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We Must Protect Our Brain's Health

Jordan Meadows

Staff Writer



Wake County Public Libraries hosted a community education program Tuesday evening titled "Protecting Brain Health in African American Adults," featuring Dr. Ashley Sanderlin of North Carolina A&T State University, who presented research on dementia risk and prevention strategies tailored to Black communities.

Sanderlin, a neuroscientist and associate professor in NC A&T's biology department, is associate director of the university's Center for Outreach in Alzheimer's, Aging and Community Health (COAACH) and serves as the site principal investigator for the North Carolina Registry for Brain Health.

She noted NC A&T operates a dedicated aging center focused on older adults' health.

Sanderlin, who leads the Alzheimer's Lifestyle Interventions and Aging Neuroscience Lab, told attendees her research centers on how lifestyle factors influence the development and progression of Alzheimer's disease and how prevention strategies might reduce risk.

"I'm most interested in the development and the progression of Alzheimer's disease and why it happens, and how we can prevent it," she said.

Sanderlin opened with an overview of the disease's biology, explaining that dementia is a broad umbrella term for cognitive impairment and that Alzheimer's is its most common form, though not the only one; vascular dementia, Lewy body dementia and frontotemporal dementia are among the others.

She stressed that dementia is not a normal or inevitable part of aging.

"Some people believe that if you just keep living, the older you get, you will develop dementia," she said. "And that is not true."

She said early symptoms—most notably short-term memory loss, disorientation in familiar places and repeating recent statements—warrant seeking medical evaluation rather than being written off as ordinary aging. She cited older age, being female and having fewer years of formal education as primary risk factors for the disease.

Alzheimer's involves two main problems, she said: sticky clumps that build up between brain cells and get in the way of them "talking" to each other, and tangled fibers that build up inside the cells and cause them to break down from within.

"They're like a tombstone of where the neuron used to be," she said of the internal tangles. Over time, this damage kills off brain cells, usually starting in the part of the brain that handles memory before spreading further, in what she called "a progressive neurodegeneration."

She noted there's still no known cause or cure.

"Alzheimer's Disease, it is a terminal disease with no known cause, cure, or effective treatment," she said. Some FDA-approved drugs are available to ease symptoms, but "they are not actually stopping or slowing the progression of the disease."

Newer drugs actually target and clear out some of that sticky buildup in the brain but they come with real drawbacks: they require IV infusions, regular MRI scans to check for safety, they don't work for everyone, they can have side effects, and they cost tens of thousands of dollars.

Sanderlin also pointed out a problem with how those newer drugs were tested: more than 76% of the people in lecanemab's trials were white.

"It is very important that we have representation from all ethnicities," she said. "We have to have a seat at the table in helping to design the drugs and making sure that they're truly effective for everyone."

Sanderlin presented data showing Black and Hispanic Americans are 1.5 to 2 times more likely to develop Alzheimer's disease and other dementias than white Americans, yet are diagnosed later, delaying access to treatment. She cited Alzheimer's Association survey data indicating only 53% of Black Americans trust that future Alzheimer's treatments will be shared equally across racial groups, and that 62% of Black Americans believe medical research is biased against people of color.

Mistrust rooted in historical and ongoing discrimination remains a major barrier to clinical trial participation, noting that nearly half of Black Americans reporting experiencing racial or ethnic discrimination in health care settings, iterating a story of her own mother once telling her plainly that she didn't want to be a research subject.

"It's not that people of color, Black people, Hispanic people don't want to help or find a cure," she said. "It's that we need to make sure we can trust where it's coming from and understand exactly what is happening."

Sanderlin distinguished between health disparities—measurable differences in disease rates and outcomes between groups—and health care disparities, which involve differences in access to treatment and information; she said the two compounds against each other. She traced much of the gap to socioeconomic and generational inequities, including the lasting effects of redlining on the physical environments Black communities live in, which researchers increasingly link to dementia risk through factors such as soil and air quality.

She cited the Alzheimer's Association's 2026 report, which found that differences in socioeconomic conditions and higher rates of chronic illnesses like cardiovascular disease and diabetes among African Americans directly elevate dementia risk.

"Prevention is key," Sanderlin said.



America's Long History Of Falling For Hucksters & Their Outlandish Promises

NEW YORK (AP) — America: land of possibility. And also: land of suckers.

Our enduring belief that anything is possible — whether based in reality or not — has helped the nation become the world's largest economy. It has also led us to fall head over heels for hucksters and charlatans, again and again.

If so much is possible here in America, who is to say it's not possible that the next new supplement, device or scheme might make you young, strong, rich or all of the above, all at once?

America brought us Clark Stanley, the Rattlesnake King, who sold us what he called "snake oil liniment" that promised to remedy pain, lameness, sprains, bunions and "reduce large joints to their natural size." America helped create Charles Ponzi, who could deliver you 50% profit in just 45 days by investing in stamp coupons.

These old examples are easy to laugh at or be mortified by, but we should be careful: We are as willing as ever to believe claims that, when subjected to even a modicum of common sense seem ludicrous. Raw milk has special powers? Peptides can make us young again? A blast of vitamins through an IV can flush out your hangover?

Why do we keep falling for this stuff? There's a simple, poignant reason: "People really don't want to die."

So says Dr. Lydia Kang, author of a book on medical fads called "Quackery" and associate professor of internal medicine at University of Nebraska Medical Center. There's a desperation to it. "Everybody has a deep wish to have a long and fruitful life," she says, "without disability or pain and with your brain intact."

This is not uniquely American, of course. But these instincts and tendencies are amplified in America, with its relentless optimism, its spirit of individualism and its lightly regulated capitalism.

The truth doesn't matter

When we fall for claims or cling to beliefs after they've been disproved, we're not necessarily being stupid.

We don't have beliefs to create an accurate representation of the world, said Tali Sharot, a neuroscientist professor at University College London. Instead, she said, it's simply "to have beliefs that will get us the most rewards and help us avoid harm. And sometimes those beliefs are the accurate ones, but sometimes they're not."

Hope and belief can provide optimism that things could get better, which can in turn at least temporarily improve mood and mental health. "Believing that your future will be better than the past and the present – even if your future will not be better," Sharot said, "Many times can be optimal."

That opens us up to the lure of supplements, balms and techniques that promise benefits that are extremely unlikely to materialize. On one hand, they are a tragic waste of hard-earned money and sometimes have negative side effects. On the other hand, "you gain something from trying," Sharot said, like positive anticipation or excitement.

But these tendencies leave us open to exploitation by companies that want our money. And they are really good at what they do.

Throughout U.S. history, there is a clear pattern: A hint that something might work opens a crack in a door that companies barge through, capturing the desperation — and the paychecks — of people who are hurting, tired or scared.

Dr. Benjamin Rush, a Philadelphia physician who signed the Declaration of Independence, was frustrated by his inability to save people during a yellow fever epidemic in 1793. He then read autopsy reports that suggested purging and bloodletting could help and he took it to an extreme. According to one account: "So much blood was spilled in the front yard that the site became malodorous and buzzed with flies."

Charles Stanley's snake oil was fake — the U.S. Bureau of Chemistry in 1916 found that it was mainly mineral oil, with "fatty oil (probably beef fat), capsicum, and possibly a trace of camphor or turpentine." But he got the idea from Chinese laborers who used oil — from a very specific snake — that did likely have some anti-inflammatory properties.

