

African-American Cultural Festival Returns to Downtown Raleigh

The 17th annual African-American Cultural Festival was held in downtown Raleigh on Sept. 5-6, 2026, bringing thousands of visitors to Fayetteville Street for a weekend of art, music and culture. The festival began with a procession of artists from the courthouse steps to the main stage. Throughout the two-day event, attendees enjoyed performances across two stages and shopped from vendors offering arts, crafts and other goods. (READ MORE on Page 6.)



Shelton Tops Alcaraz in Marathon Match! Goes 5 Sets

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The British Are Standing On Business

By Dani Ross

Special To The Carolinian

Britain knows a thing or two about occupation. In fact, they could teach a master class on colonization. But today, Britain is standing on business when it comes to Israel's occupation of the West Bank.

The United Kingdom has announced a significant escalation in its response to Israeli settlement activity in the occupied West Bank, introducing measures aimed at restricting trade with settlements and penalizing businesses involved in their construction and expansion.

The announcement made on September 8th by Foreign Secretary Ed Miliband, who is jewish, represents one of the strongest British responses yet to Israel's settlement policy. The UK says the measures are intended to defend the possibility of a future two-state solution and to discourage economic activity that helps expand Israeli settlements in Palestinian territory.

The central measure is an import ban on goods produced in Israeli settlements in the West Bank. Britain is also introducing restrictions aimed at companies and other commercial interests involved in settlement construction and related activity.

The government has framed the policy carefully. It says the measures are directed at the settlement enterprise and the occupation rather than at Israeli citizens generally or at Israel's economy as a whole. The distinction is politically important: Britain continues to recognize Israel and says it supports the country's security while opposing policies it believes threaten Palestinian statehood.

The measures build on sanctions Britain has already imposed on individuals, organizations and networks associated with settler violence. In June, the UK joined Canada, France and Norway in imposing sanctions on entities and an individual accused of financing, enabling or carrying out violence against Palestinians in the West Bank.

But why now? Israel has been encroaching on the West Bank for almost 60 years.



According to the British government, rapid expansion of settlements has reached a point at which it risks making a negotiated Palestinian state increasingly difficult to establish.

Particular concern has focused on the proposed E1 settlement development, an area east of Jerusalem whose development could significantly disrupt territorial continuity between Palestinian communities in the West Bank. British officials feel that the project as a threat to the viability of a two-state solution.

The immediate economic effect of the British restrictions is likely to be limited. Trade involving settlements represents only a small portion of Britain's overall commercial relationship with Israel. That has led some critics to question whether the sanctions can materially change Israeli policy. Yet their political significance could be much greater.

By directly restricting trade with settlements and targeting companies involved in settlement activity,

(See ***STAND ON BIZ,*** P. 2)

Federal Court Says No Constitutional Right To Clean Water In Mississippi

Victoria Bekiempis

The Guardian

A US appellate court has decided that the federal constitution does not guarantee a right to clean water.

That legal opinion came in the form of a decision on Friday from the fifth circuit court of appeals to uphold a lower court's dismissal of a 2022 lawsuit from several Jackson, Mississippi, residents claiming that tainted drinking water violated their constitutional rights.

Those residents of Mississippi's capital city contended that their local drinking water was unsafe to drink because of high lead levels and other contaminants.

The New Orleans-based fifth circuit's majority opinion held that the residents wanted "recognition of two new constitutional rights lacking any foundation in the history and tradition of our nation" – those being "the right to be free from exposure to contaminated water and the right to accurate information from public officials".

In the majority's view, residents should have gone about their legal fight for clean water another way, such as pursuing "tort claims" or by "electing representatives who will better manage the public-water system, and petitioning their representatives for other remedies".

Tort claims allege "harms caused by others" while seeking "to impose liability on parties responsible for



the harm, and to deter others from committing harmful acts", according to Cornell University's law school.

Friday's decision also said that state and federal officials were working hard to improve the majority-Black city's drinking water. The residents who filed suit alleged that public authorities had for years failed to mitigate lead levels and failed to inform them about an increase.

"Plaintiffs have not been left to go at it alone," the court said. "The State of Mississippi and federal government have worked for years, and continue today, to improve the city of Jackson's drinking water quality through regulations, investigations, and compliance plans."

Meanwhile, the opinion also said: "It is undisputed that the Constitution does not guarantee clean water."

The opinion also held that a state does not have a constitutional duty "to provide substantive services for those within its border absent a special relationship". And municipalities are not constitutionally obligated to provide sewerage, water treatment or waste management services "in a reasonably competent fashion", the decision said.

The decision nonetheless said that the majority of the court recognized the allegations of "serious government misfeasance" and was "sympathetic to the injuries [the plaintiffs] may suffer as a result". But, the court's ruling said "our sympathies cannot be the basis" for converting tort claims into constitutional issues.

"These deprivations, while grievous, do not infringe upon any deeply rooted constitutional right," the fifth circuit's opinion said.

Attorneys for the plaintiffs could not immediately be reached for comment. John Horhn, the Jackson mayor, said in a statement: "We are pleased that the fifth circuit upheld the dismissal of these claims.

"The City remains committed to the health, safety, and well-being of every Jackson resident."

Jackson residents say that they have long reeled from water crises.

The NAACP filed a complaint in September 2022 alleging that Mississippi state authorities violated civil rights law by repeatedly sending federal money earmarked for drinking water safety to white communities rather than Jackson. Such diversion of funds constituted racial discrimination, the complaint said.

"The result is persistently unsafe and unreliable drinking water and massive gaps in the access to safe drinking water that are intolerable in any modern society," Jackson residents said in a complaint to the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). "Nearly all of the residents of Jackson have watched brackish, dirty, impure, and undrinkable water trickle from their taps. At times, some have had no water at all."

The NAACP's Jackson branch sued over the diversion of these funds in August 2025. The suit against several Mississippi state officials alleged that they "intentionally deprived [Jackson] residents ... of access to federal relief funds ... which were promised to Jackson in order to address the water infrastructure crisis".

The lawsuit asked for a judge to declare that this diversion of money "is both facially discriminatory and the result of discriminatory purpose" – and to bar officials from permanently siphoning that money away from Jackson.



JUDGE CLEARS A LAWSUIT AGAINST KYRSTEN SINEMA UNDER NORTH CAROLINA'S 'HOMEWRECKER' LAW

(AP) — Former U.S. Sen. Kyrsten Sinema can be sued under North Carolina's homewrecker law over her relationship with a member of her security detail, a judge ruled Friday.

Sinema has acknowledged having a romantic relationship with Matthew Ammel but argued that she can't be sued in North Carolina because she has no connection to the state.

U.S. District Judge David A. Bragdon rejected that argument, saying nine text messages she sent Ammel while he was in the state give North Carolina jurisdiction over her. He found it implausible that she was unaware of Ammel's whereabouts when she texted him.

Sinema's lawyer, Steven Epstein, did not immediately respond to an email seeking comment.

NC LOTTERY SALES UP, BUT LESS IS GOING TO SCHOOLS

NCNewsline — North Carolina's lottery is selling more tickets than ever – but it's putting less of the money it makes into schools, says Auditor Dave Boliek.

A new audit found that gross ticket sales for the state's Education Lottery rose from $4.3 billion in FY 2023 to $6.6 billion in FY 2025. But the percentage of that money that went to public education fell each year from 23% in 2023, 20% in 2024, and just 16% in 2025.

Growth in gross ticket sales increased an impressive 51% over two years. Yet the annual transfers to the education fund essentially remained flat, increasing from $1.02 billion in FY 2023 to $1.09 billion in FY 2024, and dipping to $1.08 billion for FY 2025.

A key factor in the declining proceeds is the rise of digital instant games, which entice players by paying out more often than traditional lottery tickets. Because of that, the lottery's net profit on digital instants is lower.

"Digital instant games are designed to have a payout rate of approximately 87%," wrote Boliek in the report. "They have gone from generating zero dollars in sales in FY 2023, to $2.60 billion in sales in FY 2025, which represented approximately 40% of total lottery sales that fiscal year."

During the same time period, scratch-off tickets and the draw games saw a decrease in sales. And that's a trend that seems to be continuing.

Greg Bowers, the lottery's chief financial officer, told the North Carolina Lottery Commission in late June that digital instant sales saw a 22% increase in the first 11 months of the fiscal year compared to 2025. However, scratch-off sales dipped by about 3% for the year. As for those multi-state jackpot games, those are more unpredictable: consumers are not always motivated to play until the jackpot reaches a certain level.

Bowers said sales of scratch-offs and digital instants are projected to increase by 6.39% in 2027.

But the issue for Boliek is not whether people are buying more tickets or playing more often. It's whether the lottery is meeting its statutory obligation to provide school funding – and he says it's not.

NC CRIME DROPPED SHARPLY OVERALL IN 2026, STATE CRIME COMMISSION FINDS\

By Jordan Meadows

Staff Writer

Crime fell across all four major categories tracked by the NC Department of Public Safety during the first six months of 2026, compared with the same period in 2025, according to a new report presented at the Governor's Crime Commission meeting on Thursday morning in Raleigh.

The DPS report found property crime fell 11.9%, the steepest decline of the four categories tracked, followed by violent crime down 5.8%, drug crime down 3.2% and financial crime down 2.1%.

Within violent crime, murder fell 12.4%, robbery declined 17.7%, aggravated assault dropped 3.1%, and rape and sexual assault fell 5%. Firearm homicides specifically fell 14.1% and other firearm-related crimes fell 8%, though weapons violations rose 2.1%.

Within property crime, motor vehicle theft dropped 22.6%, burglary fell 14.2%, and larceny and theft declined 9.8%; financial crime saw counterfeiting and forgery fall 25.2%, extortion and blackmail decline 15.6%, embezzlement drop 7%, and fraud edge down 0.3%. Drug crime split into equipment

(See ***STATE BRIEFS,*** P. 2)

Hunger Crisis Widens In NC As Food Banks Face More Demand, Federal

NC NEWSLINE - On a steamy September morning, all of North Carolina's agricultural bounty is on display at the State Farmers Market in Raleigh. The boxes and crates of neatly stacked fruits and vegetables stand in stark contrast to new data that reveals a worsening hunger crisis in North Carolina.

According to Feeding America's annual Map the Meal Gap analysis, 1 in 7 North Carolinians are unsure where their next meal will come from. That compares to 1 in 9 individuals in 2021.

"There are now close to 630,000 people in the 34 counties our food bank serves who are food insecure, meaning they don't have the resources to consistently keep food on the table," said Amy Beros, president of the Food Bank of Central and Easten North Carolina.

Beros told reporters this week that nearly 180,000 more people are facing food hardship than at the height of the COVID pandemic in 2021. She said they are calling attention to the increase during September, which is Hunger Action Month.



Farmers, community allies, and supporters have all been working to increase the supply of food at local pantries, but Beros said federal funding cuts and eligibility changes are taking their toll.

Rising food prices have also forced consumers to stretch their budgets or make do with less. According to the USDA, grocery prices have gone up 2.7% on average in the past year, with some items like ground beef up 10% to 18%.

"Across the more than 700 local pantries, meal and food distribution sites, many partners have been reporting to us increases in visits ranging from 20% to 60%," said Beros.

Demand is breaking records across the state. Community of Hope Ministries in Garner recently served 597 households in a single month. At the coast, Martha's Mission served 4,400 families in Morehead City over the past year. At Feed Your Neighbor in Greenville, more than 700 households now rely on the community pantry to put food on the table.

Beros highlighted the local organizations this week as she warned that the demands on the largely volunteer pantries are not sustainable.

More hungry children, fewer choices for families

Children are disproportionately likely to be hungry. Statewide, 21.5% of North Carolina's children face food insecurity, meaning that more than one in five kids and teens are worried about their next meal. Experts estimate 57,000 more children are facing hunger than in 2021.

And that hunger is not experienced equally.

Nearly one in three Black households and nearly one in four Latino households face food insecurity. That's two to three times the rate of

(See ***NC HUNGER CRISIS,*** P. 7)

Black UNC Students Demand Answers After Racial Harassment

By Dominique Heath
Columnist

CHAPEL HILL, N.C. — What was supposed to be a simple Monday night watch party for Black students at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill quickly turned into something much more frightening after a man with no affiliation to the university allegedly entered a locked campus building, yelled racial slurs and caused students to fear he may have had a weapon.

Now, students and parents want answers.

The incident happened inside Greenlaw Hall, where students had gathered to watch the Season 8 reunion of Love Island. The event was organized by several campus groups, including the African Student Association, UNC Black Student Movement, HBUNC Media Group and Sis2Sis.

According to UNC, campus police received the first report of a person harassing and threatening students around 9:21 p.m. Monday.

The man has since been identified as 45-year-old Keegan Carlisle Wilson of Raleigh. UNC said Wilson has no current affiliation with the university.

Students who were there said the situation became terrifying very quickly.

First-year student Zion Jones told several news organizations that the man began yelling racial slurs before reaching toward his waist. Not knowing what he was reaching for, students feared he could be pulling out a gun and some dropped to the floor or hid for cover.

Jones later said she realized he appeared to be holding an aerosol can and a lighter.

Videos shared from the scene showed a man behaving erratically outside Greenlaw Hall, including holding a lighter and aerosol can. Students eventually fled the building or found another way to get away from the situation.

Wilson was later taken into custody and transported to a hospital after university officials said he exhibited signs of mental distress.

But his detainment did not answer what has become one of the biggest questions surrounding the incident: How did he get into Greenlaw Hall at all?

UNC said the building had been locked since 7 p.m. Monday. Students attending the watch party also told WRAL they had to be let into the building because the doors were locked.

If students needed someone inside to open the door for them, they want to know how a man with no apparent connection to the university was able to make his way into the same building and eventually into their event.

The question is especially important to the student organizations that planned the event.

These groups intentionally create spaces where Black students and other students of color can gather, relax and build community on a predominantly white campus. Instead, students who came together for an ordinary watch party found themselves hiding, running from a building and wondering whether a stranger confronting them had a weapon.



The African Student Association said in a statement that its organizations work hard to create spaces where students can gather and feel safe and respected.

UNC's Black Student Movement also condemned the incident and offered its support to students who were present, saying no student should have to experience racism, intimidation or fear in a space meant for community.

The amount of time it took police to respond has become another point of concern.

UNC initially said 17 minutes passed between the first 911 call and Wilson being taken into custody. The university later said he was apprehended approximately 15 minutes after officers were dispatched.

To students who were inside the building and believed there was a possibility that the man was armed, those minutes mattered.

Jones upon learning the response time was rightfully frustrated, "17 minutes? That's unbelievable."

There are also questions about why the broader UNC community was never warned about what was happening.

The university did not issue an Alert Carolina notification during the incident.

Alert Carolina is UNC's emergency communication system used to inform the campus about certain emergencies and threats. UNC said an alert was not sent because there was no longer an ongoing threat to campus safety after Wilson was detained.

That explanation may follow the university's emergency notification standards, but it does not erase the concern of students who were inside Greenlaw Hall while the situation was still unfolding.

They did not know whether the man had a gun. They did not know why he was reaching toward his waist. They did not know whether the danger was limited to their room or whether other students could encounter him.

For them, the threat was very real in that moment.

UNC Student Body President Devin Duncan said university police have been responsive while acknowledging that students still have questions that need to be answered.

University officials have also directed students affected by the incident to Counseling and Psychological Services, Student Wellness, the Heels Care Network and other campus support and reporting resources.

Wilson is expected to face charges of disorderly conduct, vandalism, damage to property and aggravated assault once he is medically cleared, according to UNC. The university has also said he will be banned from returning to campus.

Because students reported that racial slurs were directed toward the predominantly Black and Brown gathering, there are also questions about whether the incident could result in additional charges. UNC said the Orange County District Attorney's Office will ultimately determine whether further charges are appropriate.

The incident has already gained attention outside the university.

U.S. Rep. Valerie Foushee, whose 4th Congressional District includes UNC-Chapel Hill, condemned the harassment Wednesday and called on the university to take the concerns of students seriously.

"No one in our society should ever face harassment, intimidation, or discrimination in school or anywhere else," Foushee said.

She also said UNC has a responsibility to protect its students and ensure that everyone on campus is treated with dignity and respect.

That responsibility is ultimately at the center of what students are asking for now.

Black students should not have to organize an ordinary campus event while also wondering whether the room they are gathering in is secure. They should not have to flee that space because someone entered yelling racial slurs. And after something like this does happen, they should not have to fight simply to understand how it was allowed to happen in the first place.

The National Society of Black Engineers and other student groups have said they are working with the university to determine how Wilson entered Greenlaw Hall and what additional protections may be needed for future events.

For students, that answer matters.

STATE BRIEFS

Continued from page 1

violations, down 3.7%, and drug and narcotic violations, down 2.9%.

At least 60 people have been arrested in connection with 31 of the incidents tracked in the report. However, officials cautioned that figure understates the case-closure rate, since it doesn't capture offenders who died before arrest, cases where prosecution was declined, suspects held in another state or country, or incidents involving offender suicide.

Two categories bucked the overall downward trend: Kidnapping and abduction offenses, which include detaining a person against their will, rose 4.6%, and intimidation offenses, which include stalking, rose 8.2%. Women made up 58% of intimidation victims and 79% of kidnapping and abduction victims so far this year; most of the kidnapping offenses were committed by intimate partners, with another 42% committed by someone known to the victim outside their family.

Officials said together the two trends suggest intimate partner violence and stalking-related threats may be rising even as violent crime overall declines.

A separate Major Chiefs Cities Association report found crime broadly down in both Raleigh and Charlotte, though robbery and aggravated assault both rose in Raleigh compared with the same period last year. Charlotte, meanwhile, ranked among the nation's top cities for property crime in 2025 despite a 5% decline from 2024.

Caroline Farmer, executive director of the Governor's Crime Commission, said the data would help guide state resources.

"These insights will help our law enforcement agencies understand where we are seeing success and where emerging needs are developing," Farmer said in a statement. "Strong trend information allows us to respond more effectively, support victims, and ensure resources are committed to the right initiatives."

