipeline Utilities, Inc. (NC General Contractor License No. 325) is seeking certified DBE, MBE, and WBE subcontractors and suppliers for the **Farmington Woods fire Line Extension project for the Town of Cary Utilities Department** which bids on **January 5, 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 Cary Utilities Department; 316 North Academy Street; Cary, NC 27513 * Town of Cary website and planroom * Carolinas AGC Website * Dodge Data and Analytics website * NC Institute of Minority Economic Development (NCIMED) website * CDC News website.

Potential subcontracting opportunities include but are not limited to surveying, erosion control, seeding, flatwork, and fencing. 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.

ADVERTISEMENT FOR FORMAL BIDS

Project Name: Junaluska Sanitary District – HCC/Oak Park Low Pressure Water Line Rehabilitation

Project Description: The Junaluska Sanitary District is replacing old, undersized water lines within its District for improved water service and water quality. The project generally consists of the following:

- Installation of approximately 27,800 l.f. of 6-inch and 8 inch DIP water line and associated appurtenances
- Installation of water booster station and water tank

Work shall include the installation of valves, hydrants, tees, fittings, connections, service line connections, and other typical work associated with waterline installation.

Location: Lake Junaluska/Clyde Haywood County, NC

Owner: Junaluska Sanitary District
228 Edwards Rd
Clyde, NC 28721

Engineer: Brown Consultants PA
30 Ben Lippen School Road
Asheville, NC 28806
828-350-7683 or jtbrown@brownpa.net

Bids Due: The JSD will receive bids and open bids for the project at their office until 11:00 AM on April 30, 2026 at 228 Edwards Rd, Clyde, NC 28721. Bids should be in a sealed envelope with attached label as follows:

Junaluska Sanitary District – HCC/Oak Park Low Pressure Water Line Rehabilitation

Sealed Bid: Brown Consultants, PA, Project No: SRF-D-2059

Attn: Josh Nickol, Manager

Bidding Documents: The Information for Bidders, Bid Form, Contract, Specifications, and other contract documents may be examined at the following location: The office of Brown Consultants, PA. A complete set of bidding and contract documents must be purchased, non-refundable, for \$50.00 for paper set or jump drive if both are required \$ 75 from the engineer.

Bid Security: A 5% bid security is required for this project

Qualifications: Contractors offering a bid on the project must be licensed to perform Utility work in the State of North Carolina in accordance with North Carolina General Statutes and the General Requirements of the NCDEQ. The contractor will be required to provide proof of work successfully performed of similar type as this project.

NCDEQ – Requirements: This project is funded with SRF funds. Both bid and post bid submittals to meet all MBE/WBE and American Iron and Steel requirements for this project.

Award Requirements: The project will be awarded to the qualified bidder submitting the lowest bid total. Upon award of the project, the successful bidder will be required to provide Payment and Performance Bonds, and proof of general liability and workman's compensation insurance for this project.

Withdraw of Bid and Informalities: No bidder may withdraw his bid within 90 days after the actual date of the opening thereof. The Owner reserves the right to waive any informalities or to reject any or all bids.

Authorized Official: Junaluska Sanitary District
Josh Nickol
Finance Director/Manager

D/M/WBE

SUBCONTRACTORS/SUPPLIERS WANTED

Pipeline Utilities, Inc.(NC General Contractor License No. 325) is seeking certified DBE, MBE, and WBE subcontractors for the **Water Distribution and Capacity Expansion project for the Town of Selma** which bids on **April 9, 2025, at 5:00 PM.** Plans and specifications for this project are available at the following locations: Pipeline Utilities, Inc.; 2204-F Associate Drive; Raleigh, NC 27603 * T. A. Loving Company; 400 Patetown Road; Goldsboro, NC 27530.

Potential subcontracting opportunity to include but is not limited to fencing. Please contact **Darryl Tucker (dtucker@pui-nc.com)** if you are interested in submitting a proposal on any portion 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. 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 **Neuse Colony Wastewater Treatment Plant (2060 NC Highway 42 East; Clayton, NC 27527) Sludge Press Addition project for Aqua North Carolina, Inc.** which bids on **April 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 * W. K. Dickson & Co., Inc.; 720 Corporate Center Drive; Raleigh, NC 27607 * Duncan-Parnell bid room.