Gray areas leave regulators and health professionals in a difficult spot: It's often impossible to say definitively that something doesn't work. In the meantime, companies pounce. "What's scary is that they will take that hope and they will try to stick it in a bottle and sell it to you at whatever price that they think that you can afford," Kang said.

Trump Signs US-Denmark-Greenland Agreement To Bolster Arctic Security

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — President Donald Trump on Tuesday signed an agreement with Denmark and Greenland aimed at strengthening Arctic and North Atlantic security, paving the way for more U.S. bases in Greenland and easing tensions over his repeated calls for the vast island to become part of the United States.

The signing on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly in New York comes days after Trump announced the deal to bolster the U.S. military presence on Greenland but keep it under Danish control. The agreement would still apply if Greenland eventually chooses independence.

"This is tremendous for Europe and for the United States and for everybody," Trump said just before the agreement was signed. "And for Greenland, it's going to be incredible."

Tump has expressed his desire to acquire Greenland since as long ago as 2019 and, during his second term, issued threats to seize the semiautonomous territory from Denmark, a NATO ally. On Tuesday, he did not respond to questions about whether a U.S. acquisition of Greenland was off the table.



Officials from the U.S., Greenland and Denmark negotiated for months behind the scenes, searching for solutions to address some of Trump's security concerns about the mineral-rich island.

Trump's designs on Greenland strained relations within NATO, with Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen warning a U.S. takeover would amount to the end of the Atlantic alliance.

The standoff unsettled many of Greenland's roughly 56,000 people and drove a wedge between the U.S. and Denmark and its European Union partners, who stepped up security exercises on and monetary support for the island.

Trade and hopes for a resource grab have factored into concerns about Greenland's future. About two-thirds of its territory sits inside the Arctic Circle, where melting sea ice has opened additional shipping routes.

The United States was prominent

(See ***US AND GREENLAND,*** P. 12)



NCDOA HOLDS SERIES OF FORUMS FOR MINORITY SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS AFTER ELIMINATION OF HUB IN BUDGET

WUNC - In the new state budget, North Carolina lawmakers eliminated the Office for Historically Underutilized Businesses, or the HUB office.

The HUB office was created in 1999 to help underrepresented businesses owned by women, people of color, and veterans to compete for state contracts.

The HUB Office worked closely with more than 6,000 businesses. Many firms received business training, developmental resources, and were put on an easy-to-access database with other vendors, according to the North Carolina Department of Administration (NCDOA).

Despite its elimination in the state budget, Administration Secretary Gabe Esparza wants to continue supporting small businesses by meeting their needs through North Carolina's Small Business Enterprise program, which is now in the Division of Purchase and Contract within the NCDOA.

"While we mourn the loss of HUB, we want to make the most of this opportunity to continue to support small businesses that want to provide goods and services to state government," said Esparza. "We're asking business owners to let us know their needs and tell us what they'd like to see this program become. Small businesses are vital to our economy, and we want to do our part to uplift them and connect them to opportunities."

To get that feedback, a first forum was already held at the International Civil Rights Center & Museum in Greensboro. Two more will be held this month in Charlotte and Greenville. Another is slated for next month at ReCity in Durham at 112 Broadway Street.

A PRIVATE COMPANY MAKES AN OFFER FOR ROCKY MOUNT'S WATER UTILITY

WUNC - Rocky Mount's water and sewer system could pass into private hands, under a proposal offered to the city council this week.

American Water, based in Pennsylvania, will offer the city $174.6 million and retain all water and sewer employees. "From there, we would take ownership and responsibility for investing in those assets," said Brooks Crislip, Vice President of Business Development at American Water.

He said the company has identified about $200 million in needed upgrades to water treatment, pipes, and wastewater management.

"A lot of this infrastructure was put in around the same time. It has aged at the same rate, and it's getting to the point where a lot of it needs replaced," Crislip added.

Crislip emphasized that American Water would have no say on customer rates if it takes over the system.

"Our rates are not set by the company; they are set by the North Carolina Utilities Commission," he told the city council. "So, any future changes to rates would be set by the Utilities Commission through a regulated process."

Mayor Sandy Roberson and the city council had many questions for Crislip after his presentation. Roberson wanted to know how American Water came up with the $174.6 million price tag.

"We look at every bit of pipe and say, 'Hey, this pipe was put in in 1960. It is this type of material. It is depreciated at this rate. Here's the current value'," Crislip explained. "And then you're able to take a multiplier to that value per North Carolina law, and say, 'If we were to replace this today, it would cost X,' and that's how you come up with that that price."

Council member Reuben Blackwell said he's concerned about placing a public asset in private hands.

(See ***ROCKY MOUNT'S WATER UTILITY,*** P. 2)

TWO LONGTIME STAPLES OF OWNING A CAR IN NORTH CAROLINA WILL SOON GO AWAY

WUNC - Two longtime staples of owning a car in North Carolina will soon go away

Starting Oct. 1, the North Carolina Division of Motor Vehicles will no longer issue paper registration cards and license plate stickers. For decades, drivers were required to keep a registration card they could show when pulled over by a police officer. The stickers showed the month and year when that registration would expire.

Law enforcement officers already have access to that information through license plate readers and computer databases, according to DMV Commissioner Paul Tine.

"They already know, and so they don't need to ask for it," Tine said in a recent interview on WUNC's Due South.

The change is likely to create confusion for drivers and uncertainty about what to do when stopped by law enforcement. WUNC News' Bradley George asked DMV spokesman Marty Homan to explain how the new system will work.

This interview has been edited for clarity and brevity.

What's changing, and when?

Anyone that renews Oct. 1 or after will not receive the sticker or card. Anyone that renews Sept. 30 or before will.

What if I still want a printed copy of my registration card?

You'll be able to download a PDF which you can print (one) yourself for free. (For people who can't print a copy, DMV will mail one for a yet-to-be-determined fee.)

You'll also be able to request a copy be emailed to you when you renew online, at a self-service kiosk, or in person at a license plate agency. Receipts will reflect your recent renewal and include the information needed to identify your vehicle and prove your registration is up to date. There will also be a QR code on the receipt that will take you to our website where you can download a PDF of your registration or order a printed copy from us at an additional cost.

What happens when I get pulled over out-of-state and the officer asks for a copy of my registration?

Digital vehicle registration is accepted in most states. Officers can verify your registration using their own electronic verification systems. If you'd like a backup, download a copy to your device or print one to keep in your vehicle.

King's Decision To Refer Slavery Reparations Petition To Privy Council As 'Really Big Deal' Is Praised By Jamaica

Natricia Duncan
The Guardian Caribbean Correspondent

King Charles has referred a landmark slavery reparations petition from Jamaica to a high-level UK appeals court for legal advice, Jamaica's culture minister announced in parliament on Tuesday.

Referring to the move as a "really big deal", Olivia Grange told Jamaica's MPs the monarch had confirmed that their legal questions have been passed on to the London-based privy council – the final court of appeal for UK overseas territories and some Commonwealth countries.

The petition seeks guidance on three questions: whether the forced transport of Africans to Jamaica was lawful; whether it constituted a crime against humanity; and whether Britain is under an obligation to provide restitution for slavery and its enduring consequences.

"Indeed we went fearless and boldly into this chapter when we petitioned the king on Monday, September 7, 2026 – one day after the 245th anniversary of the commemoration of the Zong massacre, an event that captures the barbarity of chattel enslavement," Grange said in parliament.

"The king could have ignored us. The king could have delayed responding to us. The king could have made a decision not to refer the questions to the privy council, or he could make a decision to refer the questions," she said, before adding "King Charles has referred the petition filed on the 7th of September, 2026, on behalf of the people of Jamaica to the Judicial Committee of the privy council."