CITY OF RALEIGH - DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT TO HUD AVAILABLE FOR COMMENT

The City of Raleigh's draft Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) for the period July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026, is available for public comment from September 9 through September 25, 2026. The report summarizes how the City used federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME), and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds, along with other federal and local resources, to carry out its housing and community development programs during that period.

The draft CAPER is available at raleighnc.gov/housing, by email, and in person at the Housing and Community Development Department, 421 Fayetteville Street, Suite 1200, Raleigh, NC 27601, during normal business hours by appointment. To request a copy or make an appointment to view, call (919) 996-4330.

Written comments will be accepted through September 25, 2026, and may be sent to housing@raleighnc.gov or to the Housing and Community Development Department, P.O. Box 590, Raleigh, NC 27602. A summary of all comments received will be included with the CAPER submitted to HUD.

Accommodations for residents with disabilities and residents who speak languages other than English are available upon request. The City offers interpreter services, including American Sign Language, at no cost. Requests should be made at least 24 hours in advance by calling (919) 996-3100 (voice) or (919) 996-3107 (TDD).

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Why 9/11 Lands Differently 25 Years Later

NEW YORK (AP) — When the planes crashed and the buildings fell on that sunny September morning 25 years ago, the shock waves of dismay and grief went far past downtown New York City, rural western Pennsylvania and just outside Washington, D.C.

They radiated through every part of the United States in communities large and small, tearing at Americans' sense of safety and their place in the world. Hearts were broken across the nation, not just of those who lost their loved ones but among strangers who mourned for them, the Sept. 11 attacks leaving no one unaffected in an unwanted moment of horrifying togetherness.

A quarter of a century later, the effects linger. We all live in a post-9/11 world, with its security strictures and surveillance. But here's the thing: Americans don't all live in the SAME one. What the attacks and their aftermath have come to mean isn't a single viewpoint shared by everyone, for reasons chronological, political and personal.

It's a tapestry of meaning and grief as varied as the nation in which 9/11 took place.



So many things affect our understanding

It's somewhat inevitable. After all, the mere passage of time means tens of millions of young Americans have been born since then. For them, 9/11 is something to learn about in history lessons.

But people's views of 9/11 and its aftermath have also been shaped by human factors like policies and actions taken by those in power. And the America that was attacked was already a nation with its own history and tensions, with stress points of dispute and disagreement put under additional strain by the catastrophic event.

"The same event, whether it's a disaster or a shock or even the recovery process is completely different depending on your network," says Daniel Aldrich, a professor at Northeastern University who studies communities and resilience.

Those networks can exist in a range of ways and layers. Among them: those who lost loved ones; those who spent months clearing the rubble and debris from ground zero; those who were motivated to join the military; those who lost jobs in hard-hit industries like tourism and air transportation; those who came from certain countries and communities viewed with heightened suspicion after the attacks.

Different networks overlap in Jenna McPartland's family. She was expecting her first child with her husband, Ariel Jacobs, who was killed at the World Trade Center. She gave birth days later to their son, Gabriel, whose life was irrevocably altered by an event he didn't experience.

In the years since, McPartland remarried twice, had two younger sons with no biological tie to their older brother's dad and has been a stepmom to two teenagers for the last decade. Even as she added new chapters to her life, she made sure Gabi was connected to his father's family, and that her younger sons also knew that Sept. 11 was part of their larger family story.

"My middle boy wrote his college entrance essay on being the child of a 9/11 family, but not being the 9/11 kid. And how he wouldn't exist had his brother's dad not died," says McPartland, 52, a chef and restaurant owner in Fairfield, Connecticut. "They all acknowledge it in different ways, they feel it in different ways, they sense it in their lives in different ways."

Varied events play a role in the impact on people

Also playing a role in the impact,

(See ***9/11 - 25 YEARS LATER,*** P. 3)

Standing On Business—*CONT'D FROM PG 1*

Britain is moving beyond previous warnings and targeted sanctions against individual settlers. It is effectively telling businesses that involvement in settlement expansion can carry consequences in the British market.

The decision also creates a potential precedent for other governments. France, Canada and a number of other countries have announced or supported similar measures, increasing the possibility of a broader international effort to distinguish between Israel's internationally recognized territory and economic activity connected to settlements in the occupied West Bank.

Of course Israel has condemned the British measures, arguing that foreign governments are interfering in its domestic affairs.

The response has already extended beyond diplomatic criticism. Israel has announced plans to close the British consulate in East Jerusalem and to restrict several British officials from entering the country. The move represents a sharp deterioration in relations between the two governments.

Israeli officials reject the characterization of the West Bank settlements as simply an illegal colonial enterprise and maintain their own claims concerning the territory. The British government, by contrast, maintains that the settlements violate international law and undermine the prospects for a negotiated Palestinian state.

Britain's decision reflects a broader transformation in the international debate over Israel and the Palestinian territories.

For years, many Western governments opposed settlement expansion diplomatically while maintaining extensive economic relations with Israel. The new measures suggest that some governments are increasingly prepared to attach economic consequences to settlement activity.

That does not amount to a general British boycott of Israel. The focus is specifically on settlements and businesses connected with settlement activity. Nevertheless, the distinction may become increasingly difficult for companies to navigate if their operations, financing or supply chains span both Israel and the occupied territories.

For the British government, the argument is ultimately about whether the possibility of a two-state settlement can still be preserved.

For Palestinians and their supporters, the sanctions represent a long-overdue attempt to impose consequences on an occupation that has continued for decades. For Israel and its supporters, however, they risk being seen as an unjustified attempt by foreign governments to dictate the country's future.

The Poorest In The US Can't Find Housing Even As Low-Income Units Sit Unoccupied

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — Mathew Davis, who lives in a homeless shelter in Austin, Texas, would love an apartment of his own. But with the little money he makes donating blood plasma, even a $450-a-month tiny home with no running water and a communal bathroom would be a stretch.

Meanwhile, over 4,500 units the city classifies as affordable — nearly 16% — sit empty.

"I don't make enough money really to afford anything," Davis, 49, said of the few hundred dollars he earns a month. "I just keep trying to swim uphill."

The poorest people in the U.S. face the most acute shortages of affordable homes. But the majority of low-income housing financed in recent years is for those earning 50% of an area's median income or above, according to a survey of state housing agencies.

Some cities are now seeing an uptick in vacancies as rents for these units approach market rates. The result: Apartments designated as affordable sit empty because the poorest of the poor cannot afford them.

Meanwhile, some people are forced into homelessness and others into desperate circumstances to pay for housing they can't afford.

The poorest have few housing options

There are only about 4 million affordable rental units available for the country's 11 million extremely low-income renter households, according to the National Low Income Housing Coalition's most recent annual report.

These are people with annual incomes either below the federal poverty guidelines — just under $16,000 for a single-person household — or 30% of the median income in their area, whichever is higher. They comprise about a quarter of U.S. renter households, and include many people working low-wage jobs, seniors and those with disabilities living on fixed incomes.

About three-quarters of extremely low-income renter households pay over half their income on rent and utilities, the report said, leaving little leftover for other necessities.

Yet homes set aside for these renters were only about 12% of the affordable housing units financed in 2024 by the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit — a federal program providing tax credits to developers in exchange for keeping rents low for at least 30 years, according to figures from the National Council of State Housing Agencies.

The majority are for those earning at least 50% of an area's median income, or AMI. In Austin, that's a single person earning roughly $47,000 a year, as compared with an extremely low-income person earning under $28,000.

The program has financed nearly 4 million affordable units nationwide since its creation 40 years ago. But some experts say it's inefficient — and more costly than housing vouchers.

"It's enormously complex and bureaucratic, and it raises the cost of construction enormously because the rules are so complicated," said Chris Edwards, an economist at the Cato Institute, a libertarian think tank, who told Congress the program's complexity "spawned" an industry of law and accounting firms just to administer it.

"If you're going to subsidize affordable housing, you should give the money directly to tenants," he said, referring to housing vouchers.

Other experts say the two programs work together well because properties built with the tax credit are required to accept vouchers — while landlords of market-rate apartments in many states are not.

Still, there's a major federal funding shortfall: Experts estimate only one-in-four eligible families ever receive vouchers. Vouchers can help the poorest pay for housing that's targeted to higher income groups, but the waitlist can be yearslong.

Some affordable housing developers say that without vouchers, it's not economically feasible to provide units for

(See ***LOW INCOME UNITS,*** P. 4)

Business & Finance

NC Ranks Best For Business Economy, Dead Last For Workers

NC NEWSLINE - North Carolina is consistently ranked among America's top states for business. But a new ranking by Oxfam lists the state dead last in this year's 2026 Best States to Work Index.

Oxfam, a global nonprofit focused on poverty and inequality, examined 37 policies including wages, worker protections, and the right to organize to determine which states do the best job of supporting workers in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

"This year, while workers are facing extraordinary economic hardship, we looked at how far wages go toward the cost of living for a family of four," said Patricia Stottlemyer, Oxfam America's policy director. "In North Carolina, the minimum wage of $7.25 only meets 19% of the cost of living."



Because women and workers of color are overrepresented in low-wage jobs, raising the minimum wage would help millions of workers, according to Oxfam.

Stottlemyer notes that North Carolina has not raised its minimum wage since 2009, while neighboring Virginia raised its hourly minimum wage to $12.77 per hour this year and passed legislation to increase the minimum wage to $13.75 per hour January 1, 2027.

Republican state lawmakers have resisted raising the state's minimum wage because they say very few people actually work for minimum wage anymore. They say the current demand for labor has driven pay higher. But advocates say that's not true for every job market, especially in rural areas with few job opportunities.

Alex Campbell, a policy analyst with the North Carolina Budget & Tax Center, said raising the minimum wage substantially could boost average annual pay for over 1.5 million working North Carolinians.

"If we increased the minimum wage to two-thirds of the national median wage, that would provide an average annual pay increase of $6,100 for North Carolinians, and it would benefit a third of our workforce," Campbell told NC Newsline.

Stottlemyer said North Carolina also comes up short when it comes to policies like requiring paid family and medical leave, paid sick leave, protections for domestic workers, and caregiver discrimination protections. The Oxfam index says North Carolina's "right-to-work" laws prevent employees from forming unions to negotiate higher wages and better benefits.

Affordability crisis for workers

On Wednesday, the N.C Budget & Tax Center co-hosted an online public hearing to discuss the affordability crisis and how it's affecting low- and middle-income workers.

Caroline Hakel is a public school educator who moved to Henderson County after earning her teaching degree in Ohio. Hakel said unlike the Buckeye State, teachers here cannot collectively bargain for better wages and working conditions.

"I'm a single teacher and I've struggled to find affordable housing. Rental prices continue to rise and buying a house feels like a pipe dream," said Hakel.

Fair-market rent for a one-bedroom apartment in Henderson County is $1,429 per month, leaving her cost-burdened on her teacher's salary.

Hakel said she'd like to see state lawmakers restore master's pay and consider funding childcare for teachers. She said while the raise that came in July's state budget was welcome, veteran teachers were left behind.

"This should be embarrassing that this is what is considered significant," said Hakel.

In neighboring Transylvania County, KC Collins, a member of the Worker & Living Wage Coalition, is working two jobs to make ends meet. The county's economy is largely dependent on tourism centered around nearby state and national forests.

"The focus on tourism as the key to our local economy has led to incredibly seasonal income and financial uncertainty for workers, especially after Hurricane Helene," said Collins.

Collins said living in a state that is number one for businesses means nothing if it is also last in conditions for workers.

She also said affordable housing is a chief concern.Like many of her peers, she lives with roommates to make rent more affordable.

In Durham, Ieisha Francis works as a Certified Nursing Assistant in an assisted living facility. Over the past decade she's noticed more apartments and houses being built, but fewer workers can afford them.

"There are people in Durham that are homeless, that sleep in their cars, that have to pay for hotels to stay in or have to stay with family members," Francis said. "How is this even possible when they are working?"

The average annual pay for a CNA in Durham County is just under $38,000 annually, according to ZipRecruiter. But Francis said she's increasingly juggling soaring utility costs and rising grocery prices.

"It's not just me that I'm feeding. I have four grandchildren. So I have to also make sure that they're fed as well," said Francis. "It's a real struggle."

The struggle to make ends meet is beginning to affect the state's business ratings, too.

In July's CNBC ranking of "America's Top States for Business" North Carolina's rating for quality-of-life, based on key metrics like affordability, childcare, and safeguards against discrimination,was substantially lower than in 2025.

Stottlemyer is urging North Carolina policymakers to look at the places that top this year's Oxfam index — California, the District of Columbia, New York, Illinois, and Oregon.

"These labor policies we track are key levers in addressing the affordability crisis," said Stottlemyer.

Business Is Booming In North Carolina. Here's Why The Trend Could Continue

WUNC - When Austin Rouse thinks of a 10-second business pitch for North Carolina, it boils down to one word: Workforce.

"That's a real differentiator for us, when talking with companies," said Rouse, the director of business recruitment at the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina (EDPNC). "Whatever type of talent you need, we most often have a place that can serve that."

The Tar Heel State is one of the fastest-growing states in the U.S., projected to reach 11.7 million people by 2030. And business is booming.

In 2025, CNBC named North Carolina the top state for business for the third time in the past four years. The EDPNC reported 72 project wins for business recruitment and new facility projects last year, announcing more than 28,500 jobs and $21.7 billion in capital investment.

In the Triangle alone, massive developments are underway from an 8,500-acre mixed-use project in Chatham County to Holly Springs' Genentech plant, projected to add $3 billion to the state's economy.

North Carolina's success is in part due to its excellent business climate, Rouse said, fostering great community partnerships between identified sites and local municipalities. The state's diversity offers competitive resources and communities, from the mountains to the Piedmont to the coast. All of these contribute to a strong state-wide talent pipeline.

"Whatever your needs are, as it relates to talent, we typically can find a good fit for companies to align those needs with a place in our state that is already doing successfully what a company is trying to embark on," Rouse said.

This is especially true in the biotechnology and pharmaceutical industries, which are seeing rapid growth. According to the North Carolina Biotechnology Center, the state secured nearly $4 billion in life sciences investment across 18 companies during 2025. Those projects are expected to create 1,380 jobs in 10 communities.

The state's emphasis on retaining talent and creating "highly educated workers," especially in the Triangle, has made it a hotbed for biotech and pharma growth. Importantly for the Triangle, Rouse said, many people who graduate from universities in the area want to stay there, creating a strong foundation for attracting companies.

The EDPNC has seen an increasing interest in North Carolina in the past five to 10 years, Rouse said. He said the state's mixture of ambition and execution has been a recipe for success.

"It's a very positive story that we have in North Carolina, and we've seen it for a prolonged period of time," Rouse said. "I think we'll continue to see companies that are deeply interested in the state, and we're just hoping that we continue to find good real estate options for them to consider."

9/11, Twenty-Five Years Later—*CONT'D FROM PG 2*

and even grief, caused by 9/11: choices that were made after the attacks by the U.S. government like the restructuring of government agencies and the creation of the Department of Homeland Security, along with foreign policy decisions like the invasion of Afghanistan.

Immigration had already been a contentious issue before the attack: Who should be allowed to come? Who could stay? What did it mean to be American, and who could claim it? After Sept. 11, it took on another dimension of added fear and suspicion. And much of it fell on people of Muslim faith or coming from Muslim-majority parts of the world.

For example, in 2002, the federal government implemented the National Security Entry-Exit Registration System, which required non-U.S. citizen males over 16 from 25 countries, almost all of them Muslim-majority, to register at certain ports of entry or at immigration offices if they were already in the country. Critics condemned it as racial and religious profiling, and it was dismantled in the following decade.

"The idea that there's this outside threat in the form of people who look like this or from particular countries really fueled the reorganization of the Department of Homeland Security and has continued to fuel the ways in which we've funded and contributed to the securitization of our immigration system and society more broadly," says Jayesh Rathod, a professor at Georgetown Law.

That lingers in the existence of the Transportation Security Administration and the general hardening of security measures in society overall.



The Pullman Porters and the Creation of Labour Day: Navigating Opportunity and Oppression

By Jordan Meadows

Staff Writer



American engineer George Pullman began hiring formerly enslaved Black men as porters on his company's luxury sleeping cars shortly after the Civil War. Pullman founded the Pullman Palace Car Company to capitalize on the country's expanding rail network, introducing "Palace Cars"—dubbed "hotels on wheels"—outfitted with beds, chandeliers and high-end dining that let passengers socialize in lounge cars, eat in dining cars and rest comfortably in sleeping berths.

The first Pullman porters began working the trains around 1867, and Pullman was open about why he specifically recruited formerly enslaved men for the job: he believed they would be, in his words, "fully acclimated to servitude, eager to please and unlikely to protest low wages or long hours".

The arrangement became so identified with Pullman personally that a phrase circulated at the time: "Abe Lincoln freed the slaves, and George Pullman hired 'em."

Pullman wanted white passengers to regard porters as part of the train's furnishings rather than as people, and porters were expected to perform an extensive range of duties—carrying baggage, shining shoes, making up berths, serving food and drink, providing security, and in some cases singing or dancing for customers. Passengers routinely called every Black porter "George," regardless of his actual name, a direct continuation of the plantation-era practice of referring to enslaved people by their enslaver's name; other passengers used the term "boy."

Struggling to maintain profitability during an 1894 downturn in manufacturing demand, Pullman halved wages, but did not lower prices of rents and goods in his company town. He gained presidential support from Grover Cleveland for the use of federal military troops, which left 30 strikers dead in the violent suppression of workers there to end the Pullman Strike of 1894. To appease voters and mend ties with the labor movement during an election year, Congress rushed through a bill to make Labor Day a legal national holiday.

Later, in the 1920s, a group of wealthy white men who all happened to be named George formed a tongue-in-cheek organization called the Society for the Prevention of Calling Sleeping Car Porters George, begun largely because its members didn't want their own names associated with servile labor. The group's roughly 31,000 members ultimately pressured the Pullman Company into installing nameplates in the cars so passengers could address porters by their real names.