Potential subcontracting opportunities include but are not limited to surveying, demolition, hauling, earthwork, erosion control, seeding, sodding, electrical, HVAC, roll up doors, flatwork, CIPC, concrete forms, concrete rebar, painting, plumbing, and fencing. Please contact **Tyler Sutton (tsutton@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 **Moyock Wastewater Treatment Plant Early Works Package No. 2 – Headworks Improvements project for Currituck County Water and Sewer Department** which bids on **April 13, 2026, at 5:00 PM.** Plans and specifications for this project are available at the following locations: T. A. Loving Company; 400 Patetown Road; Goldsboro, NC 27530 * Currituck County Water and Sewer Department; 444 Maple Road; Maple, NC 27956 * Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.; 532 Patterson Avenue, Suite 160; Mooresville, NC 28115.

Potential subcontracting opportunities include but are not limited to surveying, demolition, hauling, earthwork, erosion control, seeding, electrical, flatwork, CIPC, concrete forms, and concrete rebar. Please contact **Lonnie Nolen (lnolen@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

Pipeline Utilities, Inc. (NC General Contractor License No. 325) is seeking certified DBE, MBE, and WBE subcontractors and suppliers for the **Locks Creek Drainage Improvements project for the City of Fayetteville** which bids on **April 7, 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 * City of Fayetteville City Hall, 433 Hay Street, Fayetteville, NC 28301 * City of Fayetteville website: www.fayettevillenc.gov.

Potential subcontracting opportunities include but are not limited to surveying, clearing and grubbing, hauling, asphalt paving, traffic control, erosion control, seeding, sodding, bypass pumping, and flatwork. 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.



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Untold Story Of Nine Black Students—CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

nation in Mississippi's capital.

"It's a game-changing moment, certainly within Mississippi, which at one point in time had the highest lynching rate in the 20th century," Bounds says.

For the students, simply reading in the Jackson library "was an act of defiance," Bounds says. "It was an open act. Jackson had never seen anything like it."

The Tougaloo Nine have only recently had their collective story told in detail, most notably in O'Brien's book, which was released in the fall of 2025.

"It's a project that is long overdue, but he had been working on it for several years," says Chamberlain, who was one of the book's early reviewers. Through interviews and deep research, O'Brien wove together the events of March 27, 1961, and beyond. He was able to talk to all but one of the nine students, as Pierce died before O'Brien started working on the book.

The author places the Tougaloo Nine's actions in the context of state and local history. "Such a direct assault on segregation had never been tried before in Mississippi's capital city," O'Brien writes. He provides insights on the day of the sit-in, down to the weather.

That morning was cold with rain on the way.

"Lassiter remembered specifically deciding to wear a trench coat to keep off the chill and the rain, yes, but also 'to provide an extra layer of protection' against whatever beatings might come," O'Brien writes. According to O'Brien, Edwards later recalled, "I was very concerned that I dress well and that I dressed warm. That I was comfortable. That I was well protected."

As the students approached the building, the significance of their protest dawned on them. Janice Jackson remembered walking into the municipal library as a "surreal" experience. "It was like I was there doing what I was supposed to do, but I felt like I was lifted out of my body or something," she added, per O'Brien's book.

The Tougaloo Nine were determined, though, and they continued in their mission.

Evers had helped the students plan the read-in. He was "an energetic man who was committed to bringing about integration in public fa-

cilities," Jackson Jr. told OC Weekly. The protest was executed exactly as planned: The Tougaloo Nine aimed to get arrested only for breach of peace. As soon as they were placed under arrest, they got up and followed officers' instructions to avoid charges of resisting detainment.

The students' time at Tougaloo primed them all to become leaders in their own ways. After graduating, four of the nine went on to become educators. Lassiter served three decades in the Air Force. Anding pursued careers in both the military and education, enlisting in the Air Force before teaching at universities.

A tenth student who was part of the demonstration but has long been excluded from the story is Jerry Keahey. A graduating senior at the time, he was the photographer behind a frequently distributed group picture of the nine ahead of their read-in. "That's a really important role because he was able to document by way of camera what was going on at the time," Chamberlain says. Keahey also helped the students travel to the library that day. Driving in two separate cars, Mangram and Keahey dropped the students off near their destination.

The college is located "off the beaten path," Bounds says, yet it has welcomed such distinguished visitors as Langston Hughes, Martin Luther King Jr. and Stokely Carmichael.

"You cannot detach Mississippi's civil rights movement from Tougaloo," Bounds notes. "Those are two synonymous terms."