Jamaica had activated a rarely used mechanism in the Judicial Committee Act 1833, which allows the king to refer questions of "legal or constitutional nature" to the privy council when they cannot be resolved through ordinary courts, according to the country's legal counsels.

The minister said that taking the matter to the International Court of Justice, was not an option for Jamaica.

"The United Kingdom has placed specific reservations on the compulsory jurisdiction of the ICJ which prevent the Court from adjudicating on disputes between the United Kingdom and the government of any other country which is



or has been a Member of the Commonwealth".

A privy council opinion would not compel the UK government to pay reparations, but Jamaican officials believe it could shape negotiations and legal options and set a precedent for other Commonwealth nations seeking reparations.

Earlier this month, Grange led a Jamaican delegation to London to officially lodge the petition. While in the UK, the group, lawyers and members of the country's national council on reparation met diaspora communities, MPs, church leaders and cultural institutions – among them the British Museum, from which Jamaica is seeking the return of artefacts taken during colonial rule.

Tuesday's announcement follows the Caricom Regional Conference on Reparations, which took place in Barbados last week. Officials at the conference said that Caribbean nations are drawing up a multi-pronged "action plan" with legal options to push the UK into negotiating a decades-long slavery reparations deal.

Leaders in the region are hoping the UK would agree to targeted and constructive negotiation talks at upcoming Commonwealth and UN summits, but they are ready to take the matter to international courts if Britain continues to resist diplomatic options.

Speaking at the conference, Prof Sir Hilary Beckles, the chair of the Caricom Reparations Commission, said reparations was a matter of justice, adding that countries in the region were forced to create viable democracies "out of the mess" of colonialism, which was still having an impact today.

He said: "When Jamaica took its petition to the UK, we had to surround that petition with the fact that when Jamaica became independent in 1962, 80% of the black people in Jamaica could not read or write. After 300 years of British colonisation, they moved into independence with 80% illiteracy. How do you build a modern nation, not even a competitive economy, with 80% illiteracy?"

Earlier this month, a spokesperson for Andy Burnham reiterated the British government's long-held position that "the UK does not and will not pay reparations".

Grange told parliament that the country is "awaiting directions from the Judicial Committee of the privy council as to the next steps to be taken in the case. And the attorney general is preparing to deal with the case".

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Christine Kushner Sets Sights On At-Large Wake County Commission Seat

By Jordan Meadows
Staff Writer

Christine Kushner has spent much of her life watching local government from the inside.

First as a journalist, then as a health policy professional, a school board member, and a county health and human services board member, she has built a career around the public systems that most residents notice only when they stop working.

Now she wants a seat on the Wake County Board of Commissioners.

Kushner, a Democrat and former chair of the Wake County Board of Education, won one of two Democratic nominations for the commission's new at-large seats in the March primary. She received about 30% of the vote in a seven-candidate field, with 68,690 votes. Mona Singh won the other Democratic nomination.

The two at-large seats will expand the commission from seven members to nine.

For Kushner, the move from the school board to county government is less a change in direction than an expansion of the work she has already been doing.

"I've gotten an added perspective of the linkages between the school system and social services, between public safety and mental health services, between housing and public safety and stability and economic mobility," Kushner said. "So all those linkages, and especially when it comes to our youth and the stresses that they're feeling, I feel like I'm coming in with a lot of experience that will inform my service as a county commissioner."

Kushner grew up in Fayetteville in a Greek-American family. Her father was a Greek Orthodox priest who founded a church there after finishing seminary, and her mother taught Greek. She attended public schools and describes her hometown as a close-knit immigrant community that also exposed her to a broad mix of people.

As a teenager, she became interested in journalism.

"I loved the news," she said. "I was a news junkie as a kid, loved watching the news, reading the newspaper."

At UNC-Chapel Hill, she studied journalism and political science. She later earned a master's degree in public affairs from Princeton. Her first career was in reporting. But covering local government changed the way she thought about public service.

She found herself fascinated by the people behind the stories: city employees, school administrators, police officers, and firefighters.

"When I was working as a reporter, I really saw the folks who worked for the towns and the cities, and the school systems, and first responders, police officers, and firefighters," Kushner said. "They just fascinated me with their life of public service. I said, 'I love writing. I love being a reporter, and maybe this is why this interests me so much because I'm interested in this public service'."

Kushner has lived in Wake County since 1989, first in Cary and later in Raleigh. Her professional work included health care policy and efforts to expand access to health care, including supporting grassroots primary-care systems in rural communities.

School Board and Health Board

She eventually became involved in her children's schools, volunteering in classrooms and joining the PTA. Kushner served on a superintendent's parent advisory committee and on an advisory committee for former Wake school board member Rosa Gill. She began attending school board meetings and, in 2011, decided to run.

She won a seat representing central and western Raleigh, including two terms as chair. Those years included some of the school system's most contentious debates—and the disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Kushner says the experience gave her a practical education in the consequences of local government decisions: even seemingly routine decisions could generate intense reactions.

"The most emails [I received] were

(See ***CHRISTINE KUSHNER,*** P. 12)

ROCKY MOUNT'S WATER UTILITY

Continued from page 1

"Whether you like this group of people or not, it's still a group of people elected by the people who live here and who are paying for it, and that's a hiccup that's hard for me to reach," he said.

American Water has promised to establish a "local advisory board" if it takes over the system.

"An advisory board is not the board of directors. An advisory board is not the executive suite. An advisory board does not make decisions," Blackwell said. Crislip responded by urging Blackwell to contact other communities where American Water does business. He also emphasized the Utilities Commission will have to oversee any major decisions.

The city council took no votes on the matter this week. Members asked the company for more information about how it arrived at the purchase price and its estimates to upgrade the water and sewer system.

American Water's offer comes at a precarious time for Rocky Mount's finances. The council voted in March to raise water and sewer rates by nearly 15% in response to an ongoing budget crisis. An investigation by State Auditor Dave Boliek found millions of dollars in overspending by a former city manager. Earlier this month, the state's Local Government Commission placed Rocky Mount on its "Unit Assistance List" due to financial challenges. City leaders say finances and oversight have improved, and they look forward to working with the commission.

American Water is in the process of merging with the parent company of Aqua, which manages water systems in dozens of North Carolina communities. The $63 billion deal is expected to close in the first quarter of 2027.

NCDOT TO HOLD PUBLIC MEETING REGARDING PROPOSED POOLE ROAD IMPROVEMENTS FROM WEST OF BARWELL ROAD TO HODGE ROAD IN WAKE COUNTY

STIP Project HL-0133L and HL-0133A

WAKE COUNTY - The public is invited to a meeting with the N.C. Department of Transportation this month to discuss the proposed widening of Poole Road from Barwell Road to Hodge Road in Wake County.

The proposed improvements — State Transportation Improvement Program project Nos. HL-0133L and HL-0133A — would expand Poole Road from two lanes to four lanes and include a center median to separate traffic traveling in opposite directions. It's intended to address ongoing growth and increasing travel demand throughout the corridor by reducing future traffic congestion, improving roadway operations, and supporting anticipated development.

More details, including maps of the proposed design, can be found on the project website.

The meeting will be held 5-7 p.m. Sept. 28 at the Barwell Road Community Center, 5857 Barwell Park Drive, in Raleigh. Interested residents can drop in any time during those hours to learn more about the proposal, ask questions and speak with NCDOT representatives. There will not be a formal presentation.