Porters were required to work at least 400 hours or 11,000 miles a month, whichever came first, to receive their full monthly pay, which sometimes meant shifts as long as 20 hours with only a few hours of rest in between. They were paid less than nearly any other position at the company and depended heavily on tips to make a living wage. Porters also had to cover their own meals, perform unpaid preparation and cleanup work, and purchase their own uniforms, all while enduring persistent racism from passengers and colleagues alike.

Despite the conditions, the job became highly coveted within Black communities because it offered rare access to steady cash income, and by the 1920s, the Pullman Company employed 20,224 African Americans as porters and train personnel, making it the largest single category of Black labor in the United States and Canada at the time. That steady income gave porters something few Black workers in the Jim Crow South had: geographic mobility, and they used it to help ignite the Great Migration. Because porters traveled continuously between the Jim Crow South and booming Northern industrial cities such as Chicago, New York and Detroit, they effectively became a moving communications network for Black America.

Porters formed a working alliance from 1914 to 1939 with five major Black newspapers, smuggling bundles of those papers into the Deep South, where they carried news of manufacturing jobs, better schools, and life beyond state-sanctioned terror that helped drive millions of Black Southerners north. Porters also used their earnings to buy property in Northern cities, creating safe landing places and offering temporary housing and financial help to relatives and neighbors fleeing the South.

Despite the scale of their workforce, Pullman porters were largely absent from the 1894 Pullman Strike. The American Railway Union, led by Eugene V. Debs, backed the strike with a national boycott, but the union historically excluded or failed to welcome Black workers into its ranks.

It would take more than three decades for porters to organize on their own terms.

In August 1925, A. Philip Randolph was elected president of the newly formed Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, the first all-Black labor union in the United States; the union also included Pullman's female maids, who worked alongside porters and were additionally required to look after white children traveling on the trains. The union initially faced resistance not only from the Pullman Company but from porters themselves, who feared losing their jobs, and from some members of the Black community who viewed George Pullman as providing rare employment to formerly enslaved people.

The Brotherhood became the first Black labor organization admitted to the American Federation of Labor in 1935. After 12 years of resistance, the Pullman Company finally signed a labor agreement with the Brotherhood in April 1937, raising wages and capping working hours at 240 a month—a landmark contract that made the Brotherhood the first African American union to reach a collective bargaining agreement with a major U.S. corporation.

Former Pullman porter E.D. Nixon went on to organize the Montgomery Bus Boycott, carrying the Brotherhood's decades of institutional experience directly into the next chapter of the fight for civil rights.

LOW INCOME UNITS

Continued from page 2

extremely low-income people.

True Ground Housing Partners, an affordable housing developer in the Washington, D.C., area, gives an example: A unit for those earning 60% of the area's median income — nearly $70,000 a year — brings in $1,715 per month in rent. But after $1,575 in mortgage and operating expenses, only $140 is left.

"The math does not lie," said president and CEO Carmen Romero, noting that an extremely low-income person would pay only half that rent.

"Our expenses don't make it really possible to create a 30% AMI unit, unless there was this extraordinary amount of subsidy that just doesn't exist."

Affordable housing competes with market-rate rents

Meanwhile, affordable housing rents for 60% AMI units are approaching those of market-rate apartments in U.S. cities like Austin, Denver and Portland, Oregon.

As a result, some people are opting to pay a bit more for market-rate apartments with less income-verification and faster approval — leaving growing numbers of affordable units vacant.

In Austin, the vacancy rate for all affordable housing is nearly 16% with over 4,500 vacant units, according to real estate data and analytics firm CoStar. A healthy vacancy rate is around 5%.

LDG Development, an affordable housing developer, cited a 12% vacancy rate for its 60% AMI units in Austin. Chief portfolio officer Rebekah Fischer said LDG is "in direct competition" with the thousands of new market-rate apartments recently built in Austin.

"I have to have every bank statement, every pay check, every bill, every Venmo transaction that you had with your friends," Fischer said of affordable housing applicants.

"When we're almost going after the same renter, you can be approved within two minutes at a market-rate deal, where unfortunately in affordable housing ... it takes time."

In Denver, there's a 13% vacancy rate among 60% AMI units financed by the federal tax credit program — and a 21% vacancy rate for 80% AMI units, according to the Colorado Housing and Finance Authority. Meanwhile, there is far too little housing for the city's poorest.

In Portland, where there is also a housing shortage for the lowest income groups, there are over 1,700 vacant affordable units for an overall vacancy rate of 7.5%, according to the Portland Housing Bureau. Most are for those earning 60% AMI, or about $54,000 for a single-person household, with rent capped at $1,444 per month.

That's close to the average rent of $1,581 for a one-bedroom market-rate apartment, according to CoStar figures shared by the bureau.

Portland resident Jaiden Barbee earns around 55% of the area median income and is on waitlists for affordable housing. But, he says, he'd pay more for a market-rate apartment to avoid the lengthy application process.

"I'd rather spend the $200 extra just to get into a place easier that's wherever I want" and doesn't have "all these hoops," he said.

'I want to shut the door at night and sleep'

Austin officials set a goal of building 20,000 units between 2018 and 2027 for extremely low-income people — 17% of the city's households.

Just 543 were built as of 2024, city documents show.

Meanwhile, all 15,000 units planned for those earning between 60% and 80% of area median income were built.

In response to questions from The Associated Press, the Austin housing department said it recognized the need to do more to produce housing for the poorest people and was taking steps to do that, including giving preference to funding proposals that include 30% AMI units.

For Davis, who lived in his car for a year before getting a bed in the Austin shelter, the housing shortage for people like him is frustrating.



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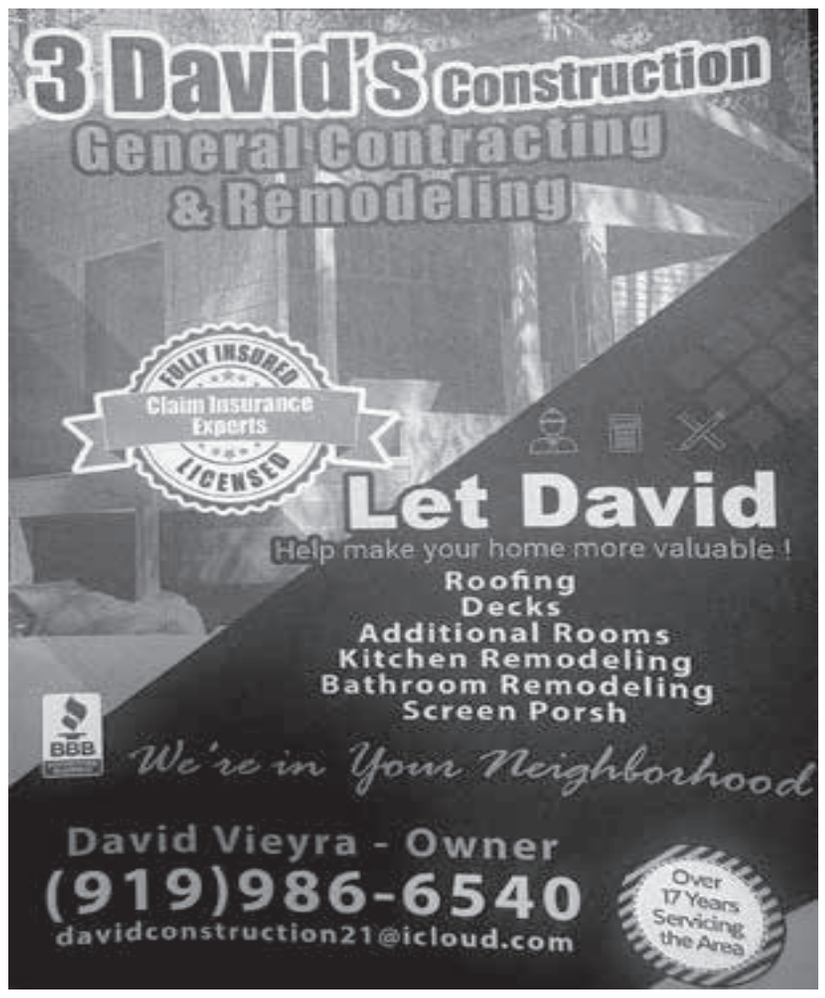
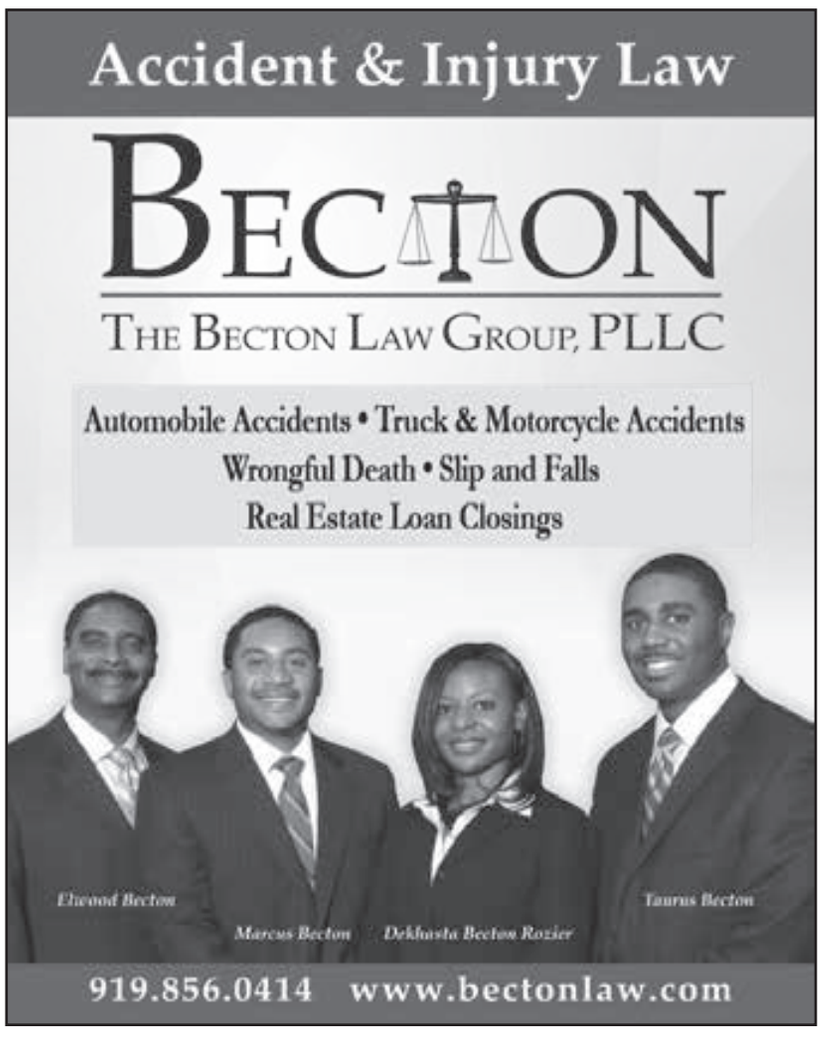












Health & Wellness

How To Fight Food Insecurity And Eat Healthy On A Budget

By Dr. Ileana Vargas
Columbia University

New York City is famous for its food, with restaurants, markets, and delis offering everything from local classics to foreign delicacies. Despite these diverse options, roughly 1.4 million New Yorkers don't have enough to eat and worry about where their next meal will come from—a problem known as food insecurity.

Ileana Vargas, MD, a pediatric endocrinologist at Columbia's Naomi Berrie Diabetes Center, and Kaylee Seekon, RD, a pediatric diabetes educator at the Berrie Center, discuss the basics of food insecurity, tips for eating healthy on a budget, and resources for accessing nutritious food.

What is food insecurity?

Food insecurity tends to be more common in lower-income areas where people are already struggling to make ends meet. In these neighborhoods, healthy food options are also generally more expensive and harder to come across, making it even more difficult to access nutritious foods.

"Here in Washington Heights, you see fast food on every corner. That's what's available and what our patients and children can afford—when they can afford to eat," says Dr. Vargas. "A lot of times we blame communities for their food insecurity and the foods they do consume, but they don't always have other options."

How can food insecurity impact health?

Food insecurity can lead to a wide range of health problems, such as nutrient deficiencies, diabetes, depression, sleep issues, and more. These problems are particularly common in mothers, who tend to eat smaller portions or skip meals to ensure their children have enough food.

Children are especially vulnerable to the cognitive and behavioral impacts of food insecurity, including increased risk of substance abuse, aggression, anxiety, and difficulty concentrating, which have been shown to affect school performance.

But identifying food insecurity can be challenging. "Food is a very sensitive topic, and patients usually aren't comfortable discussing food insecurity due to feelings of shame and stigmatization," says Seekon. "If you're food insecure, it's important to talk to your provider to address any health issues it's causing."

How to eat healthy for less

Eating healthy can seem overwhelming, but you don't have to overhaul your whole diet—or your budget. "It's easier to focus on what you can eat, rather than what you shouldn't," says Seekon.

Here's what Dr. Vargas and Seekon suggest for eating healthier on a budget:

•Don't go to the grocery store hungry. Plan out your meals and bring a list of the ingredients you need to reduce the urge to satisfy immediate cravings.

•Learn to cook homemade versions of your favorite fast foods, such as macaroni and cheese, which can be made in bulk and are more nutritious.

•Buy in-season fruits and vegetables, which are generally more affordable than out-of-season produce. Stock up on frozen vegetables and add them to your regular meals, such as adding broccoli to pasta or beans to rice.

•Drink less sugar by swapping soda and juice for sparkling water or tea.

•For dessert, try fruit dipped in dark chocolate instead of processed cookies and candies.

"You don't need to make big sacrifices or change your whole lifestyle to eat healthier than you were yesterday," says Dr. Vargas. "Some changes may take some getting used to, but even the small ones can make a big difference in your health and well-being."



Democrats Demand Trump Admin Halt Collection of Patients' ER Records

KFF—A group of Democratic lawmakers is calling for the Trump administration to suspend a new surveillance program it quietly launched to collect the personal and identifiable health data of Americans who visit emergency rooms.

KFF Health News first reported that the Consumer Product Safety Commission — a federal agency tasked with monitoring injuries from household items — was pressuring hospitals to provide a private company with personally identifiable health information for analysis. The rollout of the program has inspired broad pushback from hospitals and privacy advocates.

The CPSC's goal is to obtain millions of Americans' medical records from emergency rooms for most injuries, even when a consumer product is not involved, internal emails and documents reviewed by KFF Health News revealed. The agency instructed hospitals to share detailed patient information for more than 10,000 types of injuries or conditions, such as vaccine reactions, suicide attempts, or stingray stabs.

The scope of data CPSC is collecting far exceeds the agency's mission and should be immediately suspended, Massachusetts Sen. Ed Markey, who sits on the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, and other House and Senate Democrats wrote in a letter to CPSC acting Chairman Peter Feldman.

"This unprecedented and sweeping effort to collect identifiable patient data is untethered from the Commission's statutory mission and authority, and is ripe for misuse by an administration that has repeatedly sought access to Americans' most personal information," the letter stated. "Americans should be able to seek medical care without fear that their personal health information will be swept into a federal database and repurposed for political ends."

Among other Democrats signing the letter were Sen. Richard Blumenthal of Connecticut, Rep. Jan Schakowsky of Illinois, and Sen. Ron Wyden of Oregon, the ranking member of the Senate Finance Committee.

CPSC spokesperson Steve Roney did not answer several questions about the program and the call for it to be suspended.

"We received the letter, and will respond directly, through the appropriate channels," he said in a statement.

The CPSC is one of several agencies that have launched broad acquisitions of Americans' sensitive medical records during Trump's second term. The Office of Personnel Management has requested federal workers' sensitive health information. Health and Human Services Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr. deputized at least one private organization to collect more medical records for his studies on vaccines and autism.

The CPSC has operated a voluntary program for decades that enables trained hospital workers based in about 70 hospitals nationwide to report injuries involving consumer products, called the National Electronic Injury Surveillance System, or NEISS. Compared with the current initiative, the agency's data collection has historically been far narrower, and previously requested patients' identifiable information, generally for follow-up, in fewer than 1% of cases.

Without public notice, CPSC staffers overhauled the program early this year — rebranding it as NEISS-R — and told hospital executives that participation is mandatory, requiring they report far more identifiable patient details from more injuries to a private company called Konza Health. The Kansas-based company won a five-year contract last year worth up to $15.9 million with the CPSC.

Immigrant Patients Often Choose Doctors With A Shared Cultural Background

THE CONVERSATION—At a recent dental appointment, I was unexpectedly seen by a new provider in my longtime dentist's practice. Early in the visit, he realized we were both Iranian American. Like me, he had been born and raised in the United States. We were both fluent English speakers and fully accustomed to navigating American medical settings.

After we briefly discussed how the war in Iran was affecting our families there, something shifted. The exchange was short, but deeply human. I left feeling an immediate sense of connection, trust and familiarity with a provider I had only just met.

That experience helped me better understand something I had long observed among immigrant families – that immigrant patients often seek out healthcare providers from similar backgrounds. What they are often seeking goes beyond a shared language or cultural familiarity.

I am a health administration professor and lawyer who studies how people navigate health systems. In my work, and through conversations with immigrant families, including my own, I have seen how subtle interactions in clinical settings can shape whether patients feel confident or dismissed and unsure about returning for care. For some, choosing a doctor with a similar background represents their best attempt to feel more understood.

The fact that many patients actively seek out providers who share aspects of their cultural background, even when doing so may require additional effort or limit their options, illustrates that it is not a minor preference, but a meaningful part of how people experience care.

Immigrants make up a growing share of patients in the U.S., accounting for about 15% of the population.

Large national studies suggest that patients often seek providers with whom they share a cultural background. That choice is especially pronounced among racial and ethnic minority patients, those who speak a language other than English at home and those with public insurance.