The school fostered an environment in which the Tougaloo Nine could grow into activists. Previous protests also laid the foundation for these students. One of the earliest library sit-ins took place in Alexandria, Virginia, in 1939, when a group of Black men visited a public facility that was open only to white community members. As the men picked up books and began reading, library staff called the police, who arrested them and escorted them out of the building.

In 1960, the year before the Tougaloo Nine's protest, four Black men participated in one of the most well-known sit-ins of the era—at the Woolworth's lunch counter in Greensboro, North Carolina. This protest inspired an array of similar demonstrations across the American South.

"You had sit-ins, you had read-ins, you had church-ins," Bounds says. "On the coast, you had wade-ins, because the beaches were segregated."

In an email, Kevin Strait, a curator at the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture, says, "By targeting public spaces like lunch counters and libraries, participants directly confronted the daily practice of racial exclusion and helped spark the public awareness and pressure that made desegregation possible." The Tougaloo Nine's action was "a powerful statement about access—and who gets to learn, gather and belong in our shared public spaces," he adds.

Making the public library the focus of their demonstration put a spotlight on the uneven distribution of educational resources to segregated public schools. Often, Black students received "secondhand books that are years old," Chamberlain says. Despite 1954's Brown v. Board of Education decision, which deemed segregation in American public schools unconstitutional, "states like Mississippi were rolling out desegregation as slow as they possibly could," she notes.

The books that the Tougaloo Nine picked up in the Jackson library, while obscure and selected for strategic reasons, symbolized freedom. Bradford chose Introduction to Parasitology, while Cook picked Bergey's Manual of Systematic Bacteriology—a text that "would become central to his later profession but now was a convenient foil," according to O'Brien.

Following the abolition of slavery in the United States in 1865, "one of the definitions of freedom became access to education," Chamberlain says. "As an enslaved person, you could not be learned, you could not know how to read. It was to keep people powerless and of course ignorant to the world around them, and to also keep them subservient in this status that they were born into."

It took another three years for the goals of the Tougaloo Nine's sit-in to be enshrined in federal law. The students—and the broader civil rights movement—lost a leader along the way.

In June 1963, 37-year-old Evers was murdered, shot in the back in his own driveway. Byron De La Beckwith, a known white supremacist, was convicted of the killing three decades later, in 1994. Evers had been work-

ing tirelessly right until the end: Two weeks before his death, he shepherded another Jackson sit-in that became national news. Several Tougaloo students sat at a whites-only Woolworth's lunch counter, where they were harassed and attacked by a hostile crowd.

The struggle for desegregation continued, and in July 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act, which outlawed segregation of public facilities and race-based discrimination in the U.S.

Later, in the 1980s, some members

of the Tougaloo Nine received notices that the City of Jackson had absolved them of their breach of peace violations. But they still faced difficult realities: "Some complained that the misdemeanor continued to show up on their formal criminal record for years to come," O'Brien writes.

Today, four of the Tougaloo Nine are still living: Jackson Jr., Edwards, Sawyer and Lassiter. Edwards wrote about her life in the 2011 book Back to Mississippi. Members also gathered periodically for anniversary celebrations of their sit-in.

In 2017, the state dedicated a historical marker outside the Jackson Municipal Library to the students and their groundbreaking action. The group's surviving members and their families were also honored at a local baseball game in 2022.

Back in 1961, the Jackson library's sea of books represented everything that the Tougaloo Nine were trying to achieve. Chamberlain says, "Just by being able to pick up a book and having access to that knowledge, it opened a world of opportunity for those nine young people."

Clyburn's CTA — CONT. FROM PAGE 6



repeats itself doesn't mean the result will be the same. That's why I wrote this stuff, for you to understand the dynamics...so we can build defenses." He emphasized that progress is only achieved through active participation, not just marching or protesting. Drawing an analogy to atomic energy, he argued that just as the energy from an atom is only useful when harnessed, the "energy" created

by marches and protests is only effective when channeled into a "targeted" vote. He linked this to his own experiences, stating that while he spent time in jail marching, the time that really matters is "marching into that booth" to cast a vote.

Clyburn's message was a clear call to action, urging the audience to remain vigilant, to learn from history, and to prioritize voting above all

else. His speech served as a powerful reminder that progress is not guaranteed and that the struggle for equality and democratic representation is an ongoing generational battle. As he concluded, he left the audience with a stark warning: ignore these lessons at the nation's peril, as the forces that sought to disenfranchise and oppress are still very much present and active today.



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