People may also submit comments by phone, email or mail by Oct. 12.

For more information, contact NCDOT Division 5 Project Delivery Staff Engineer S. Reid Davidson at 919 317-4700; srdavidson@ncdot.gov; or 2612 N. Duke St. in Durham.

NCDOT will provide auxiliary aids and services under the Americans with Disabilities Act for disabled people who wish to participate in this workshop. Anyone requiring special services should contact Aleksandra Djurkovic, Environmental Analysis Unit, at 1598 Mail Service Center in Raleigh; 919-707-6024; or andjurkovic@ncdot.gov as early as possible so that arrangements can be made.

Those who do not speak English, or have a limited availability to read, speak or understand English, may receive interpretive services upon request prior to the meeting by calling 1-800-481-6494.

Aquellas personas no hablan inglés, o tienen limitaciones para leer, hablar o entender inglés, podrán recibir servicios de interpretación si los solicitan antes de la reunión llamando al 1-800-481-6494.

NCDOT HOSTING A PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE A PROPOSAL TO GRADE SEPARATE N.E. MAYNARD ROAD UNDER THE NCRR/NORFOLK SOUTHERN AND CSX RAIL LINES AND REALIGN THE CHATHAM STREET/N.E. MAYNARD ROAD INTERSECTION SOUTH OF ITS EXISTING ALIGNMENT IN WAKE COUNTY

Project No. P-5718

CARY - The N.C. Department of Transportation is hosting a public meeting to discuss the proposal to grade separate N.E. Maynard Road under the NCRR/Norfolk Southern and CSX Rail lines in Cary.

The purpose of this project is to eliminate rail-highway conflicts at the existing at-grade railroad crossing location on N.E. Maynard Road near its intersection with E. Chatham Street. The proposed project will improve vehicular mobility and safety at this location and the surrounding area.

Project details and maps can be found on NCDOT's project input website at publicinput.com/maynardroad-gradeseparation. The information will be available at the meeting allowing for one-on-one discussions with NCDOT staff, but there will be no formal presentation.

The meeting will be held from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. on October 6 at First Cary United Methodist Church, Community, 117 S. Academy Street, in Cary.

People may also submit comments by phone at 984-205-6615 project code 7714, email maynardroad-gradeseparation@publicinput.com, or mail at the address shown below by October 27, 2026.

By Mail: Matthew Potter
NCDOT Rail Division – Engineer Consultant
1 South Wilmington Street
Raleigh, NC 27699-1553

NCDOT will provide auxiliary aids and services under the Americans with Disabilities Act for disabled people who wish to participate in this meeting. Anyone requiring special services should contact Tony Gallagher, Environmental Analysis Unit, at 1598 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1598, 919-707-6069 or magallagher@ncdot.gov as early as possible so arrangements can be made.

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Business & Finance

North Carolina Business Continuity & Employee Ownership Conference

By Jheri Hardaway

Staff Writer



Raleigh, NC - Across North Carolina, a quiet demographic shift is heading toward Main Street. Dubbed the "Silver Tsunami," more than 82,000 business owners in the state are age 55 or older, facing an inevitable crossroads: how to exit their life's work without shuttering storefronts or displacing the workforces that built them. At the recent North Carolina Business Continuity and Employee Ownership Conference, regional business leaders, advisors, and founders gathered to address this impending wave. Their shared message was clear: employee ownership is not an idealistic fringe concept; it is a pragmatic, capital-smart succession strategy that preserves local wealth and jobs across the state. Nationwide, roughly 2.3 million business owners over 55 employ an estimated 24.7 million workers. When these founders retire without a viable succession plan, viable enterprises frequently close or sell out to corporate buyers who slash overhead and consolidate staff. The vulnerability is especially real in North Carolina's rural communities. In counties like Polk, where roughly 79% of business owners are nearing retirement age, the loss of even one or two staple businesses can gut local tax bases and employment security and opportunities.

Compounding the problem is an outdated assumption about succession. "In the olden days, the expectation was that you pass it on to your children," conference panelists noted, observing that the next generation increasingly pursues independent careers. Meanwhile, third-party sales carry steep failure rates: only about 20% of businesses listed with traditional brokers ever reach closing, leaving many founders stranded at the finish line.

Illa Burbank Executive Director of the North Carolina Employee Ownership Center (NCEOC), who organized the conference focused heavily on dismantling long-standing misconceptions that prevent owners from considering internal transitions. The foremost myth: that workers must pay out of pocket to purchase the company. In practice, structures such as Employee Stock Ownership Plans (ESOPs) and Employee Ownership Trusts (EOTs) are financed through corporate loans paid back over time using the business's own operating profits.

Panelists also dispelled the fear of operational chaos. Employee-owned companies do not abolish management structures or run daily operations by popular vote. Day-to-day hierarchies from executives and supervisors to accounting departments remain intact, while legal ownership transitions into a trust or cooperative structure designed to benefit the employees long-term. Sellers do not sacrifice fair market value. Certified independent valuations establish transaction prices, while state and federal tax structures offer distinct incentives. Under Section 1042 of the Internal Revenue Code, eligible business owners who sell to an ESOP can defer capital gains taxes indefinitely. For businesses structured as 100% S-Corporation ESOPs, federal and state corporate income taxes are completely eliminated, unlocking vital capital to reinvest in operations and compensation.

The Employee Ownership model is in action across North Carolina. The conference highlighted varied paths to shared ownership, illustrating that the strategy fits small creative ventures as well as sprawling industrial employers:

The ESOP Path: Charlotte-based highway contractor Blythe Construction adopted an ESOP to protect its century-old family legacy and avoid layoffs after an earlier brush with international ownership. More recently, C. Herman Construction converted in 2024. Nick Terasovic, CFO of C. Herman Construction, emphasized how shared ownership combats high turnover in competitive industries: "A lot of businesses in the United States over the years have figured out ways to cut benefits to improve the bottom line. An ESOP is a way that we're actually putting benefits back in our employees' hands."

The Worker Cooperative: In Durham, the Electric Violin Shop turned to a worker co-op over a decade ago after two attempts at traditional broker sales fell through. The transition allowed the founder to retire while preserving a niche, worldwide trade specialty within the local staff.

The Employee Ownership Trust (EOT): Durham-based CNC router manufacturer ShopBot Tools and Mooresville safety leader HMS Motorsport chose the EOT model—a flexible, lower-overhead alternative to federally regulated ESOPs. For HMS Motorsport, the transition secured long-standing relationships with NASCAR suppliers and created tangible profit-sharing incentives that convinced younger staff to build permanent careers within the firm.

Generational Wealth Building: For mature employee-owned businesses like Columbia Forest Products, which has operated as a 100% ESOP since the 1990s, the model creates life-changing outcomes for working-class households. Across its rural manufacturing communities, generations of line workers and plant operators have retired as ESOP-backed millionaires.

Mariana Amaro, a strategic advisor presented at the conference, "What stood out most during the conference was the consistent message that people are at the heart of sustainable business success. Discussions around succession planning, ownership, accountability, and employee engagement reinforced the critical role of culture in driving performance. Employee-owned companies demonstrate that it is possible to achieve strong financial results while creating meaningful value for society and maintaining a deep commitment to the people who make that success possible."

Soyini Abdul-Mateen, Founder & Principal Consultant, Brilliant Corners Innovations reflected, "What stayed with me most is that employee ownership isn't simply an exit strategy—it's a continuity strategy. It gives founders another way to protect what they've built, create opportunity for the people who helped build it, and keep value rooted in the community. The conference also reinforced something central to my work: whatever next chapter a founder chooses, the business first has to be ready to carry forward beyond them."