Even as the U.S. physician workforce becomes more diverse, many patients still report difficulty finding providers who share their cultural or linguistic background. At the same time, some evidence suggests the number of foreign-born physicians may also be declining. In my view, that makes the effort to find such providers all the more noteworthy.

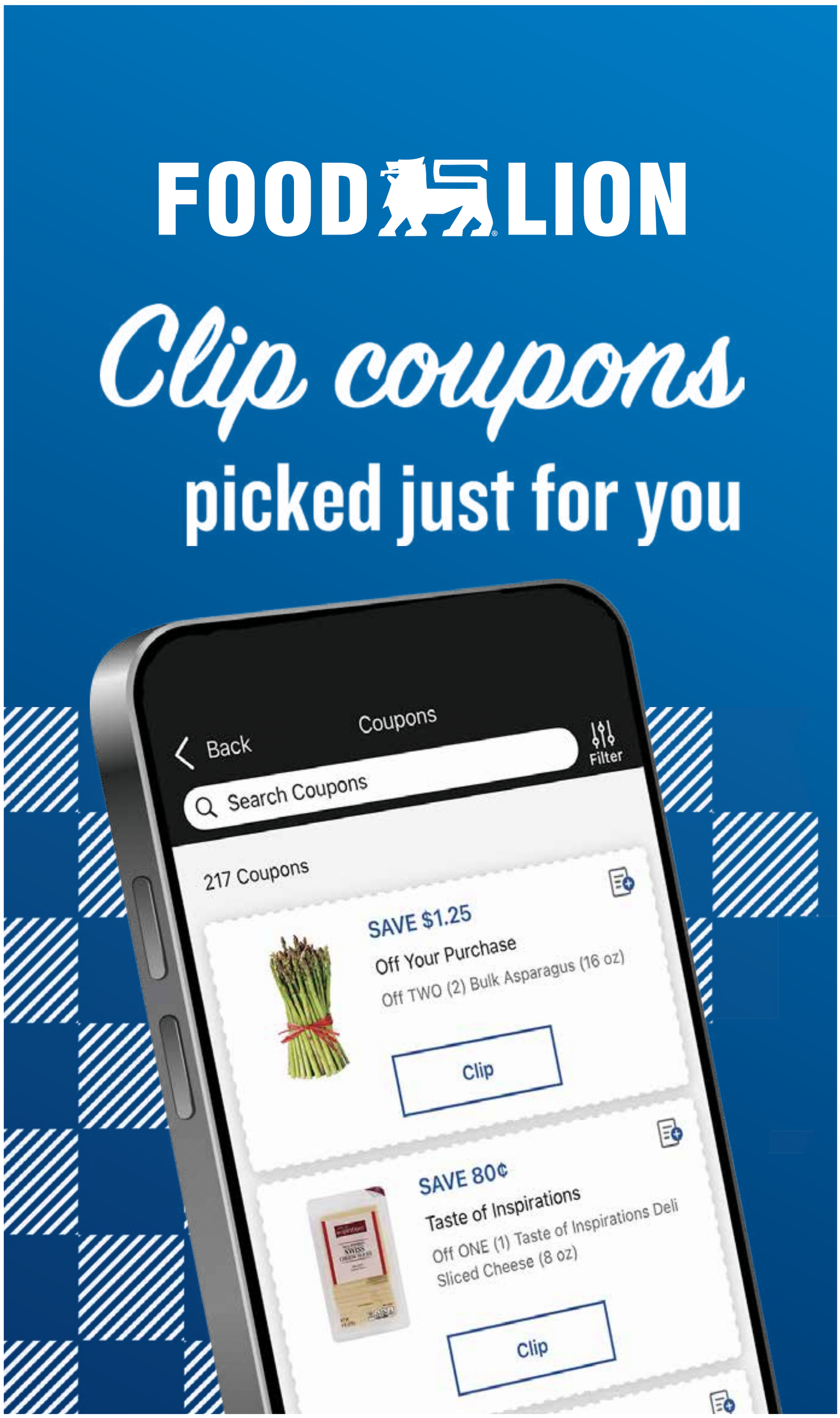
A shared language may seem like the most obvious explanation for why immigrants seek out doctors from similar backgrounds. And in many cases, it does matter. When patients and clinicians speak the same language, communication improves and medical errors decline, especially for patients who are not fluent in English.

But language alone does not explain experiences like my own.

Narrative research on immigrant patients describes broader issues. For example, a patient might raise a concern about a persistent symptom, only to feel too quickly dismissed, or hear an explanation delivered in a simplified way that does not match their level of knowledge or experience.

These moments can be subtle, but as they accumulate over time, they may contribute to a sense that medical care feels transactional or dismissive rath-

(See ***IMMIGRANT PATIENTS,*** P. 8)



Arts & Culture

Celebrating Art, Music, and History: Raleigh's 17th AACF











By Jordan Meadows

Staff Writer

An estimated 40,000 people packed Fayetteville Street in downtown Raleigh over Labor Day weekend for the 17th Annual African American Cultural Festival of Raleigh & Wake County.

First established in 2010, the festival has grown into one of the region's premier cultural events and a major driver of Labor Day weekend tourism, drawing families, artists, tourists, and local leaders from across North Carolina and the country, along with a major contingent from the Black Chamber of Raleigh.

This year's theme, "Rooted in Community, Anchored in Legacy," centered on the festival's Legacy Wall, a public installation that let attendees post the names and stories of ancestors, local pioneers and community organizations, building what organizers described as a living historical archive along Fayetteville Street.

Saturday's programming opened with a procession featuring African dance, drumming, giant puppets and stilt walkers, preceded by a workshop that let attendees learn some of the dance and puppetry techniques themselves before joining in. Earlier that morning, the City of Raleigh Museum hosted Special Children's Author Readings, giving young readers a chance to meet Black authors and engage with African American stories and creativity.

Programming continued throughout the weekend across the Main Stage and Family Village Stage, with nonstop performances spanning jazz, R&B, reggae, traditional gospel choirs, African drumming ensembles, local DJs and spoken word poetry. National R&B act Kindred the Family Soul headlined the weekend's main daytime programming, while the festival transitioned each evening into ticketed outdoor concerts, headlined by hip-hop veteran Chubb Rock and backed by regional acts including the Sumthin 4 Tha People Band, Jus Once Band, Soultriii and DJ Skillz World. The AACF Comedy Jam, featuring local comedian D Wissh & Friends, capped off Sunday evening.

Beyond the stages, attendees could take in a formal Art Gallery Walk showcasing visual artists, alongside interactive chalk art walls, live mural painting, and hands-on puppetry and theater workshops built around teaching children traditional storytelling.

The festival's African Marketplace filled Fayetteville Street with dozens of juried visual artists, craftsmen, and Black-owned small businesses. Vendors sold fine art prints including recurring favorites depicting Black historical icons and family-legacy imagery, alongside custom Ankara-print clothing and jewelry, Greek paraphernalia for Divine Nine fraternities and sororities, and screen-printed streetwear carrying slogans like "Power to the People" and Raleigh-specific graphics.

Specialty goods included hand-tailored coats and kimonos printed with traditional West African Adinkra symbols, structured handbags made entirely from African wax-print fabrics, and skincare lines such as Clara Bea Essentials, which offered handmade hair milks, raw shea butter creams, and moisturizing bars formulated specifically for textured hair and skin.

Food options spanned Southern soul food, smoked barbecue, fried catfish baskets, smoked turkey legs, mac and cheese and collard greens — alongside Caribbean and West African fare including Jamaican jerk chicken, beef patties, oxtail plates and jollof rice bowls.

Because the event receives partial funding from the City of Raleigh, Raleigh City Council members and Wake County commissioners have historically made appearances, delivered opening remarks at the Main Stage, or staffed community resource booths. Local historically Black colleges and universities, including Shaw University and Saint Augustine's University, also maintained a heavy presence through alumni groups and recruitment tables.

JoCo Family Preserves Black Land While Building Community

By Judaea Ingram

Special To The Carolinian

JOHNSTON COUNTY — On a stretch of land that has remained in one North Carolina family for more than 80 years, history is being preserved in a way that extends far beyond property lines.

What began as farmland purchased by the Gooch family in 1944 has evolved into a community gathering place where thousands of people come together each year for rodeos, concerts, cultural celebrations and youth programs. While the property has become a destination for entertainment and education, its greatest significance lies in what it represents: the preservation of Black land ownership in a region where many African American families have lost generational property over time.



Located in Johnston County, the family-owned property has become home to the Gooch Sports Arena, where events celebrating both African American and Latino traditions regularly bring together residents from across North Carolina.

The arena has grown into more than an event venue. It has become a place where different cultures meet, neighbors connect and families gather, demonstrating how shared traditions can strengthen communities.

For owner Donal Gooch, preserving the family's land has always been about honoring the sacrifices made by previous generations while creating new opportunities for those who follow.

As development continues to reshape communities throughout the Triangle and surrounding counties, maintaining ownership of family land has become increasingly challenging for many Black families. Rising property values, development pressures and generational transfers have contributed to a steady decline in Black-owned farmland and family property across the South.

The Gooch family's story offers a different narrative.

Rather than selling the property, the family has transformed it into a destination that celebrates culture while remaining rooted in its history. Rodeos, live music performances and community events now attract visitors from diverse backgrounds, creating opportunities for cultural exchange while supporting the local economy.

The property has also become a place where young people can connect with traditions that are often overlooked.

That mission continues through Saddle Up and Read, a nonprofit founded by Donal Gooch's daughter, Caitlin Gooch. The organization combines horseback riding with literacy programs to encourage children to develop a love of reading while learning about agriculture, responsibility and Black equestrian history.

The program has received national recognition for introducing children, many of whom have never interacted with horses before, to experiences that build confidence both inside and outside the classroom.

Together, the arena and nonprofit reflect the family's broader vision of preserving history while investing in future generations.

Their work also highlights an often-overlooked chapter of North Carolina's history. African Americans have long played an important role in the state's agricultural industry and equestrian traditions, yet those contributions have frequently received limited public attention.

Today, the Gooch family's efforts serve as a reminder that preserving Black-owned land is about more than maintaining property. It is about protecting family history, creating opportunities for education and ensuring future generations have spaces where culture and community can thrive.

As North Carolina continues to experience rapid population growth and development, stories like the Gooch family's illustrate the importance of preserving places that connect people to their heritage while welcoming new generations to become part of that legacy.

For many visitors, a trip to the Gooch Sports Arena may begin with a concert, rodeo or community celebration. For the Gooch family, however, every event is also a celebration of perseverance, heritage and the enduring value of land that has remained in the family for more than eight decades.

In a state where conversations about growth often center on what is being built next, the Gooch family's legacy demonstrates the importance of preserving what has already been built: a foundation of history, community and opportunity that continues to bring people together.

Lonnie Bunch To Retire From Smithsonian Following Clash With Trump Administration

WASHINGTON (AP) — Lonnie Bunch is stepping down from the leadership of the Smithsonian Institution following a tumultuous year in which President Donald Trump tried to remake the portrayal of U.S. history by the Smithsonian museums and other cultural entities.

Bunch said in a news release Tuesday that he was departing the position he had held since 2019 "with very mixed emotions and heartfelt gratitude." The Smithsonian said he would leave the post at the end of the year.

Bunch's departure comes two months after a White House report branded the leaders of the Smithsonian Institution, especially at the National Museum of American History, as radical activists who cannot be trusted, an indication that Trump could be preparing to install his own team.



Anthea M. Hartig, the first female director of that museum, faced growing scrutiny from Trump and other Republicans over the summer after the White House Domestic Policy Council's report saying the museum's leadership doesn't tell history "in a way that is inspiring, unifying, and worthy of our great republic."

Three weeks after the report's release, Trump ordered his administration to install signs in front of the U.S. history museum telling visitors that some of the exhibits are inaccurate. Hartig pushed back, telling lawmakers during congressional hearings that the report "does not fairly or accurately characterize the full body of work at the museum."

There had been speculation that firings were in the offing. Trump doesn't have the power to fire leaders at the Smithsonian with the swiftness he's managed at other top cultural institutions in Washington, most notably the Kennedy Center, where a board of his supporters named him chairman.

The Smithsonian operates outside the executive branch and museum directors report to Bunch, who is subject to oversight from a Board of Regents that includes Vice President JD Vance, Supreme Court Chief Justice John Roberts, a bipartisan group of lawmakers and so-called citizen regents.

Roberts, who serves as Smithsonian's chancellor, said in a release that Bunch had "pursued excellence in the telling of our nation's story."

The announcement has left questions about some Smithsonian programming. Bunch is scheduled to speak Sept. 25 at the National Museum of African American History and Culture at an event entitled: "Understanding America: 10 Years of Excellence."

A Smithsonian spokesman said Bunch would be at the event.

The Smithsonian has been under examination by the Trump administration since 2025 as it has focused on the images and messages presented to the public as the nation approached its 250th anniversary.

A March 2025 executive order, Restoring Truth and Sanity to American History, led to signs being changed at federal parks, exhibits being altered or in some cases removed, and military bases being renamed. Trump specifically cited the National Museum of African American History and Culture and argued that the Smithsonian as a whole was engaging in a "concerted and widespread effort to rewrite our Nation's history."

Several months later, the White House ordered a wide-ranging review of the Smithsonian museums and exhibitions before the country's 250th birthday, with a goal of aligning the institution's content with Trump's interpretation of American history.

In a letter sent to Bunch at the time, the White House detailed the steps it expected the organization to take as part of the announced review. The examination covers all public-facing content, including social media, exhibition text and educational materials, to "assess tone, historical framing, and alignment with American ideals," according to the letter.

That review initially focused on eight museums — the National Museum of American History, the National Museum of Natural History, the National Museum of African American History and Culture, the National Museum of the American Indian, the National Air and Space Museum, the Smithsonian American Art Museum, the National Portrait Gallery and the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden.

California Democrat Sen. Alex Padilla praised Bunch in a statement for not shying away from the nation's history. "In the face of Donald Trump's attacks on the Smithsonian, Secretary Bunch spoke truth to power and reasserted his commitment to defend and uphold American history and values. While I respect his decision to depart, the job now falls to the Board of Regents and Congress to ensure the success of his work will remain for generations to come."

Africa's Mother Tongues Are Finding New Life



HARARE, Zimbabwe (AP) — A television game show in Nigeria's commercial hub of Lagos has an unforgiving rule: Speak English and you lose. For a U.S.-born millennial in the audience and a student of her parents' mother tongue, the high-stakes setting is a perfect classroom.

Meanwhile, a 15-year-old Canadian speaks to a teacher about 13,000 kilometers (8,000 miles) away in Zimbabwe, learning a language her parents feared she would never speak.

"Mhoroi," Nyashadzashe Machingura says cheerfully with a pronounced Canadian accent while greeting in Zimbabwe's vernacular Shona.

The scenes capture a new generation of interest and entrepreneurship around African languages once pushed to the margins by decades of colonialism. Often seen as secondary to English, French and Portuguese, they are enjoying a renaissance that is also creating business opportunities.

There are between 1,500 and 3,000 languages in Africa

Africa is home to over 1 billion people speaking roughly a third of the world's languages, with between 1,500 and 3,000 across 54 countries, according to UNESCO.

Experts say the revival in some of them is driven partly by second- and third-generation Africans in the diaspora finding it easier to reconnect with their roots and communicate with older relatives, thanks to social media, online learning and entertainment.

"There were times I definitely felt left out because my family around me were all speaking Shona. And I just couldn't understand them," Nyashadzashe said after a lesson covering traditional greetings, proverbs and ancestral clan symbols. She said she had eaten the food and worn the traditional clothing but still felt left out.

But now her conversations with her grandparents in Zimbabwe are growing longer.

"Being able to connect with them on that level makes me really proud of my heritage," she said.

African languages were never 'modernized'

Her Zimbabwe-based tutor, Shungu Chidovi, left her banking career in January to focus full-time on ZimbOriginal, an online platform that teaches Shona through storytelling, book clubs and "buddy pairing" exchanges.

Now she teaches about two dozen learners in Zimbabwe, Canada, Australia, South Africa, Ireland and Scotland, charging $50 a month.

The business, part of a small but growing number of online initiatives teaching African languages, emerged almost by accident. Chidovi began writing a blog about Zimbabwean traditions in 2016. Readers began asking whether she taught Shona.

"I didn't see it at the time that I was really writing about the Shona language," Chidovi said.

Western languages were prioritized

Like many in Africa, she grew up with the understanding that to get ahead she had to embrace Western languages instead of her mother tongue. English remains the dominant language for education, business and government affairs in the southern African nation that officially recognizes 16 mostly Indigenous languages.

"When you talk of Africa, you talk of English, French, Portuguese," said Believe

(See *AFRICAN LANGUAGE,* P. 9)

Preserving The Art Of Discovery

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Community

2026 Graduation Rate Reaches Historic High, Accountability Results Continue A Positive Trend for NC Public Schools

RALEIGH, NC—North Carolina public school students marked another year of noteworthy academic progress in 2025-26, achieving a record-high graduation rate and improving performance on most standardized tests, according to data presented Wednesday to the State Board of Education.

The four-year cohort graduation rate rose to 88.8% in 2025-26, up from a record 87.8% in the previous year, thereby marking a new historic high. This graduation rate moves North Carolina's public schools closer to reaching a "Best in Nation Measure" as identified in the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's (NCDPI) strategic plan, Achieving Educational Excellence.

"These academic achievement results are a testament to the incredible work happening across North Carolina's public schools," North Carolina Superintendent of Public Instruction Maurice "Mo" Green said. "While I am pleased to see these results trending positively, including our highest graduation rate ever, I look forward to continued progress as we aim to achieve educational excellence for all North Carolina public school students and become the best public education system in the nation."

The all-subject and all-grade composite score for end-of-grade (EOG) and end-of-course (EOC) assessments reported 59.2% of students proficient – the highest in the past three years.