We are building collective wealth right here at home, but we have to be strategic. Research presented at the North Carolina Business Continuity and Employee Ownership Conference indicates that employees at worker-owned companies see median wages roughly 33% higher, job tenure 53% longer, and household net worth 92% higher than their peers at traditional enterprises. As baby boomer retirements accelerate, keeping North Carolina businesses locally rooted remains paramount. While an ESOP or cooperative conversion requires planning, clean financial records, and deliberate cultural communication, conference speakers emphasized that state resources, technical assistance networks, and regional advising programs are actively available to guide business owners through each phase of the journey.



PHOTO: CLAYTON HENKEL/NC NEWSLINE

$2B WakeMed-Atrium Merger Was Approved

By Jordan Meadows

Staff Writer

The Wake County Board of Commissioners voted 5-2 Monday evening to let the proposed $2 billion merger between WakeMed and Atrium Health move forward, capping a five-hour meeting that ended with sheriff's deputies clearing a packed chamber before the final vote was cast.

The vote would allow WakeMed to amend its articles of incorporation and governing documents, transferring control from the county's Board of Commissioners to a new 14-member board jointly selected by Atrium and county leaders.

Board Chair Don Mial asked deputies to clear the room after spectators, some of whom had been in the chamber for more than five hours, grew disruptive as commissioners began voting; commissioners then took a five-minute recess before resuming.

Commissioners Vickie Adamson and Tara Waters cast the two dissenting votes, both citing insufficient time to review revised legal documents that arrived just days before the meeting.

"In my eight years on this board, I don't think I've ever been handed this complicated of legal documents on Thursday night and had to vote on it on that day, and that's just normally not how we do business," Adamson said.

Waters, who represents District 5, home to WakeMed's Raleigh campus, said she'd heard extensive resident concerns and wanted to weigh the decision carefully.

"It's an important decision and one that I will do thoughtfully, prayer-

(See ***WAKEMED-ATRIUM MERGER,*** P. 7)

NC Main Street Program Adds $500M, 2,500 Jobs

RALEIGH, N.C. - The NC Main Street & Rural Planning Center reported today that since the inception of the Main Street program in North Carolina in 1980, designated Main Street and Small Town Main Street communities have leveraged more than $6.6 billion in public and private investment in their downtown districts. This investment supported more than 8,700 building rehabilitations and a net gain of more than 8,800 businesses and nearly 42,000 jobs.

In addition, the N.C. Department of Commerce, which houses the program, announced that NC Main Street communities recorded significant numbers during fiscal year 2025-26, gaining nearly $514 million in local public and private investment, 318 new businesses, and nearly 2,500 jobs in their downtowns. These results are from the NC Main Street & Rural Planning Center's fiscal year reports for the 72 designated Main Street and the eight designated Small Town Main Street communities.

"Strong downtowns support small businesses, create jobs, and help North Carolinians thrive," said Governor Josh Stein. "I'm proud to see Main Street communities across North Carolina continue to invest in their downtowns and create opportunities for their people. These investments are a testament to what is possible when communities build great places for people to work and live."

"The NC Main Street & Rural Planning Center team works with communities across the state to build economic development strategies that drive investment, business growth and job creation," said N.C. Commerce Secretary Lee Lilley. "Every community has unique strengths, and through the NC Main Street program, they gain the tools to leverage those assets for long-term economic prosperity, keeping our state First in Opportunity."

NC Main Street Program

Currently, designated Main Street communities range in population from 1,435 to 115,053. All were under 50,000 in population at the time of designation. These communities partner at the local level with a Main Street director, a board of directors, and a host of community volunteers.

Main Street communities reported the following statistics from their 2025-26 work:

- $507,114,044 in downtown public and private investment
- 2,393 new jobs
- 308 new businesses
- 276 building renovations
- 347 façade improvements
- 83,942 volunteer hours with a value of $2,882,570

Since 1980, designated Main Street communities have seen $6,443,526,259 in downtown public and private investment, more than 39,000 jobs, and a net gain of more than 8,200 businesses. Designated Main Street communities use strategic planning, technical assistance, and training and education that they receive from the NC Main Street & Rural Planning Center to develop economic development strategies that are transformational for their downtown districts.

"Main Street communities continue to show the power of local leadership and strong partnerships," said Reginald Speight, Assistant Secretary for Rural Economic Development at the N.C. Department of Commerce. "The investment and growth reported this year highlight how rural towns are turning their assets into real economic opportunity."

"Local Main Street programs continue to demonstrate strong momentum, with new investment, job creation, and business development statewide. We're seeing transformative projects, including renovated mills, rehabilitated theaters, new mixed-use developments, streetscapes and public spaces, and revitalized historic commercial buildings that are housing new businesses. All of these projects are creating vibrancy in downtowns and leveraging opportunities for entrepreneurs," said Liz Parham, director of the NC Main Street & Rural Planning Center.

Small Town Main Street Program

The designated Small Town Main Street communities have been successful in revitalizing the state's smallest communities. The Small Town Main Street program operates in communities with populations below 5,000 that have the capacity to run a volunteer-driven downtown revitalization initiative. Small Town Main Street communities reported the following statistics from their 2025-26 work:

- $6,870,181 in downtown public and private investment
- 74 new jobs
- 10 new businesses
- 21 building renovations
- 11 facade improvements
- 10,751 volunteer hours with a value of $369,188

Since its inception in 2003, the Small Town program has welcomed $172,378,853 in downtown public and private investment, more than 2,400 jobs, and a net gain of 610 businesses.

Wages, Economic Worries Take Center Stage At NC AFL-CIO Convention

NC NEWSLINE - Like a lot of people who've moved to North Carolina in recent years, Christa Jackson was looking for a lower cost of living. These days, she's not finding it.

"I moved here three years ago from Los Angeles. Never thought that my very fuel-efficient, 12-gallon car would cost me $46 to fill-up here," said Jackson. "It's ridiculous."

Jackson, a member of the Actors Equity Association, attended the North Carolina AFL-CIO's annual convention in Cary to discuss policies that would improve the outlook for working families struggling in the current economy.

Gov. Josh Stein did not shy away from addressing one of the greatest economic disparities in the state as he addressed the convention Thursday.

A new report released over Labor Day weekend ranked North Carolina as the worst state in the country for workers. By contrast, in each of the last six years, North Carolina has been ranked number one or number two in the nation for business.



"The General Assembly has not raised the minimum wage in 17 years," said Stein. "And the minimum wage for tipped workers is $2.13 an hour. You have to work an hour to fill up your gas tank with half a gallon."

Republican state lawmakers have argued it's unnecessary to raise the $7.25 minimum wage because many employers already pay more than that in the current labor market. But advocates say that isn't always the case, especially in rural areas where unemployment is higher.

Stein also pointed out that North Carolina is the only state in the country with a complete ban on collective bargaining by public employees.

"Shame! Shame!" responded union members in the audience.

Stein told the audience of 250 labor activists that it is possible to build an economy that supports both working people and businesses.

"Strengthen public education. Invest in workforce development, including apprentices. Lower the cost of living. And make sure that you all have a seat at the table," said Stein.

Stein said his administration is working to rein in rapidly rising costs for healthcare and housing, two of the largest expenses for working families in North Carolina.