The percentage of students who were grade level proficient, the designation given to a score of a 3, 4 or 5 on EOG and EOC exams, was also the highest in the past three years for 14 of 15 reading and mathematics tests. Additionally, results for all race and ethnicity subgroups were the highest of the past three years, reflecting both progress across the full range of North Carolina's student population and the need for continued improvement.

College and career ready, the designation given to a score of 4 or 5 on EOG and EOC exams, also improved to 37.5% of students, up from 34.7% in 2024-25. Overall college and career ready results improved on 16 of 18 total tests administered in 2025-26. The two exams that were not the highest in college and career ready results were reading for grades 3 and 4.

Science proficiency also saw notable gains, led by a striking jump in biology. Proficiency in biology rose from 48% in 2024-25 to 59% in 2025-26, an 11-percentage-point increase in a single year. Science proficiency in grades 5 and 8 improved as well over the past two years.

English Language learners saw continued gains as well. The percentage of total students making progress or exiting reached its highest point in the past three years to 36%, an increase of nine points from 27% in 2023-24.

The average ACT composite score for 11th graders increased to 18.4, with 55% of students scoring a 17 or higher, the minimum score for admission to a university within the University of North Carolina system. This year's results include a one-time correction that increased scores: ACT identified a technical scoring issue in its spring 2026 online, school-day testing and rescored all affected exams nationwide. Because this year's composite includes those one-time increases, NCDPI will monitor how this year's ACT results compare with future years as part of its ongoing trend analysis.

While ACT WorkKeys participation has increased to 52,623 students, an increase of 11% since 2024, the percentage of students earning a silver or higher certificate has decreased slightly to 59% overall compared to 60% in the 2023-24 academic year. Nearly all subgroups experienced decreases.

School Performance Grades continued to trend upward this year, with more schools earning an A, B or C, and fewer earning a D or F rating. These grades are based on student achievement, growth on state assessments and English learner progress at all grade levels. The ACT, ACT WorkKeys, math course rigor and graduation rates are also factored in for high schools. The percentage of schools labeled D or F dropped to 23% in 2025-26, down from 31% the previous year. As a result, 162 fewer schools were designated low-performing in 2025-26 compared to the year before, and nearly 100 fewer schools were designated continually low-performing over the same span. Only 10 districts were designated low-performing this year, 13 fewer than in 2024-25 and the fewest since 2018-19.

"It is promising to see this continued improvement in student achievement in the 2025-26 accountability results," NCDPI Chief Accountability Officer Dr. Michael Maher said. "From graduation rates to EOG and EOC scores and school performance grades, students and educators across North Carolina should be proud of this progress. At the same time, these results alone do not capture the full breadth of the important work happening in our public schools. The work of the Accountability Task Force gives us an opportunity to consider additional measures that, alongside academic achievement, can provide a more complete picture of student progress and how well schools are preparing students for what comes next."

Project Sweetpotato: Bold Farm-to-School Movement Launches In Harnett County

By Jheri Hardaway

Staff Writer



Lillington, NC - True community wealth is measured by how well we feed our children, preserve our soil, and invest in our neighbors. This week marks the official public launch of Project Sweetpotato (Ipomoea batatas), an ambitious, farm-to-school nutrition proposal presented to the Harnett County Board of Commissioners and Harnett County School Board by your author Jheri Hardaway. At its core, the initiative establishes a direct, recurring procurement pipeline ensuring that Harnett County farmers are empowered to serve homegrown sweetpotatoes across every cafeteria in the Harnett County Schoolsystem. This is more than a standard lunchroom contract; it is an intentional ecosystem designed to uplift local agriculture while confronting childhood hunger with nutrition, dignity, flavor, and local pride.

North Carolina's agricultural heritage is defined by this resilient crop, yet our children rarely get the chance to understand or enjoy it at its fullest potential. Sweetpotatoes are a bona fide superfood full of vitamins A and C, gut-friendly fiber, and complex carbohydrates that sustain focus throughout a demanding school day. What makes this hearty root vegetable uniquely transformative for our schools is its sheer culinary adaptability and versatility. Sweetpotatoes can be prepared steaming hot or cold, tossed into crisp salads, mashed with warm spices, roasted with savory herbs, or enjoyed entirely plain in all its natural richness.

Food insecurity is an issue in Harnett County. At the start of the summer our Harnett County NAACP 5473-B President Benita Harrington addressed the Harnett County school board about adding sites for summer lunch pick ups. The Harnett County Schools Board of Education Vice-Chair Brad Abate immediately set plans in motion to add additional locations, so there is an openness to innovation in the student nutrition space. With an exceptional, natural shelf life, properly cured sweet potatoes provide an enduring, reliable food staple. For students navigating food scarcity at home, having consistent, nourishing access to a food that doesn't spoil overnight is a vital line of defense.

This is not the first time students and sweetpotatoes have made waves in North Carolina. In the 1990's, fourth grade students at Elvie Street School in Wilson, North Carolina petitioned the North Carolina General Assembly for the establishment of the sweetpotato as the Official State Vegetable after being inspired by a visit from their local congressman, Representative Gene Arnold. With the support of their parents and community they began a letter writing campaign to the state legislature requesting the adoption. In the summer of 1995, after two years of work, the bill was passed.

Goodness grows in North Carolina is more than just a motto, cultivating the next generation of agriculture professionals is essential to our food systems. Equally vital to Project Sweet Potato is what happens beyond the lunch tray of the backpack. A central pillar of the initiative integrates agricultural education into the curriculum through structured field trips to participating Harnett County farms. Our students will put their boots in the dirt, meet the agrarian leaders stewarding our land, and learn the mechanics of sustainable farming firsthand. In an era increasingly separated from nature and food sources, this initiative bridges the gap, instilling respect for local farming and inspiring our young scholars to consider fruitful careers in agribusiness and environmental science. Additionally, with the Lillington Farmer's Market project underway, timing is excellent to champion our local growers and promote shopping fresh and local.

Lastly, it is essential to keep Harnett County dollars in Harnett County. When our schools buy from industrial conglomerates thousands of miles away, our community loses out twice: our kids eat processed foods, and our farmers see diminishing returns. Project Sweetpotato keeps public dollars circulating right here at home, guaranteeing stable local demand for regional growers while giving our youth the very best our county has to offer.

To learn more about how you can support the initiative or advocate for Project Sweetpotato follow our ongoing coverage in The Carolinian or contact our author at Jheri@caro.news.

Merrick-Moore Alumni Celebrate 75 Years and Hall of Fame Inductees

The Merrick-Moore/Mill Grove Alumni Association celebrated the 75th anniversary of Merrick-Moore during its annual reunion, held Sept. 4-6 at the Hyatt Place Durham/Southpoint.

The weekend also marked the association's inaugural Hall of Fame induction. Honorees included Dr. Charles Daye, Dr. Mae Lipscomb Rodney, Jo Anne Parker, Dr. Melvin Carver and Gayle Bridges Harris.

Several championship teams were also inducted, including the 1964 and 1965 football teams and the 1965, 1967 and 1969 basketball teams, all of which won state championships.



Raleigh Top Teens of America Welcomes 30 New Members in Celebratory Induction

RALEIGH, N.C. — The future of youth leadership was on full display as the Raleigh Chapter of Top Teens of America (TTA) proudly inducted 30 outstanding young people into its growing membership during a celebratory ceremony held Saturday, August 29, at Vision Church RDU.

Surrounded by family, friends, Top Teens, and members of the Raleigh Chapter of Top Ladies of Distinction, Inc., the new inductees officially began their journey of leadership, service, scholarship, and community impact.

Adding to the excitement of the occasion, National TTA President Noah Guilford and the National TTA First Vice President joined the Raleigh Chapter for the celebration. Current Top Teens led the ceremony, welcomed their newest peers, and demonstrated the leadership and confidence the program strives to develop.



"Welcoming 30 new Top Teens is an exciting milestone for our chapter," said Melissa McDonald, Raleigh Chapter Top Teen Advisor. "These young people are talented, motivated, and ready to serve. We are excited to help them develop their leadership skills, build lasting relationships, and make a meaningful difference in our community."

Sponsored by the Raleigh Chapter of Top Ladies of Distinction, Inc., the Raleigh Top Teens program provides young people with opportunities for leadership development, community service, academic enrichment, cultural experiences, and personal growth.

With 30 new members joining its ranks, the Raleigh Chapter is entering another exciting year with a strong message: the next generation of leaders is ready to lead, serve, and make an impact.

NC HUNGER CRISIS

Continued from page 1

white households, where hunger touches one in nine households.

Families on a tight budget rely on cheaper, more processed foods, which are higher in fat, sodium and sugar.

"It is not because they do not want to eat healthy. It is because oftentimes that food is just not accessible to them because it is the most expensive food out there," said Beros.

A big part of the organization's 2030 strategic plan is to increase access to fresh produce and protein. But the Trump administration has cut funding for a program that buys fresh foods from local farmers to donate to food banks.

New SNAP restrictions

Beros said the Food Bank is grateful that the new state budget includes $9 million for food purchases, but the state investments will not erase larger federal losses or cuts that are coming

Statewide more than 1.2 million North Carolinians rely on SNAP, commonly called food stamps, to purchase groceries. But strict work and reporting requirements have led to a decline of more than 100,000 in enrollment in just the last year.

Beginning October 1st, the federal government will shift an additional quarter of SNAP administrative costs to the state and counties. While the state's portion is covered in the recent budget, the county portion is not, adding to the workload and paperwork of county social service offices. That loss of support will send more people to their local pantries.

Next October, states will be required to pay a portion of the SNAP benefit costs based on their payment error rate. The Stein administration estimates that North Carolina may be responsible for paying $140 million or more each year because of the federal changes.

Beros said there is no way North Carolina's large hunger relief network can make up what is being cut at the federal level.

For every one meal that the Food Bank of Central and Eastern North Carolina provides, SNAP provides nine.

Beyond donations, food bank leaders are urging North Carolinians to contact elected officials and ask them to protect SNAP and restore strong federal food purchase programs.

"What we are trying to make sure is that the humanity remains at the center of how we talk about this crisis. These are not just numbers. These are our neighbors," said Beros.

Raleigh - Wake Chapter Member Named NCCU Alumnus Of The Year For 2026

By Jheri Hardaway

Staff Writer



Durham, NC - The Raleigh-Wake Alumni Chapter of North Carolina Central University (NCCU) proudly congratulates Stephanie Wilson Jones on being named the recipient of the 2026 NCCU Alumnus of the Year Award, also known as the Eagle Excellence Award.

The award recognizes alumni who demonstrate exceptional leadership, service, and commitment to NCCU through their contributions of time, talent, and treasure in support of the university, alumni association, and surrounding communities.

A proud member of the Raleigh-Wake Alumni Chapter and current Region IV Vice President of the NCCU Alumni Association, Stephanie has remained dedicated to advancing the mission of NCCU through scholarship fundraising, alumni engagement, student support initiatives, and community service efforts.

As the 2025 Ms. NCCU Alumni, Stephanie campaigned under the motto, "Grounded in Truth. Soaring in Service." Through her campaign, she raised more than $41,500 for student scholarships and has remained steadfast in her belief that service to NCCU extends far beyond Homecoming, titles, or special recognition. Since being crowned, she has continued to serve through alumni leadership, student engagement initiatives, scholarship fundraising efforts, support of NCCU Athletics, campus pantry initiatives, and community outreach efforts throughout Region IV and beyond.

Stephanie is a proud magna cum laude graduate of NCCU's School of Business, earning her Bachelor of Business Administration degree in Marketing in 2004. She is the Broker-in-Charge and owner of Next Move Realty, LLC, a devoted mother of two sons, and a proud member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated.

This honor holds special significance for Stephanie, who credits her aunt, Daphne Magee-Hunter, NCCU Class of 1975, for inspiring her to attend North Carolina Central University. Stephanie often shares that none of these accomplishments would have been possible without her aunt leading the way and showing her what it means to be an Eagle. The Raleigh-Wake Alumni Chapter celebrates Stephanie's continued leadership, service, and dedication to North Carolina Central University and congratulates her on this well-deserved recognition. Congratulations to the 2026 NCCU Alumnus of the Year and Eagle Excellence Award recipient, Stephanie Wilson Jones!

North Carolina Central University located in Durham, NC, was the first state-supported liberal arts college for African American students in North Carolina. It was chartered as a private institution in 1909 and opened its doors to students in July 1910. Its founder, James E. Shepard, served as its first president. Its purpose continues to be the development of young African American men and women into citizens with fine character and sound academic training.

Sports

Shelton Ends Alcaraz's Title Reign In Late-Night Marathon

NEW YORK (AP) — Ben Shelton had gone toe-to-toe with Carlos Alcaraz for five exhausting sets and finally at 3:33 a.m. Wednesday came the chance to end the U.S. Open champion's title reign.

Shelton fired an ace at 146 mph, a ball that Alcaraz couldn't have gotten back even with fresh legs.

That gave Shelton a 6-7 (5), 6-1, 6-3, 1-6, 7-6 (10-7) victory in a marathon tussle that was the latest-finishing match in U.S. Open history.

"I'm tired. It was a war," Shelton said. "Carlos is one of the greatest champions of our sport. It was the most enjoyable match I've had in my career, for sure."

Alcaraz had his 18-match winning streak in Grand Slam tournaments ended in a match that lasted 4 hours, 28 minutes, after he fought deep into the night and early into the next morning in a bid to get his hands on the trophy again.

"I mean it was close, it was really close, so I was disappointed I didn't get the win at the end," the No. 2-seeded Alcaraz said. "But I'm happy, I am proud of myself about how I fought. As I said, physically I was really tired but I found a way to push myself."

Shelton next plays No. 11 seed Frances Tiafoe, who kept coming back until he had reached his third U.S. Open semifinal, beating Alex Michelsen 5-7, 3-6, 7-5, 6-3, 7-6 (10-6) on Tuesday.

The U.S. is guaranteed to have a representative in Sunday's final as it seeks its first men's major title since Andy Roddick lifted the title here in 2003.

The U.S. Open craves its night matches and players love the energy the fans provide — even when a number of matches have already gone past 2 a.m. this year.

Thousands stayed to the end, with Arthur Ashe Stadium perhaps still one-third full for the finish. Shelton benefited from a home-crowd boost even against the popular Alcaraz, with fans chanting his name along with "USA! USA!"

"It's incredible," Shelton said. "I always say that this is the greatest sports city in the world, I say that this is the greatest stadium in the world. I'm just hoping that my best friend and my sister over there don't have to be at work at 6 a.m. in three hours."



Three of the four singles quarterfinals went to match tiebreakers on a marathon day, which started with Aryna Sabalenka edging Wimbledon champion Linda Noskova to keep her hopes alive of a third straight U.S. Open title.

Alcaraz will have to wait for his next one.

Instead it was Shelton reaching his third major semifinal, having gotten to the final four in the 2023 U.S. Open and 2025 Australian Open.

He seized control by winning nine straight games from early in the second set until he had a 3-0 lead in the third. But Alcaraz, in his first tournament since April after returning from a right wrist injury, battled back even as he vomited before the start of the final set.

Alcaraz ran off four straight points in the tiebreaker to go ahead 5-3, but Shelton came back behind some of his powerful serves that can exceed 140 mph, along with some mistakes from Alcaraz. Shelton eventually finished it off with a 146 mph serve his opponent couldn't get back.

Defending NFC South Champion Panthers & QB Bryce Young

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP) — The Carolina Panthers are looking to take another big step forward under fourth-year quarterback Bryce Young in 2026 after winning the NFC South and snapping a seven-year playoff drought.

The Panthers backed into the playoffs last season with an 8-9 record before nearly pulling off a monumental upset against the Los Angeles Rams. Carolina lost 34-31 on a late TD pass by league MVP Matthew Stafford.

Despite that, general manager Dan Morgan is encouraged by the direction of the team and its patient rebuild process.

Much of that optimism surrounds Young's improvement.

The 2023 No. 1 overall pick entered last season 6-22 as a starter, leading to questions about his future in Carolina. But Young rebounded by throwing for a career-high 3,011 yards and 23 touchdowns last season while going 8-8 as a starter.

Panthers coach Dave Canales said Young looks more comfortable and confident than ever entering his third season in the same offensive system. He's getting the team to the line quicker. He's being more decisive. And he's taken on a bigger leadership role, something the team was eager to see.

"I love where he's headed," Canales said.

Offensive coordinator Brad Idzik will take over play-calling duties from Canales this season, but the playbook essentially remains the same.

Young has some intriguing weapons to work with.

Tetairoa McMillan was named NFL Offensive Rookie of the Year after catching 70 passes for 1,014 yards and seven TDs, and the late-season emergence of Jalen Coker solidified the team's No. 2 receiver spot.

Chuba Hubbard returns as the starting running back, and the Panthers are expecting big things from 2024 second-round draft pick Jonathan Brooks. Brooks is finally healthy after missing almost two full seasons with knee injuries.

The Panthers also added veteran free agent Darren Waller to the mix, giving Young an experienced pass-catching tight end.

The addition of edge rusher Jaelan Phillips and inside linebacker Devin Lloyd in free agency should help bolster a defense that improved from last in the league in 2024 to 16th last season.

Aaron Glenn Of The Jets Starts NFL Season On The Hot Seat

The NFL had an offseason in which there was a record-tying 10 head coaching changes.

Next offseason might not see that many changes, but there will be some. NFL teams have become increasingly impatient and quick to change head coaches. There's even a notion that Green Bay Packers coach Matt LaFleur, who has won 65.4% of his games and has just one losing season out of seven, could be on the hot seat if the Packers don't do well enough this season. Whether that comes to pass, it shows how tough of a profession it can be.

Here are the coaches on the hottest seats heading into the season:

•New York Jets' Aaron Glenn

Glenn was a candidate to be one and done after a very disheartening 3-14 season. Glenn stayed, but he replaced 12 of the 22 assistants from last year's staff. That type of turnover is a clear indication that the head coach needs to show improvement the following season. If the Jets are as uncompetitive as they were in Glenn's first season, it seems likely that a change would be made. And the Jets have plenty of roster holes heading into the season.