'Harder to make ends meet'

Jackson lives in Angier, where housing costs are lower than in Raleigh or Holly Springs, but she's still noticing that people are tightening their belts.

"I'm seeing the prices are higher. Restaurants are empty. Folks can't afford to go out," said Jackson.

(See ***NC AFL-CIO,*** P. 4)

AI Is Making Money Scams More Dangerous

THE CONVERSATION - The phone rings, and it's your grandson's shaken voice. There's been an accident, he says, and he needs money before anyone finds out. Except it isn't him. It's software that learned his voice from a clip posted online, run by a stranger working through a list of phone numbers.

For years, warnings about artificial intelligence and cybersecurity have focused on corporate networks and government systems. Those threats are real. But if you follow the money in the FBI's fraud data, a different picture emerges: Staggering sums are flowing out of household accounts.

In its 2025 annual report, the FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center began tracking complaints with an AI connection for the first time. Americans filed more than 22,000 such cases and reported roughly US$893 million in losses. Investment fraud accounted for $632 million of that, and people over 60 accounted for $352 million of the losses.

Those figures include only victims who reported to the FBI, and only cases where AI's role could be identified. The consulting firm Deloitte projects that the actual hit from AI will be much bigger and help push U.S. fraud losses overall to $40 billion by 2027, up from $12.3 billion in 2023.

I'm a finance professor who studies household finance and how people use AI to make money decisions. And I believe the most consequential AI security story right now isn't unfolding in server rooms, but at kitchen tables.

Old cons, new machinery

None of these scams are new. What AI changed is the cost and the quality of the cons.

Cloning a voice now takes a few seconds of audio and cheap consumer tools. In one study, listeners were able to identify an AI-generated voice only about 60% of the time. Video is heading the same way. In 2024, a finance employee at the architecture and design firm Arup was tricked into wiring about $25 million to fraudsters after they set up a video meeting "staffed" by deepfakes of the chief financial officer and several colleagues.

Phishing has improved, too. Clumsy wording and odd formatting used to give fraudulent emails away. Language models now write clean, fluent messages and can personalize them at scale using details scraped from social media. Deepfake videos of well-known business figures pitch bogus trading platforms.

The same pressure is visible in business losses. The cyber insurer Resilience reported that more than 85% of the losses in its claims portfolio in the first half of 2026 stemmed from attacks aimed at people rather than systems.

Why careful people fall for it

We'd like to believe that only careless people get taken. Research in behavioral finance says otherwise.

These scams are engineered around fear and urgency: a panicked grandchild, a boss demanding a same-day transfer, an investment window that closes tonight. Stress narrows attention and pushes people toward fast, intuitive judgments at the very moment they need slow, deliberate ones. Fraudsters also strike a pose of authority, whether a CFO's face or a government agency's letterhead, because most people defer to it.

Fluency matters as well. My own research examines how the smoothness of AI-generated communication leads people to trust it. A message with no typos, in a voice that sounds exactly right, sails past defenses that a clumsy fake would have tripped.

Nobody plans to make a major financial decision mid-panic. That's exactly why scammers manufacture the panic.

The quiet version of the attack

AI-enabled theft doesn't necessarily involve talking to the victim. Stolen personal data sells for a few dollars on dark web markets. Criminals then feed it to automated AI agents that probe bank and fintech systems around the clock, testing credentials and hunting for weak points at a speed no human crew could match. Last fall, the AI company Anthropic disrupted an espionage campaign in which an AI agent performed 80% to 90% of the intrusion work against roughly 30 targets, including financial institutions.

When an attacker gets into a customer account, the takeover can be over in minutes. Instant payment platforms like Zelle, built for speed and convenience, become the getaway car. The money typically moves within minutes, and getting it back is almost impossible.

How to protect you and your loved ones

Banks defend their own wire rooms

(See ***AI MONEY SCAMS,*** P. 4)

Mother Finds Success On Third try at employment, life skills training

NC NEWSLINE - The third time was a charm for Brooke Jackson.

The mother of three finally completed self-improvement programs at StepUp Ministry that she first began in 2023, but dropped out of twice.

"Things went well for a while until life showed up and I had to separate from the program," Jackson said, referring to the first time she left. "The second time, I was determined. I made it a little further but once again, life showed up."

Jackson's remarks came last week during StepUp's graduation ceremony in Raleigh. She stood tall and proud as the program's class speaker. She received the honor because of her perseverance in completing the program on her third try.

"Life didn't stop lifing" on the third attempt, Jackson told the crowd that gathered at White Memorial Presbyterian Church to cheer on the graduates and enjoy a celebratory meal.

She said her children were among the reasons she wouldn't allow herself to quit this time.

"My youngest, she has seen the improvement in me and my confidence, and it gives her confidence to want to try out for things at school and do her best in school," Jackson told NC Newsline in an interview. "All of them do pretty well in school, but my youngest is very observant."

Jackson was one of seven adult graduates who completed StepUp's jobs and life skills programs. The nearly 40-year-old nonprofit helps individuals and families overcome barriers to stability through employment training, job placement, mentorship and life skills education.



The nonprofit has served more than 10,000 people since it was founded in 1988. StepUp provides support with employment, legal services, financial management, technology, childcare and other life skills to help participants achieve long-term success.

"We are very much a community-based organization where we're trying to work with all the different community partners to make sure that people get the resources and the pathway they need to be successful," said Melvin Breeden, StepUp's chief operating officer.

Program sees growth

Breeden said the program saw a 55% increase in demand last fiscal year. The increased interest yielded 746 program enrollments, which exceeded that year's 650 enrollment goal by 96.

Breeden said the nonprofit ended the recent fiscal year with 700 program enrollments, signaling a sustained growth in need for the organization's services amid tough financial times for many low-to-moderate income individuals and families.

"Fifty-four percent of the people that we served last year self-identified as being housing-insecure, which was an uptick from the year before when it was 46%," Breeden said.

Some participants come to StepUp, Breeden said, already employed but looking for new skills to secure higher-paying jobs so they can afford to pay higher prices for goods and services.

The organization is fundraising for a new 9,500-square-foot facility on the current site that could serve up to 1,000 people per week.

The organization is in the process of moving out of its current space and into a temporary facility. A completion date for the new facility has not been set.

Breeden said the new facility will allow more case managers and participants to meet face-to-face. Case managers currently meet participants in the community and over Zoom, he said.

"That is going to change," Breeden said. "Now we can have a safe space for Brooke to come and have a conversation with her case manager, and she has kids, so she can bring her kids and have a safe space for them to be in."

Jackson told NC Newsline that she's currently unemployed and feels the financial pressures brought on by the economic crisis.

"I do have three children, so it significantly affects my pockets, having to provide, make sure they are clothed, fed and have everything that they need," Jackson said. "I feel a lot of it, but it goes back to making my budget and working my budget with the skills and things that I have learned since I've been in StepUp. I've been able to manage."

Jackson said all of the skills she's learned will be invaluable in her search for a new job and after she finds work.

"It showed me how to carry myself when I'm looking for jobs, even when I'm just inquiring about jobs, when I call jobs, when I do interviews, how I present myself when I go," Jackson said.

Equally important, the program has given her "a lot of confidence," Jackson said.

At the graduation ceremony, she offered words of encouragement to others who might be struggling to complete the program.

"There's no shame in trying until you get it right," Jackson said. "Your journey doesn't have to look like anyone else's journey. What matters is that you continue moving forward."

Jackson told the crowd she's proud to finally say the words she'd waited to say for a long time – "I finished."