•Tampa Bay Buccaneers' Todd Bowles

Bowles was in trouble after the Buccaneers went from 6-2 to losing seven of eight games and coming up short in the NFC South, which didn't have a single team over .500.



•Cincinnati Bengals' Zac Taylor

The Bengals have missed the playoffs three straight seasons in Joe Burrow's prime.

Indianapolis Colts' Shane Steichen

It's rare in this era for coaches to miss the playoffs four times to start their tenure and still keep their job.

•Washington Commanders' Dan Quinn

A year ago, it would have been shocking to see Quinn on this list. The Commanders were coming off a magical season that led to the NFC championship game. But last season was a huge step back, including Quinn admitting to a mistake having Jayden Daniels on the field in a blowout and seeing him dislocate his elbow. Then Quinn changed both coordinators in the offseason. There's usually only one move to make after that if the team doesn't improve. If the Commanders have soured on Quinn, they might quickly make a move to maximize Daniels being on his rookie contract.

The Aggie-Eagle Classic Is This Weekend, And NCCU Is Ready!

CAMPUS ECHO—The 2026 NCAA college football season is fast approaching with N.C. Central University's Eagles set to begin the season on Aug. 29 against the Texas Southern University Tigers for the first time in both schools' history.

The Eagles were forced to make changes across the roster this offseason and endured the challenge of bringing in new assistant coaches. The question remains before the season begins, can the Eagles return to the top of the MEAC conference?

Since the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Eagles had finished in the top 2 of the MEAC conference every year until last season.

An 8-4 record landed the Eagles third place to finish the 2025 season, the lowest finish during the Coach Oliver era.

This season the Eagles look to find their way back to the top of the conference and potentially an appearance in the Celebration Bowl.

Head coach of the Eagles, Trei Oliver, is coming into this season with five new coaches added to his staff.

New offensive coordinator, Chris Barnette, joins the team after a two year stint at Alabama State University where they were the best offense in the SWAC conference last season.

Former NFL linebacker Tommy Thigpen will serve as the new defensive coordinator with an extensive coaching background including at UNC-Chapel Hill, Auburn University, University of Tennessee, Tennessee State University, University of Illinois and Bowling Green State University.

Grayson Reed is set to be the new offensive line coach coming from the University of Southern California and Elijah Coleman will be the new cornerback coach after three years at Howard.



NCCU alumni Omar Beasley was named Director of Speed Development.

The Eagles roster on both sides of the field also saw a major overhaul. Last season's star quarterback Walker Harris and many other key offensive players will not be back for the 2026 season. The Eagles top wide receiver, running back and offensive lineman had to be replaced along with the entire starting defensive line and top linebacker from last season.

NCCU is facing a new challenge they've never seen before under Coach Oliver but despite the changes, the Eagles were still voted to finish second in the MEAC in preseason polls.

Returning senior wide receiver Chance Peterson was also voted 2026 MEAC Preseason Offensive Player of the Year. Five Eagles total made the Preseason All-MEAC First Team with five others making the Second Team.

Expectations remain high for the Eagles regardless of feeling like a brand new team to long time fans. Even still, NCCU will continue to be one of the better coached teams across HBCU Football under Coach Oliver.

Some of the big games to get excited about this season include the 98th Aggie-Eagle Classic against long time rival North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University on Sept. 12th.

The Eagles will travel to Greenville, N.C. on Sept. 26th to take on American Conference powerhouse Eastern Carolina University.

The Eagles only nationally televised game of the season will be against their first conference opponent Delaware State University on Oct. 23rd. Most NCCU games will be streamed on ESPN+ with the exception of the games against TSU, Elizabeth City State, Campbell University, and Delaware State.

NCCU begins their season on the road against Texas Southern on Aug. 29th, streaming on HBCU GO.



Birdies, Bogeys, and Bragging Rights

The purpose of the Carolinian Clubbers is to bring the community closer through golf. We used to have Meadowbrook and Tee Off as places to use for community congregation and competition. Though we no longer have those courses, we still have those connections. The Carolinian Clubbers events are simply ways to reconnect us and bring us closer.

These rounds of golf are about more than birdies, bogeys and bragging rights. They are about camaraderie. They are about networking, with a side of friendly competition. They are about fresh air and exercise. The Carolinian Clubbers events are a chance to hang out, have fun and help support your community in the process.

Over the next few weeks, The Carolinian newspaper will announce locations of courses and tee times for us to go out and play nine holes on a local golf course. For every golfer that comes out to play in a Carolinian Clubber event, the golf course will make a donation to the foundation. There is no easier, or more fun way to show your support for your community.

Each week the newspaper will advertise the course and tee times available for the following week's event. You can either call the course directly to make your tee time, or you can send Paul Ross an email at paul.ross@caro.news to coordinate it for you. If you choose to call the course directly, be sure to mention the Carolinian Clubbers when making your reservation.

We are so very excited to offer these events to you! Fall is for football, friends and foursomes. Let's Play!

IMMIGRANT PATIENTS

Continued from page 5

er than responsive to patients' concerns. Even patients who are fully fluent in English and comfortable navigating the health system may come to expect not to be fully heard.

That expectation can shape where people feel comfortable seeking care.

Sharing a background, whether through race, ethnicity, language or cultural experience, can sometimes help create a sense of connection – especially at the start of a relationship.

But research suggests the relationship is more nuanced than simply matching patients and doctors by identity. The way a doctor communicates, as well as whether they listen carefully, take concerns seriously and involve patients in decisions, also plays a central role.

In one study that examined physician-patient relationships across racial and ethnic groups, patients who felt personally similar to their physician – for example, in how the physician communicated, approached decisions or seemed to understand their concerns – were more likely to trust their doctor, feel satisfied with their care and follow medical advice.

Research on patient-centered care has similarly found that patients value interactions where they feel respected, understood and able to communicate openly.

Together, these studies suggest that while shared backgrounds can sometimes help create trust, communication and interpersonal connection may matter just as much.

More research is needed to understand how much these experiences reflect differences in communication itself versus connection spurred by a common background. But for immigrant patients, it may not be the shared identity itself that matters most, but the expectation that it will help them feel more easily understood. When patients consistently struggle to find that experience, shared background can become one of its few visible signals.

Understanding why immigrant patients make these choices ultimately reveals something more universal: Trust in medicine is shaped not only by clinical expertise, but by everyday human interaction. And patients value this quality so highly that they actively seek out providers who they believe will offer that sense of understanding and connection.

Church

African Language Findinng New Life—*CONT'D FROM PG 6*

Mubonderi, a linguistics lecturer at Zimbabwe Open University. His research notes the importance of ensuring that African languages have a place in technologies shaping how people communicate, learn and trade.

"In most cases, African languages were sidelined. They were never exposed or modernized to be used in commerce, science and technology," he said. "When a language has a very low status, there's a danger that that language eventually becomes endangered."

Culture and connection are driving the new interest

Governments and international organizations are trying to reverse that trend.

The African Union's 2022 decision to adopt Kiswahili, spoken in much of east Africa, as an official working language has raised its international profile. The United Nations declared 2022-2032 the International Decade of Indigenous Languages.

And the AU continental body and UNESCO are supporting efforts to document and revitalize African languages, including using artificial intelligence to generate and translate children's books and teacher guides.

But there's a steep digital disadvantage. UNESCO says only 10 languages around the world dominate the "internet ecosystem," while less than 2% of African languages have a meaningful online presence. That leaves many with too little data to train artificial intelligence systems.

Still, momentum for change is growing, with much of it from Africans abroad.

"People of African descent have come to realize that we also have our own identity which we need to embrace and be proud of. You go on Facebook, you go on TikTok, you are seeing many different efforts," Mubonderi said. Younger diaspora Africans "are trying by all means to revive, to revitalize, to make use of these languages."

Chindovi said she hears that desire from children and their parents.

"When people are away from home, they long for home more than when they are home," she said.

Nigerian game show penalizes English speakers

That hunger for connection is also reshaping culture.

In Nigeria, a game show called "Masoyinbo," meaning "Do not speak English," has turned Yoruba, one of the country's most widely spoken languages, into prime-time entertainment. Contestants, including diaspora Nigerians, are tested on Yoruba language and culture, with prizes reaching thousands of dollars.

Host Olalekan Fabilola, who started the show in 2024, sees its popularity as part of a wider shift.

"If 'Masoyinbo' had started like 10 years ago, it wouldn't have been what it is now," he said. "But we are in the age of cultural resurgence. People want to go back to their roots. Everyone wants to know why, where they are from, and so it's timely."

Tomi Adeshokan, a New Jersey resident who is learning to perfect her Yoruba with Fabilola as a tutor, was part of the audience during a recent recording of the show. She said she lost daily exposure to Yoruba after moving out of her father's home before the COVID-19 pandemic. During the pandemic, she joined Clubhouse just to hear the language and later began taking classes. Now she was back visiting family.

"It's very important for us to immerse ourselves in our culture and not to fully identify with other cultures, like the American, the Western culture," Adeshokan said.

SERMON of the WEEK



KEEP THE VISION ALIVE
Bishop William Eli Ratcliff
Sermonic Text: Numbers 13:1–2, 23, 25, 27–28, 30–33

1The Lord said to Moses, 2"Send some men to explore the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the Israelites. From each ancestral tribe send one of its leaders." ...When they reached the Valley of Eshkol, they cut off a branch bearing a single cluster of grapes. Two of them carried it on a pole between them, along with some pomegranates and figs. At the end of forty days, they returned from exploring the land...They gave Moses this account: "We went into the land to which you sent us, and it does flow with milk and honey! Here is its fruit. But the people who live there are powerful, and the cities are fortified and very large...Then Caleb silenced the people before Moses and said, "We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it." But the men who had gone up with him said, "We can't attack those people; they are stronger than we are." And they spread among the Israelites a bad report about the land they had explored...We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and we looked the same to them."

Something jumped out at me in verse 2. God told Moses to send men to explore Canaan, but don't miss what He said next: the land "which I am giving to the Israelites."

Their assignment was not to decide whether they could have the land. God had already settled that! They didn't have to vote on it, debate it, or hold a committee meeting. God didn't say, "Go see whether I can give it to you." He said, in essence, "Go look at what I'm giving you!" Moreover, there is a difference between exploring a promise and questioning a promise.

1. DON'T QUESTION WHAT GOD HAS ALREADY PROMISED

All twelve men saw the same land, walked on the same ground, and saw the same opportunities, but they didn't return with the same attitude. Attitude can determine altitude.

Ten talked about why it couldn't be done. Joshua and Caleb believed what God had already promised. When they saw giants and fortified cities, those obstacles didn't cancel what God had spoken. If God says go, don't let a giant tell you no!

Ten leaders believed the people were stronger than they were, but they forgot God was stronger than the people! Don't put more faith in what frightens you than in the God who promised you victory. KEEP THE VISION ALIVE!

2. DON'T CARRY THE EVIDENCE AND STILL DOUBT THE PROMISE

Verse 23 says they cut down a cluster of grapes so large that two men carried it on a pole between them. If those grapes had been entered in the State Fair, they wouldn't have just won a blue ribbon—they might have shut the competition down!

But that cluster was only a sample of the orchard God was giving them. They were carrying evidence of the promise while talking themselves out of the promise. They had fruit in their hands but fear in their hearts. They said, "The land is wonderful. It flows with milk and honey. Here's the fruit to prove it... BUT!"

Watch your "but." Sometimes one "but" can cancel everything faith was getting ready to say: "God has been good, but..." "I know He made a way before, but..." "I know He promised it, but..."

Caleb said, "We should go up and take possession for we can certainly do it." He understood that if God gives you a sample, don't mistake the sample for the whole blessing. Those grapes were saying, "There's more where this came from!" KEEP THE VISION ALIVE!

3. DON'T LET A GRASSHOPPER MENTALITY KILL A GOD-GIVEN VISION

The men said, "We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes." Don't miss that—the giants didn't call them grasshoppers. They called themselves grasshoppers! The battle hadn't started, and they had already defeated themselves.

As a child, I sometimes kept grasshoppers in jars for a few days, so I learned something about them. A grasshopper may be small, but God gave that little fellow some powerful legs! He can jump many times his body length, and when jumping isn't enough, God even gave him wings!
So, if you're going to call yourself a grasshopper, at least remember: God equipped the grasshopper to get somewhere!

Don't underestimate what God can do with something small. David looked small beside Goliath. Gideon's army looked small beside the Midianites. A little boy's lunch became an all-you-can-eat seafood buffet for five thousand hungry people!

But unbelief turned Israel's journey toward the promise into years of going in circles. Joshua and Caleb kept the vision alive because the next generation deserved more than another trip around the same mountain.

Sometimes keeping the vision alive isn't just about you reaching the promise. It's about making sure those coming behind you don't spend their lives circling what God intended them to possess.

If God said it—KEEP THE VISION ALIVE!

If giants stand in your way—KEEP THE VISION ALIVE!

If you feel like a grasshopper—KEEP THE VISION ALIVE!

In 1969, a year before I graduated from high school, a group had a hit song, "Going in Circles." The devil can have us going round and round, everywhere except where God wants us to go. But our ancestors knew something about circles too: "Will the circle be unbroken...?"

Before we get to that circle in the sky, God needs to break some circles down here—the circles of fear, doubt, defeat, and doing the same old thing with the same wrong circle of people!

God didn't bring us out to have us walking around in circles. HE BROUGHT US OUT—TO BRING US IN! Don't break the vision—BREAK THE CIRCLE! And as long as God lets you live, believe God, keep moving toward the promise, and KEEP THE VISION ALIVE! So, sing a new song and say, "I'M A LIVING TESTIMONY!"

Please visit www.youtube.com/@lincolnparkholinesschurch1913. We invite you to Like, Subscribe, and Share your comments. We would love to hear from you.

Saint Paul AME Celebrates National Register Marker For 178-Year History

By Jordan Meadows
Staff Writer





Saint Paul AME Church in downtown Raleigh unveiled a new National Register marker from the U.S. Department of the Interior this week, marking the latest recognition in the 178-year-old congregation's history and adding to previous designations from the city of Raleigh, the state of North Carolina and Wake County.

The church, built in 1884 at 402 W. Edenton St. by Black masons, was the first independent African American congregation in Raleigh and remains the oldest Black church in Wake County; it was first listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1987.

The new marker highlights the church's connection to the first Freedmen's Conventions, when freedmen gathered at Saint Paul in 1865 and 1866 to organize around voting rights, the right to testify in court and other civil rights protections in the aftermath of the Civil War. That history was separately recognized last year with a historical marker commemorating the conventions, unveiled 160 years to the day after the first gathering.

The Rev. Dr. Steven L. Lyons, the church's pastor, said the new designation underscores both the congregation's endurance and its continuing mission.

"It allows this community, it allows the world to see that Saint Paul is here and we have lasted all of this time to be able to do what God would have us to do, to serve humanity, whomever, to be here, to provide whatever we need to advance the kingdom of our God," Lyons said.

Florence Avery, chair of the church's Historical Commission, pointed to the congregation's continued vitality across generations.

"It's a wonderful church," Avery said. "We have a lot of things going on, you know, of all ages. We have a senior group that really is something else."

The unveiling drew a range of local and federal officials, including U.S. Rep. Deborah Ross, Wake County Sheriff Willie Rowe, Raleigh Mayor Janet Cowell, U.S. House candidate Paul Barringer, NC State House Rep. Monika Johnson-Hostler, and Wake County Board Chair Donald Mial.

Church leaders said they intend to keep researching and documenting the congregation's history as part of an ongoing preservation effort alongside community outreach work.

Practical Biblical Principles

PUT ON CHRIST
READ: ROMANS 13:8-14
By John L. Caldwell, Pastor
New Jerusalem Baptist Cathedral

Given the time and place it is the responsibility of God's spokesman to pick the subject which will be relative to and address the issues at hand. Jesus never preached an issue which did not address the problem at hand for that time and place. In short, the preacher is not to speak about Moses crossing the Red Sea, when there are little children dying of starvation.
When a preacher speaks on issues needing to be addressed right now, he is using his time wisely. Other wise he is wasting his time as well as the time of the congregation. Thus, the gospel, which is supposed to be good news, is not going anywhere. The gospel is supposed to be timely and on time. And if the gospel is not on time, hope is lost and the out-of-time-gospel becomes non effective. The gospel not only saves and brings salvation, but it also opens doors to freedom, helps us make progress and guides us to our destination we are hoping for. If at any time the pulpit mis-times the needed gospel, the enemy laughs and claps his hands. In other words, a mis-timed or out-of- sync gospel goes nowhere and is ineffective.

If we take note of the written gospels, we will see that the writers addressed more than one topic in their sermon. This is because the community needed to hear all these topics in one address. Keeping in mind, the disciples were a traveling group. In short, this gospel information and spiritual guidance were needed at the time, to address the issues of that time which were never addressed. This way the people would be kept updated with the times and issues at hand.

When Jesus spoke the Beatitude Sermon, He was on time with this sermon. For the people following Him were hungry for worldly, and materialistic blessings after seeing Christ perform signs of wonder and miracles, especially hearing of Him feeding the hungry and healing the sick. In a sense, the people sought a "free ride," so to speak if they followed Jesus. The sermon on the Mount poured ice cold water on the expectation hot desires for a free ride of worldly goodies. St Paul's preaching, like that of Jesus, was always timely and on time for the problems at hand.

In Romans 13, Paul had a unique way of telling the people of yesterday and today to get ready for Christ's return. Paul first spoke on the subject: Submitting oneself to the government. In other words, civil disobedience is not an option for Christians-Read Rom 13 1-7. Next, he speaks of Loving your neighbor. Lastly, he speaks of "Putting on Christ."

The first two subjects were issues which needed to be addressed at that time God governs the government of all nations today. This includes our present sitting President. This is a different situation if the Leader is not in compliant with God's will. The second issue is about love which is God's supreme subject. "Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves has fulfilled the law."
The first issue is obedience, and the second issue is love. One cannot put on Christ without either.

There is a timely warning about the issue of putting on Christ. One can only put on Christ when one is readily expecting Him to return at any moment.

"And to do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now, our salvation is nearer than when we first believed." Salvation means Believers were saved in the past (justification), we are continually being saved (sanctification), and third, will ultimately be saved (glorification) when Christ returns. Believers are to always be aware of Christ's return. In other words, Be Ready! To put on Christ is to "Be Ready"!

Paul continues, "The night is far spent, the day is at hand." Time is almost gone. Christ's return is closer than we think.

These remarks are a prelude to the near return of Christ. These remarks are meant for today's Christians to remind them not to get too caught up in the world's activities of feel good.

The signs of the times are upon us now. Floods, earthquakes, fires, falling away from the church, men being lovers of themselves, disrespectful of parents, heady and high minded (egotistical), unthankful and unholy, unloving, unforgiving (2 Timothy 3:1-5). These issues are present and on-going today. If one cannot discern these issues and events today, then one is spiritually blind and have no real sense of our Lord's eminent return.

"Therefore, let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly, as in the day, (Otherwise, implying walking improperly at night). Walking not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lust" (Romans 13:12-14).

Compare this short, powerful message with that of Paul's words in 1Thessalonians 4:16-17 and those in Revelation 20:11-12).
It's the squeakiest wheel which needs the most grease!



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Classifieds

CHATHAM COUNTY

North Carolina Chatham County
In the General Court of Justice
District Court Division
File No: 26CV000868-180
NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION

To: IGINIO EVELIO HERNANDEZ DIAZ, Defendant.

Take notice that a pleading seeking relief against you has been filed. The nature of the relief being sought is for child custody. You are required to make defense to such pleading no later than October 7, 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, Enma Julissa Roblero Perez, will apply to the court located at 40 E Chatham St, Pittsboro, NC 27312 for the relief sought.

This, the 19th day of August, 2026.
Aneta Paval
Paval Law Offices, PLLC
Telephone: (919) 410-6690
8/27, 9/3, and 9/10/2026

DURHAM COUNTY

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File No: 26E000895-310

Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of MARK ROBERT MCGRATH, deceased, late of Durham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 10th day of December, 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 10th day of September, 2026.
Robert F. McGrath, Executor
1230 Trillium Circle, Apt. G
Raleigh, NC 27606
9/10, 9/17, 9/24, and 10/1/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File No: 26E000829-310

Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of MARION MILES, deceased, late of Durham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 10th day of December, 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 10th day of September, 2026.
John Erick Miles, Executor
c/o Floyd B. McKissick, III, Esq.
McKissick & McKissick
835 N Mangum Street
Durham, NC 27701
9/10, 9/17, 9/24, and 10/1/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File No: 26E001085-310

Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of EDITH C. HEATHERLY, deceased, late of Durham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 10th day of December, 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 10th day of September, 2026.
Charlotte Sinclaire, Executor
c/o Robert N. Crosswhite, Attorney
239 E. Broad Street
Statesville NC 28677
9/10, 9/17, 9/24, and 10/1/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS

ALL PERSONS, firms and corporations having claims against DAVID L. HARRISON, deceased, of DURHAM COUNTY, NC, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before December 4, 2026 or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment.

This is the 10th day of September 2026.
26E000549-310
Carl D. Harrison, David D. Harrison
Administrators of the Estate,
c/o MONROE JENKINS, PA
PO Box 12534
Durham, North Carolina 27709
9/10, 9/17, 9/24, and 10/1/2026
DURHAM COUNTY
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION
In The General Court Of Justice
District Court Division
File No.: 26CV001593-310
SYLVIE T. MBIOLA, PLAINTIFF VS. JABARIO N. HARRIS and LASHANDA R. SCARBOROUGH, DEFENDANTS

TO: JABARIO N. HARRIS

Take notice that a pleading seeking relief against you has been filed in the above entitled action. The nature of the relief sought is as follows:

Complaint for Property Damage, Loss of Use as a result of a Motor Vehicle Accident on July 12, 2025 on Duke Street in Durham, NC.

You are required to make defense to such pleading not later than October 20, 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 10th day of September, 2026.
Robert T. Perry
N.C. State Bar #11051
PERRY, PERRY & PERRY, P.A.
Attorneys for Plaintiff
601 Fayetteville Street, Suite 300
Post Office Drawer 2051
Durham, North Carolina 27702
Telephone: (919) 683-8685
9/10, 9/17, and 9/24/2026
DURHAM COUNTY
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION
In The General Court Of Justice
District Court Division
File No.: 26CV001593-310
SYLVIE T. MBIOLA, PLAINTIFF VS. JABARIO N. HARRIS and LASHANDA R. SCARBOROUGH, DEFENDANTS

TO: LASHANDA R. SCARBOROUGH

Take notice that a pleading seeking relief against you has been filed in the above entitled action. The nature of the relief sought is as follows:

Complaint for Property Damage, Loss of Use as a result of a Motor Vehicle Accident on July 12, 2025 on Duke Street in Durham, NC.

You are required to make defense to such pleading not later than October 20, 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 10th day of September, 2026.
Robert T. Perry
N.C. State Bar #11051
PERRY, PERRY & PERRY, P.A.
Attorneys for Plaintiff
601 Fayetteville Street, Suite 300
Post Office Drawer 2051
Durham, North Carolina 27702
Telephone: (919) 683-8685
9/10, 9/17, and 9/24/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File No: 26E001048-310

Having qualified as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of MARIANA AYAD MANSI BEKHEIT, deceased, late of Durham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 3rd day of December, 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 3rd day of September, 2026.
Youssef Bekheit, Administrator
1510 Autumn Ridge Drive
Durham, NC 27712
9/3, 9/10, 9/17, and 9/24/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File No: 26E001073-310

Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of ALEISE GYANT, deceased, late of Durham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 3rd day of December, 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 3rd day of September, 2026.
Collin Thomas, Executor
4110 Durhams Crossing
Cincinnati, OH 45245
9/3, 9/10, 9/17, and 9/24/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
File No: 24E001967-310

Having qualified as Administrator of the Estate of PEGGY ANNE RICHARDSON, deceased, of 321 E Carver Street, Durham County, Durham, NC 27704, the undersigned does hereby notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the estate of said decedent to exhibit them to the undersigned in care of the attorney for the estate on or before December 4, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

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

This the 3rd day of September, 2026.
Jennifer Shannon Richardson
Administrator of the Estate of Peggy Anne Richardson
c/o Law Office of Jeffrey L. Austin, PLLC
500 Westover Dr. #32043
Sanford, NC 27330
FOR PUBLICATION: The Carolinian
9/3, 9/10, 9/17 and 9/24/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File No: 26E001002-310

Having qualified as CO-ADMINISTRATORS of the Estate of CHARLES LAMBERT AUTRY, deceased, late of Durham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 3rd day of December, 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 3rd day of September, 2026.
Jennifer Ferrer and Brenda Penelope Autry-McAllister, Co-Administrators of the Estate of Charles Lambert Autry
Seth M. Gerringer, Attorney
Deal Law, PLLC
1153 Huffman Mill Road
Burlington, NC 27215
9/3, 9/10, 9/17, and 9/24/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
File Number 26E001047-310

ALL PERSONS, firms and corporations having claims against HELEN L. HILDERMAN a/k/a HELEN LONG HILDERMAN, deceased, of Durham County, N.C., are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before 12-3-2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This 9-3-2026.

Jennifer W. Sosensky, Executor of the Estate of Helen L. Hilderman a/k/a Helen Long Hilderman c/o Lori M. Bernstein, Attorney at Law
2726 Croasdaile Dr. Suite 202
Durham, North Carolina 27705
For Publication: 9-3, 9-10, 9-17, 9-24-2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File No: 26E001035-310

Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of LAURA ANN BRACEY, deceased, late of Durham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 3rd day of December, 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 3rd day of September, 2026.
Ryan Matthew Cahela, Executor
1113 Banyon Grove Loop
Cary, NC 27513
9/3, 9/10, 9/17, and 9/24/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File No: 26E000613-310

Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of BRYAN LEIGH SELLARS, deceased, late of Durham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 28th day of November, 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 27th day of August, 2026.
Gladys Denise Hobbs, Executor
11 Sparger Spring Ln.
Durham, NC 27705
8/27, 9/3, 9/10 and 9/17/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Having qualified as Administrator of the Estate of NATHAN BERNARD CURRY, deceased, this is to notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the Estate of Nathan Bernard Curry to present them to the undersigned on or before the 28th day of November 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 27th day of August, 2026.
Delores Leathers Curry,
Administrator Attorney for the Estate of Nathan Bernard Curry c/o
John W. Perry
Post Office Drawer 2051
Durham, North Carolina 27702
Telephone: (919) 683-8685
8/27, 9/3, 9/10 and 9/17/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF DURHAM
NOTICE TO CREDITORS

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 6th day of August 2026, as Executor of the ESTATE OF JOHN CALHOUN MARLOWE, JR. aka JOHN C. MARLOWE, JR., Deceased, of Durham County, North Carolina, does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 28th day of November 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 27th day of August.
John C. Marlowe III
EXECUTOR
ESTATE OF JOHN CALHOUN MARLOWE, JR.
c/o Shirley Diefenbach, Attorney
Walker Lambe, PLLC
Post Office Box 51549
8/27, 9/3, 9/10 and 9/17/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
COUNTY OF DURHAM
NOTICE TO CREDITORS

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 21st day of August, 2026, as Administrator CTA of the ESTATE OF MORRY WAYNE SPITZER, 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 30th day of November, 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 27th day of August,
MADELINE SELTMAN
ADMINISTRATOR CTA
ESTATE OF MORRY WAYNE SPITZER
c/o Jennifer Dalman, Attorney
Walker Lambe, PLLC
240 Leigh Farm Rd, Ste 100
Durham, North Carolina 27707
8/27, 9/3, 9/10 and 9/17/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
File No: 26E000905-310

Having qualified as Executor of the Estate of JOHN B. MODRAK (also known as JOHN BRUCE MODRAK), deceased, of 4119 Edenton Lane, Durham County, Durham, NC 27707, the undersigned does hereby notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the estate of said decedent to exhibit them to the undersigned in care of the attorney for the estate on or before November 28, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

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

This the 27th day of August, 2026.
Susan P. Modrak
Executor of the Estate of John B. Modrak c/o Law Office of Jeffrey L. Austin, PLLC
500 Westover Dr. #32043
Sanford, NC 27330
8/27, 9/3, 9/10 and 9/17/2026
NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
DISTRICT COURT
CASE NUMBER: 26 CV 008790-310

Custody action of Karla Morena Trigueño Escalante against John Doe, father of the minor M.A.T.E. born September 8, 2020.

Note that a judicial plea seeking relief against you has been filed in the previously authorized custody motion. The nature of the relief requested is as follows: Karla Morena Trigueño Escalante is seeking full custody of the minor child M.A.T.E. and requests that the court determine that you have abandoned and neglected your child, thereby acting in an incompatible manner with your right to be a parent, and that reunification with your child is not in the best interest of the child. You are obligated to respond with a defense no later than 30 days after receiving this message; failure to do so will result in the party seeking service against you applying to the court for custody. The hearing date will be forthcoming, and the hearing will take place in Durham County. For more information about the hearing, call the Durham County Clerk's office at (919) 808-3223 and reference the case number 26 CV 008790-310

Maria Slater, Esq.
Counsel for the Plaintiff
NC Bar #51679
330 S. Greene St., Ste. 100A
Greensboro, NC 27401
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
336-895-2694
Mslater@cwsglobal.org
8/27, 9/3, and 9/10/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION
District Court Division
File No. 26CV007999-310

[CHILD CUSTODY PROCEEDING] ANA CONTRERAS NUNEZ AND MARITZA NUNEZ TABORA, Plaintiffs v. GILBERTO AGUILAR LOPEZ AND SILSA LOPEZ RAMIREZ, Defendants. To Defendant, father of E.L.A.L. a female child, born to Defendant Silsa on 5/11/2010. TAKE NOTICE that a pleading seeking relief against you has been filed in the above-entitled action. The relief sought against you is an award of legal custody of the child to Plaintiffs. You are required to make a defense to such pleading with the Durham County Clerk of Court within 30 days of receiving this notice. If you fail to answer the Complaint the party's seeking relief against you will apply to the Court for the relief sought. The hearing date will be forthcoming and will take place in Durham County. For more information about the hearing, call the Durham County Clerk's Office at 919-808-3223.

This 27th day of August, 2026.
Adriana Hernandez, Attorney for Plaintiffs
CWS Greensboro
330 S Greene St, Ste 100A
Greensboro NC 27401
336-470-0495
8/27, 9/3, and 9/10/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION
FILE NO.: 26CV009105-310
Juan Hernadez Morales
v. Verenice Hernandez Morales
To: Verenice Hernandez Morales

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, Hayden Yeray Hernandez Hernandez. 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.

Publication begins This is the 27th day of August 2026.
Yesenia L. Polanco-Galdamez,
Attorney for Plaintiff
411 Andrews Road, Suite 130
Durham, NC 27705 (919) 294-8032
8/27, 9/3, and 9/10/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Estate of Michael Charles Supples
File No. 26E000999-310

ALL PERSONS, firms, and corporations having claims against MICHAEL CHARLES SUPPLES, deceased, of Durham County, N.C., are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before November 20, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This the 20th of August, 2026. Matthew Thomas Supples, Administrator of the Estate of Michael Charles Supples, c/o Amanda Honea, Attorney, 1255 Crescent Green, Suite 200, Cary, NC 27518.
8/20, 8/27, 9/3, and 9/10/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Having qualified as Co-Administrators of the Estate of SOSRETHA HOBSON, deceased, of Durham County, North Carolina, File No. 21E000469-310, this is to notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the Estate of Sosretha Hobson to present such claims to the undersigned on or before ninety (90) days from the date of first publication of this notice, or the claims may be forever barred.

All persons indebted to the estate are requested to make immediate payment to the undersigned.
Charmita Hobson Graham
Co-Administrator
409 S. Meadow Road
Raleigh, NC 27603
and
Lakeisha Hobson
Co-Administrator
1118 E. Geer Street
Durham, NC 27704
Estate of Sosretha Hobson
File No. 21E000469-310
8/20, 8/27, 9/3, and 9/10/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS

ALL PERSONS, firms and corporations having claims against ROLAND VELEZ, deceased, of Durham County County, N.C., are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before (3 months and 2 days from 1st date of publication), or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This August 20, 2026.
26E000280-310
Sara Velez Mallea, Administrator of the Estate. Mail claims to:
Attn: Nicholas A. Fernez
Silver Eagle Law
PO Box 11
Smithfield, NC 27577
8/20, 8/27, 9/3, and 9/10/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File No: 26E001009-310

Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of CAROLYN ANN HOLT, deceased, late of Durham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 20th day of November, 2026, or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This, the 20th day of August, 2026.
Angela Yearby, Executor
610 Chalice Street
Durham, NC 27705
8/20, 8/27, 9/3, and 9/10/2026 \
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File No: 26E000985-310

Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of DONALD HARVEY BALL, deceased, late of Durham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 20th day of November, 2026, or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This, the 20th day of August, 2026.
Kristina Caitlin Ball, Executor
100 Cathy Rd.
Carrboro, NC 27510
8/20, 8/27, 9/3, and 9/10/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

Classifieds

DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

All persons, firms and corporations having claims against JUANITA NOVELLA TAYLOR, DECEASED, of Durham County, NC, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before November 21, 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 the 20th day of August 2026. All correspondence should be to Thomas Kenneth Taylor, III, Administrator c/o Florence A. Bowens, Attorney, P.O. Box 51263, Durham, NC 27717.
8/20, 8/27, 9/3, and 9/10/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

All persons having claims against SUE LYNN ASHE of Durham County, North Carolina, are notified to present them to Brigid Ashe-Moore and Clara Ashe-Moore, as Co-Administrators of the Estate of Sue Lynn Ashe, c/o Brittany N. Porter, Attorney at Law at NextGen Estate Solutions, 101 Glen Lennox Drive, Suite 300, Chapel Hill, NC 27517, on or before November 20, 2026. Failure to present a claim in timely fashion will result in this Notice being pleaded in bar of recovery against the estate, the Co-Administrators, and the devisees of Sue Lynn Ashe. Those indebted to Sue Lynn Ashe are asked to make prompt payment to the Estate.
Brigid Ashe-Moore and Clara Ashe-Moore, Co-Administrators of the Estate of Sue Lynn Ashe
C/O Brittany N. Porter, Attorney
NextGen Estate Solutions
101 Glen Lennox Drive, Suite 300
Chapel Hill, NC 27517
8/20, 8/27, 9/3, and 9/10/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File No: 26E000732-310

Donna K. McClure and Stephanie L. Barker, having qualified as Executors of the Estate of JANICE D. HOLDER, late of Durham County, North Carolina, hereby wish to notify all persons having claims against the estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned at the below listed address on or before the 20th day of November, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

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

This is the 20th day of August, 2026.
Donna K. McClure
Stephanie L. Barker
307 Broach Road
Durham, NC 27703
8/20, 8/27, 9/3, and 9/10/2026

ORANGE COUNTY

NORTH CAROLINA
ORANGE COUNTY

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION
In The General Court Of Justice
District Court Division
FILE NO. 26CV001727-670

DAVID ISAAC HICKERSON, Plaintiff, Vs. BRITTANY ANNE BEAL, Defendant.

To Brittany Anne Beal, the above named Defendant:

Take Notice that a pleading seeking relief against you has been filed in the above-entitled action. The nature of the relief being sought is as follows: The Plaintiff is seeking primary custody of the minor child, Dev Isaac Hickerson, with supervised and conditioned visitation by the Defendant.

You are required to file an answer to the Complaint within forty (40) days after the date of first publication of this Notice, exclusive of such date, said deadline being the 20th day of October, 2026; and upon your failure to do so, the party seeking relief against you will apply to the Court for the relief sought in the Complaint.