NC AFL-CIO CONVENTION

Continued from page 3

Jackson said she's been a union member for three decades and is now fighting for the next generation.

"I never went without health insurance. I have a pension from that work, which is so rare, I can retire, and I made a living wage," said Jackson.

She said while some younger workers may be content with the gig economy, collective bargaining can help them get the job security and benefits they'll need as they get older.

"I'm thinking they're not going to be able to afford healthcare," said Jackson. "They're not going to have jobs that give them retirement. They're just going to have to continue to work and work and work and work."

Calandra Hackney, also with the Actors Equity Association, agreed with that assessment.

"I think it's harder to make ends meet for everyone," said Hackney.

Hackney said she was worried about some of her colleagues being able to afford transportation.

"In order to get a job. you have to get to the interview," said Hackney. "I went to the pump yesterday and paid $4.19 a gallon for gas in Durham. For regular gas. That's insane."

Marching orders

Dolly Parton's iconic "9 to 5" – a workplace anthem for many – played over the convention center speakers just before Braxton Winston, president of the North Carolina State AFL-CIO, took the stage.

Winston told delegates that real progress happens when workers, unions, community organizations, and elected officials work together to win lasting change.

He said one of the best ways to improve the current economic landscape is to encourage working people and their families to register, vote, and stay involved in local, state and national politics.

Winston encouraged union members to stick around after the two-day convention to help knock on doors in Raleigh in support of pro-worker candidates. Representing over 125,000 union members, Winston said, the NC AFL-CIO has the power to shape the outcome of many races this fall. The group has been mobilizing voters since spring.

"As we know, if you don't have a seat at the table..." Winston said.

"You're on the menu!" responded the audience.

AI MONEY SCAMS

Continued from page 3

with procedures, not vigilance. Households can borrow those procedures.

Check by calling back. When you get a suspicious call, hang up and dial a number you already know – like your bank's fraud hotline – and never one the caller or message supplies. The point is to leave the channel the scammer controls. A cloned voice can't answer your grandson's real phone.

Trust and verify. You should agree on a robust family code word for emergencies and treat any request for money that lacks it as fake. Require two people in your household to sign off on any large transfer, so nobody moves serious money alone and under pressure. And build in a delay, such as a self-imposed 24-hour wait, before any big payment. Urgency is the scammer's tool. Slowness is yours.

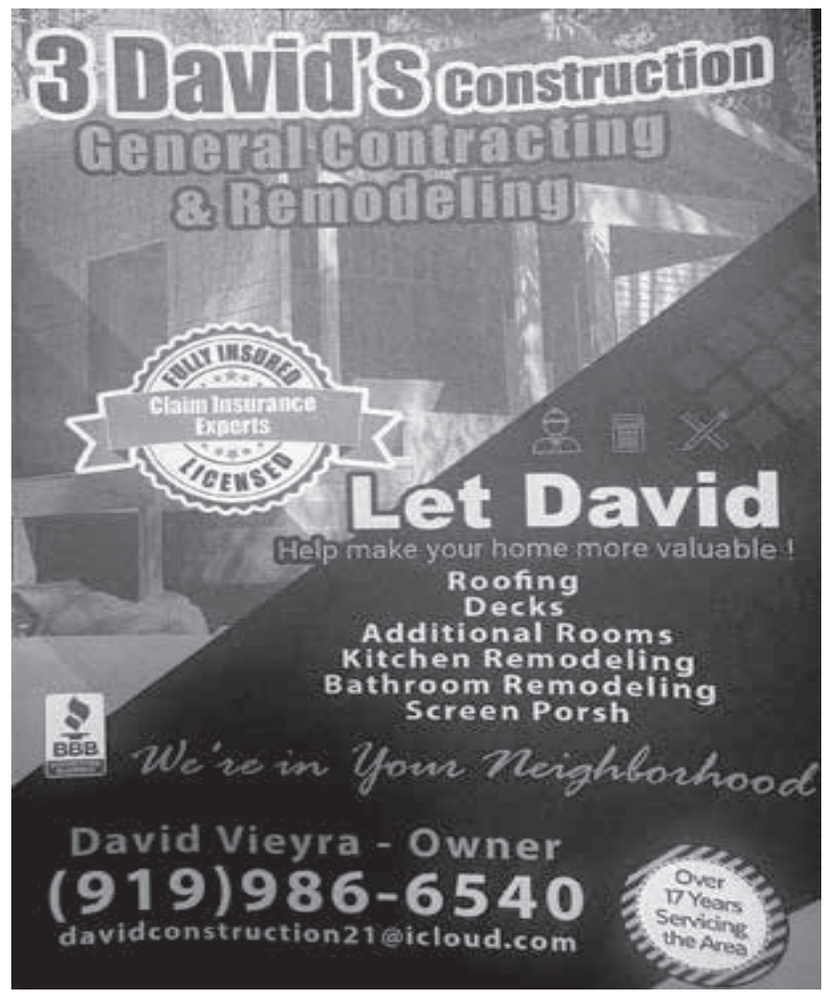
Add layers of protection. Protect the accounts themselves, too. Turn on two-factor login for financial accounts, and never share a verification code with someone who contacts you. That code is the second lock on your door, and the only reason a caller wants it is to get in.



Support Small & Local Businesses

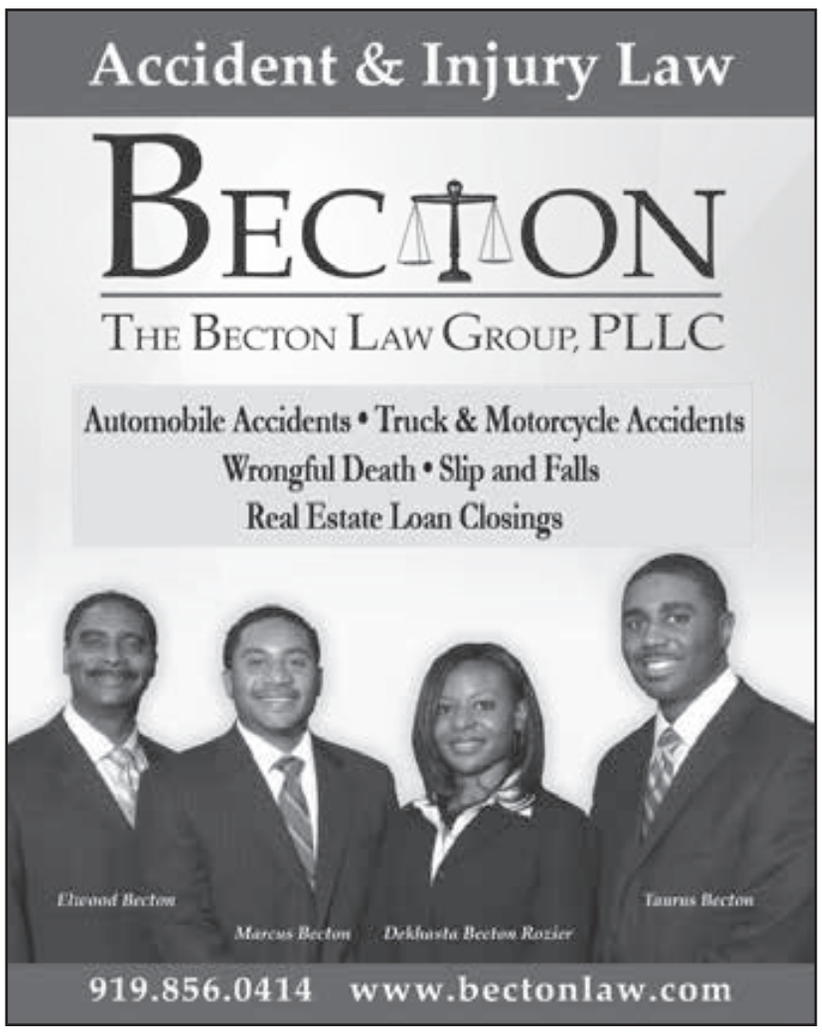
















Health & Wellness

New Federal Regulations Will Reshape Medicaid In NC

NC HEALTH NEWS - Sweeping federal restrictions on Medicaid, the government-funded health insurance program that covers one in every four North Carolinians, are about to take effect.