The address of the Clerk of Superior Court of Orange County is:

Clerk of Superior Court of Orange County
106 E Margaret Ln,
Hillsborough, NC 27278

The name and contact information of Plaintiff's attorney is as follows:

Robert N. Jennings
Jennings Law
P.O. Box 1015
Graham, NC 27253
(919) 563-2550
Fax: (919) 563-2500
rob@JLawNC.com

This the 10th day of September, 2026.

JENNINGS LAW
By: Robert N. Jennings,
Attorney for Plaintiff
NC State Bar No. 31612
9/10, 9/17, and 9/24/2026

WAKE COUNTY

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File No: 25E003697-910

Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of MARIE BIRDSALL PALMER A/K/A MARIE B. PALMER, deceased, late of Wake County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 10th day of December, 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 10th day of September, 2026.
Desiree Glascoe, Executor
3705 Del Mar Drive
Woodbridge, Virginia 22193
9/10, 9/17, 9/24, and 10/1/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Having qualified as Personal Representative of the Estate of LINDA GAIL FISH, deceased, late of WAKE County, North Carolina, the undersigned does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against the estate of said decedent to exhibit them to the undersigned at: 300 PINEHURST AVENUE, SOUTHERN PINES, NORTH CAROLINA 28387, on or before the 17th day of DECEMBER, 2026 or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons, firms and Corporations indebted to the said estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This the 10th day of September, 2026.
STEPHANIE FISH JENKINS
PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE
FOR THE ESTATE OF
LINDA GAIL FISH
JAMES H. JENKINS
Thigpen and Jenkins, L.L.P.
Attorney for Estate
300 Pinehurst Avenue
Southern Pines, North Carolina 28387
9/10, 9/17, 9/24, and 10/1/2026

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION: NORTH CAROLINA, WAKE COUNTY. In the General Court of Justice, District Court Division, File#26SP000446-910 [Adoption Proceeding]

TO: UNKNOWN FATHER. TAKE NOTICE that a Petition for Adoption was filed on 2/24/26, with the Clerk of Superior Court for Wake County, Raleigh, NC, in the above-referenced special proceeding. The Petition relates to a male child, Z.J.G., conceived in or about April 2019 and born to Keniesia Gee on 1/1/2020, in Raleigh, NC. You are required to make defense to such pleading with the Wake County Clerk of Court no later than10/21/26, which is 40 days from the first publication of this notice to participate in and receive further notice of this proceeding. IN THE EVENT YOU FAIL TO RESPOND, THE CLERK OF SUPERIOR COURT WILL ENTER AN ORDER ALLOWING THE ADOPTION TO PROCEED WITHOUT YOUR CONSENT. Any parental rights that you may have will be terminated upon the entry of the decree of adoption. This, the 10th day of September, 2026. Ashley Treible, Attorney for Petitioners, P.O. Box 58058, Raleigh, NC, 27658, 919-794-7511, ext. 9. The Carolinian 9/10, 9/17, 9/24, 2026.

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION NORTH CAROLINA COUNTY OF WAKE

In the General Court of Justice, District Court Division, File No: 26CV019460-910 [CHILD CUSTODY PROCEEDING] ARACELI GOMEZ HERNANDEZ, Plaintiff v. JOSE MANUEL MALDONADO GUZMAN, Defendant. To Defendant, father of minors born on 9/4/12 and 7/28/14. TAKE NOTICE that a pleading seeking relief against you has been filed in the above-entitled action. A hearing date of 11/18/2026 has been scheduled. The relief sought against you is an award of legal custody of the children to Plaintiff. You are required to make defense with the Wake County Clerk of Court no later than 10/21/2026. Upon your failure to do so, the party seeking relief against you will apply to the Court for the relief sought. This, the 10th day of September 2026. Katherine Moye, Attorney for Plaintiff, P.O. Box 58058, Raleigh, NC, 27658, 919/794-7511, The Carolinian, 9/10, 9/17, 9/24, 2026.

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION NORTH CAROLINA COUNTY OF WAKE

In the General Court of Justice, District Court Division, File No: 26CV021582-910 [CHILD CUSTODY PROCEEDING] ERICA MARIBEL NARVAEZ CASTILLO, Plaintiff v. LUIS ALBERTO CASTANON FLORES, Defendant. To Defendant, father of minor born on 1/12/13. TAKE NOTICE that a pleading seeking relief against you has been filed in the above-entitled action. A hearing date of 11/18/2026 has been scheduled. The relief sought against you is an award of legal custody of the child to Plaintiff. You are required to make defense with the Wake County Clerk of Court no later than 10/21/2026. Upon your failure to do so, the party seeking relief against you will apply to the Court for the relief sought. This, the 10th day of September 2026. Katherine Moye, Attorney for Plaintiff, P.O. Box 58058, Raleigh, NC, 27658, 919/794-7511, The Carolinian, 9/10, 9/17, 9/24,2026.

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File No: 26E001920-910

Having qualified as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of LISA BALDWIN LEWIS, deceased, late of Wake County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 3rd day of December, 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 3rd day of September, 2026.
Michele L. Lee, Administrator
5056 Audreystone Dr.
Cary, NC 27518
9/3, 9/10, 9/17, and 9/24/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

IN THE GENERAL COURT OF JUSTICE
DISTRICT COURT DIVISION
FILE NO. 25CV011744-910
CRYSTAL E. WHITE, Plaintiff, v. MONTREAL L. WHITE, Defendant.
NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION

TO: MONTREAL L. WHITE

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 an Absolute Divorce.

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

This the 3rd day of September, 2026.
Crystal E. White, Plaintiff
108 Elmridge Dr.
Knightdale, NC 27545
9/3, 9/10 and 9/17/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

IN THE GENERAL COURT OF JUSTICE
DISTRICT COURT DIVISION
FILE NO. 26CV012332-910
ZHAHE'M SMITH, Plaintiff, v. MADISON A. JAMES, Defendant.
NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION

TO: MADISON A. JAMES

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 no later than forty (40) days after the first publication of this Notice. Upon your failure to do so, the Plaintiff will apply to the Court for the relief sought.

This the 3rd day of September, 2026.
Zhahe'm Smith, Plaintiff
1904 Southgate Dr.
Raleigh, NC 27610
9/3, 9/10 and 9/17/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File No.: 26E000286-910

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 27th day of March, 2026, as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of VINH THU TAN, Deceased, of Wake 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 26th day of November, 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 27th day of August, 2026.
Maomei Wang, Administrator
c/o Law Office of Fiona Wang, PLLC
135 Parkway Office Ct., Suite 205
Cary, NC 27518
8/27, 9/3, 9/10 and 9/17/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File No.: 25E001270-910

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 15th day of May, 2026, as CO-ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of WILLIAM LEE WRIGHT, Deceased, of Wake 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 26th day of November, 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 27th day of August, 2026.
James Wright Easter
Co-Administrator
3624 Sweet Birch Drive
Greensboro, NC 27406
Patricia Wright, Co-Administrator
753 Fawn Road
Ayden, NC 28613
8/27, 9/3, 9/10 and 9/17/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File No: 26E002040-910

Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of MARY ALICE SULLIVAN, deceased, late of Wake County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 20th day of November, 2026, or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This, the 20th day of August, 2026.
Linda Povlich, Executor
8505 Society Place
Raleigh, NC 27615
8/20, 8/27, 9/3, and 9/10/2026

FORECLOSURE

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

In The General Court Of Justice
Superior Court Division
Before The Clerk
26SP000749-310
In The Matter Of The Foreclosure Of The Deed Of Trust Executed By Nova Rtp Iii, Llc, Recorded On February 14, 2022, In Book 9614, Page 294, In The Durham County Registry.
NOTICE OF SALE

Under and by virtue of the power and authority contained in the Deed of Trust executed by Nova RTP III, LLC ("Grantor") on February 11, 2022, and recorded on February 14, 2022, in Book 9614, Page 294, of the Durham County Registry ("Deed of Trust"), and because of default in the payment of the indebtedness secured by the Deed of Trust (referred to as the "Note"), and pursuant to the Order of the Clerk of Superior Court for Durham County, North Carolina, entered in this foreclosure proceeding, the undersigned, Ryan J. Adams, appointed Substitute Trustee by instrument recorded on June 24, 2026, in Book 10572, Page 704, in the Durham County Registry, will expose for sale at public auction to the highest bidder for cash, that certain tract or parcel of property located in Durham County, North Carolina (including any fixtures and improvements thereon) as more particularly described as follows:

BEING all of Lot 2 shown on the plat of MINOR SUBDIVISION PROPERTY OF VICKERS LAND COMPANY, LLC, dated December 18, 2002, by Riley Surveying, P.A., and recorded in Plat Book 157, Page 311 Durham County Registry, to which plat reference is hereby expressly made for a more particular description of the same.

Property Address: 2680 NC 55 Hwy, Durham, North Carolina

The record owner of the above-described property, as reflected by the records in the Durham County Register of Deeds not more than ten (10) days prior to the posting of this notice is Nova RTP III, LLC.

The above-described real property, improvements and fixtures will be sold subject to any and all superior mortgages, deeds of trust and liens, including, without limitation, the lien of all unpaid ad valorem taxes and assessments, as well as easements, conditions, restrictions and other matters of record filed prior to the Deed of Trust.

The above-described property will be sold "AS IS, WHERE IS." The property is not being sold subject or together with any subordinate rights or interests. Neither the Substitute Trustee, nor the holder of the Note secured by the Deed of Trust being foreclosed, nor the officers, members, managers, directors, attorneys, employees, agents or authorized representatives of either the Substitute Trustee or the holder of the Note make any representation or warranty relating to the title or any physical, environmental, health or safety conditions existing in, on, at or relating to the property being sold, and any and all responsibilities or liabilities arising out of or in any way relating to any such conditions expressly are disclaimed.

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

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

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

The sale will be held open for ten (10) days for upset bid as required by law.
DATE OF SALE: September 25, 2026
HOUR OF SALE: 10:00 a.m.
PLACE OF SALE: Durham County Courthouse
510 S. Dillard Street
Durham, NC 27701

This the 4th day of September, 2026.
ADAMS, HOWELL, SIZEMORE & ADAMS, P.A.
By: /s/ Ryan J. Adams
Ryan J. Adams
N.C. State Bar No.: 27687
1600 Glenwood Ave., Suite 101
Raleigh, North Carolina 27608
Telephone: (919) 900-4700
Facsimile: (919) 839-2230
Email: ryan.adams@adamshowell.com
Substitute Trustee
September 10 & 17, 2026

DATE CORRECTION NOTICE PUBLIC HEARING FOR

Wake County's 2025 Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER)

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT Wake County will hold a public hearing on Monday, September 21, 2026, at 2:00 PM in the Wake County Justice Center, 300 S. Salisbury Street, Raleigh, 2nd Floor, Room 2700. To sign up to speak, submit a comment, or livestream the meeting, please visit: https://tinyurl.com/3uhtxka9

Wake County will receive public input during a public hearing on the County's Draft 2025 CAPER. The CAPER is an annual report required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The report summarizes housing and community development accomplishments during Program Year 2025 (July 1, 2025–June 30, 2026) in Wake County.

Reasonable accommodations and language assistance will be made available upon request for persons with disabilities and individuals with limited English proficiency. Interpreter services, including American Sign Language, may be provided at no cost. Speech or hearing-impaired persons may contact 1-800-735-2962 (TT) or 1-800- 735-8262 (voice).

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 **Hertford Wastewater Treatment Plant Rehabilitation** project for the **Town of Hertford** which bids on **September 28, 2026, at 2:00 PM.** Plans and specifications for this project are available at the following locations: T. A. Loving Company; 400 Patetown Road; Goldsboro, NC 27530 * WithersRavenel; 167 East Chatham Street; Cary, NC 27511 * QuestCDN website.

Potential subcontracting opportunities include but are not limited to surveying, demolition, clearing and grubbing, hauling, earthwork, erosion control, seeding, sodding, electrical, SCADA, bypass pumping, dewatering, CIPC, concrete forms, concrete rebar, and painting. Please contact the Civil Infrastructure Estimating Team (infrastructure@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.

Politics & Election News

Who Is Running For Mayor of Raleigh This Year? Anybody?

By Jordan Meadows
Staff Writer

Raleigh voters are heading into a mayoral election that will look different from previous city elections, with a two-candidate contest, longer terms for city leaders and a new staggered election system reshaping how City Hall will operate for years to come.

Incumbent Mayor Janet Cowell is seeking another term, facing Ashleigh Heath Armstrong in the general election. Because only two candidates filed for mayor, the race did not require Raleigh's newly adopted nonpartisan primary to narrow the field.

The mayoral contest is the first test of major changes Raleigh City Council approved in 2024.

Under the new rules, the city moved away from two-year terms for the mayor and council members and began transitioning to four-year terms. The changes also established staggered elections, meaning roughly half of the council will face voters every two years rather than the entire council being up for election on the same cycle. City officials said the changes were intended to give elected officials more time to govern, reduce the frequency of campaigns and provide greater continuity.

The 2026 election is a transition year: voters will elect the mayor, District A, District B and the at-large candidate who receives the highest number of votes to four-year terms running through 2030.

Districts C, D and E and the at-large candidate receiving the second-highest vote total will initially receive two-year terms and return to the ballot in 2028. After that transition, all Raleigh council seats will operate on four-year terms with elections staggered every two years.

Raleigh is also using a new nonpartisan primary system.

Under the city's rules, district races with more than two candidates are narrowed to two candidates for the November election. For the two at-large seats, a primary is triggered when more than four candidates file, with the field narrowed accordingly. The mayoral race did not meet that threshold, leaving Cowell and Armstrong to advance directly to November.



For Cowell, the campaign comes as Raleigh continues to grapple with the effects of rapid population growth.

During her 2026 State of the City address, Cowell highlighted housing affordability, transportation, public safety, environmental concerns, and quality of life as major areas of focus. She also pointed to continued development of affordable housing, Bus Rapid Transit, water and sewer infrastructure, the new City Hall and the planned Smoky Hollow park as pieces of Raleigh's broader growth strategy.

Public safety has taken on particular importance during the election year following violence surrounding Fourth of July celebrations. Raleigh police reported large gatherings of young people in Brier Creek and Glenwood South, with approximately 3,000 young people estimated at Brier Creek and more than 5,000 in Glenwood South. Police reported nine people shot across several locations and 29 arrests. The incidents prompted city leaders to consider a citywide curfew for people under 18.

The debate over public safety is unfolding alongside broader questions about how Raleigh should manage growth. The city's current priorities include community safety, housing, transportation, environmental resilience, economic development, quality of life and city services. Housing costs have become an especially prominent issue as Raleigh's population has expanded, while transportation advocates and city officials continue to debate transit investment, pedestrian safety and infrastructure needed to accommodate future growth.

North Carolina's 2026 general-election voting period is now underway, with absentee ballots beginning to be distributed last Friday. The voter-registration deadline is Oct. 9, in-person early voting runs from Oct. 15 through Oct. 31, and Election Day is Nov. 3. Absentee ballots must be received by the county board of elections by 7:30 p.m. on Election Day under the current rules.

Despite the NC State Board of Elections' updated guidance concerning absentee-ballot handling, statewide voting changes are separate from Raleigh's municipal election reforms.

Ashleigh Heath Armstrong, Cowell's sole challenger, does not have a campaign website or public social media presence. She is unaffiliated and a Wake County resident since at least 2004, according to state voting records.

Four Cities Statewide Proclaim Women Executives Circle Day

RALEIGH, N.C. — Lt. Gov. Rachel Hunt received the inaugural Vanguard Award for Public Leadership and Service during the first anniversary celebration of Women Executives Circle at the North Carolina Executive Mansion.

Hunt also accepted an honor on behalf of Gov. Josh Stein as four North Carolina municipalities proclaimed Sept. 3 as Women Executives Circle Day.

Women Executives Circle, or WEC, is a statewide network of senior women leaders founded in Raleigh by Siri Swahari. In its first year, the organization has grown to 30 Chapter Circles and seven Domain Circles nationally.

The event also focused on artificial intelligence and leadership. Phaedra Boinodiris, Global Leader of IBM Consulting's Responsible AI Practice and a member of North Carolina's AI Leadership Council, delivered the keynote, "When Technology Moves Faster Than Policy."

Boinodiris told more than 100 executives, mayors and state officials that artificial intelligence is advancing faster than many of the policies designed to govern it. Her remarks came two months after North Carolina released its AI Strategic Roadmap, which includes 17 goals centered on protecting residents from AI harms, preparing the workforce and modernizing state services.

The discussion was especially relevant to the Triangle, where Durham-Chapel Hill has been ranked among the nation's leading midsized metros for women in technology and Raleigh-Durham has been recognized as one of North America's more gender-diverse technology markets.

WEC also presented its inaugural Vanguard Awards to leaders across several fields. Honorees included Boinodiris for Responsible AI Leadership; Dr. Siobahn Day Grady of N.C. Central University for Academia; former Pfizer executive Lidia Fonseca Gribnau for Technology; Dr. Tiamesha Walker-Smith of ATHENA





of the Triangle for Talent Development; Cindy Anderson of Thinc Strategy for Enterprise Growth; Dr. Nini Bautista de Garcia of the Asian American Foundation for the Carolinas for Civic and Community Impact; Kimberley Basnight of Extreme Networks for People and Culture; and Greg Boone of Walk West and RDULabs for Sponsorship and Advocacy.

Presenters included Raleigh Mayor Janet Cowell, Durham Mayor Pro Tempore Javiera Caballero, Cary Mayor Pro Tempore Lori Bush, North Carolina Chief Information Security Officer Bernice Russell-Bond, Tsegga Medhin of The Pearl Leadership Institute and other business and civic leaders.

Net proceeds from the anniversary luncheon benefited The Pearl Leadership Institute, a nonprofit focused on developing emerging leaders.