Recently described by Melanie Bush, head of NC Medicaid, as "probably the most significant changes in the history" of the program, the provisions are part of H.R. 1, the budget reconciliation law signed last summer by President Donald Trump (also known as the One Big Beautiful Bill Act). Those provisions will limit the number of people eligible for coverage and create new hurdles for adults who still qualify.

The first major change is set to go live on Oct. 1. It will narrow Medicaid eligibility for noncitizens, cutting off coverage for most lawfully present immigrants unless they hold a green card or qualify for an exemption.

Data from the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services showed that in this state, more than 66,800 documented noncitizens were enrolled in Medicaid at the end of August. About 32 percent of them were children, pregnant women or members of other groups that will be exempt from the rule.

Undocumented noncitizens are not eligible for Medicaid in North Carolina.

The more far-reaching change will arrive a few months later on Jan. 1, when most adults covered by Medicaid expansion must begin to prove they are working, attending school or participating in other approved activities in order to remain enrolled.

As many as 345,600 people could fall off the rolls in North Carolina in connection with the requirement, according to an analysis published in March by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Much of that drop-off is expected to come not from people who are actually ineligible, but from eligible enrollees being tripped up by paperwork and reporting requirements.

To help make sense of it all, here are answers to questions you may have about the changes.

Which noncitizens are exempt from the new federal policy that rolls out Oct 1?

Medicaid coverage will remain available to the following noncitizens.

Lawful permanent residents with green cards

Children without permanent immigration status who are younger than 19

Women without permanent immigration status who are pregnant or who gave birth within the past 12 months

Cuban and Haitian entrants are also covered, as are residents of the U.S. who are citizens of the Freely Associated States — Micronesia, the Marshall Islands and Palau.

Which noncitizens are no longer covered?

Anyone who doesn't fall into one of the categories above. That includes refugees, people who have been granted asylum, survivors of human trafficking and people with Temporary Protected Status, among other groups.

NC DHHS began sending notices to noncitizens who might be affected earlier this summer. During a live Q&A on Sept. 7, Medicaid Director Melanie Bush encouraged beneficiaries who believe they are at risk of losing coverage to "schedule your appointments and refill your prescriptions" before Oct. 1.

How can those noncitizens access care after the rule takes effect?

In a crisis, these folks may still qualify for a limited form of Medicaid that covers the cost of medical emergencies handled in a hospital's emergency room, regardless of a patient's immigration status.

Bush said this safety net, known as Emergency Medicaid, is meant for conditions like a "heart attack, stroke or serious accident." It does not cover urgent care.

Many community health centers and free clinics also provide care at a low cost or on a sliding scale, depending on your ability to pay, regardless of immigration status. That makes these clinics a potential option for people who lose coverage.



What is the Medicaid work requirement?

This provision of H.R. 1 affects the 40 states that expanded access to Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act, which North Carolina did in late 2023.

Expansion raised the income limit for eligibility, which previously was very strict and limited coverage for most adults. The policy, enacted in December 2023, extended coverage to many low-income adults who previously made too much money to qualify. Nearly 735,000 people in North Carolina have signed up for Medicaid through expansion, according to state data.

Beginning Jan. 1, most of those beneficiaries will have to show that they're working, in school or volunteering for at least 80 hours a month to keep their coverage.

People with a household income of at least $580 a month before taxes can satisfy the requirement without working 80 hours a month. That's about what someone earning minimum wage would earn if they worked 80 hours a month. This keeps self-employed people with irregular hours in compliance.

Who is exempt from the requirement?

Several groups are excluded from the rule, including:

- Adults with disabilities
- Parents and caretakers of dependent adults with disabilities
- Parents and caretakers of dependent children younger than 14
- Women who are pregnant or were pregnant within the last 12 months
- There is also an exemption for adults with illnesses that make them "medically frail," but it will only apply to people who can demonstrate that their condition prevents them from working.

NC DHHS plans to publish a comprehensive list of exemptions before the requirement takes effect.

Who is at risk of losing coverage?

Anyone who doesn't meet the work requirement and doesn't qualify for one of the exemptions could lose Medicaid.

However, NC DHHS has repeatedly noted that the vast majority of adults who enrolled through expansion are either already working or unable to work. This means the reporting burden for beneficiaries (more on that later) may be a bigger threat than noncompliance.

How can people who are subject to the new requirement satisfy it?

Beneficiaries have two ways to satisfy the rule. The state will first check whether a person's household brings in at least $580 a month, factoring in income from a spouse or other household members and, in some cases, non-job sources like unemployment benefits. Having an income below that level means that someone qualifies for Medicaid under the state's original strict criteria.

Seasonal workers can also qualify if their income averages out to that earning threshold over the previous six months.

While the federal requirement imposes a new minimum income for eligibility, the state's maximum income limit for coverage under expansion remains the same. Under that limit, a beneficiary cannot earn more than 138 percent of the federal poverty level, or about $1,835 a month, unless they are pregnant or have a disability.

Some States Bet Big On Rural Health Startups



By Sarah Jane Tribble

KFF

When Josh Fleig, Louisiana's chief innovation officer, learned his state had set aside $20 million a year, for five years, to invest in startup rural health companies, his reaction was not surprising: "Wow!"

In rural America, where people are often reported to be sicker with poor access to healthcare, the cash influx is a relief. In the economic development space where Fleig operates, it's an opportunity.

"Look, that's a lot of money for what we do," said Fleig, whose state-funded economic development office invests in corporate launches, ranging from software startups to shipbuilders.

Louisiana and a handful of other states set aside money from their share of the $50 billion federal Rural Health Transformation Program to quickly invest in new technologies, mirroring private industry moves. Lawmakers added the rural health program to offset more than $900 billion in reduced Medicaid spending expected over 10 years from Republicans' sweeping 2025 tax and spending law.

But rather than filling the budget hole, the rural program's assignment is to find new approaches for revitalizing rural communities where doctors are in short supply and hospitals have been downsizing and closing for decades. The federal government doled out the first-year rural health program awards to states this year, with pots ranging from $147 million in New Jersey to $281 million in Texas.

Modernizing technology infrastructure is a key pillar of the federal rural health program, and the catalyst money epitomizes the administration's strategy to move fast and experiment with untested technology — much like the "move fast and break things" mantra during the heyday of Silicon Valley.

Instead of breaking things, though, the goal is to "move fast, fast-fail, innovate quickly, and move to sustainability," said Aaron Bujnowski, a managing director with the healthcare industry group at the consultancy Alvarez & Marsal. "This is a transformation that is still meant to serve the people."

Beyond Louisiana, Timothy Foster, a spokesperson for the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, confirmed that Delaware, Georgia, Massachusetts, Nebraska, South Carolina, Virginia, and West Virginia are also creating rural health tech catalyst funds.

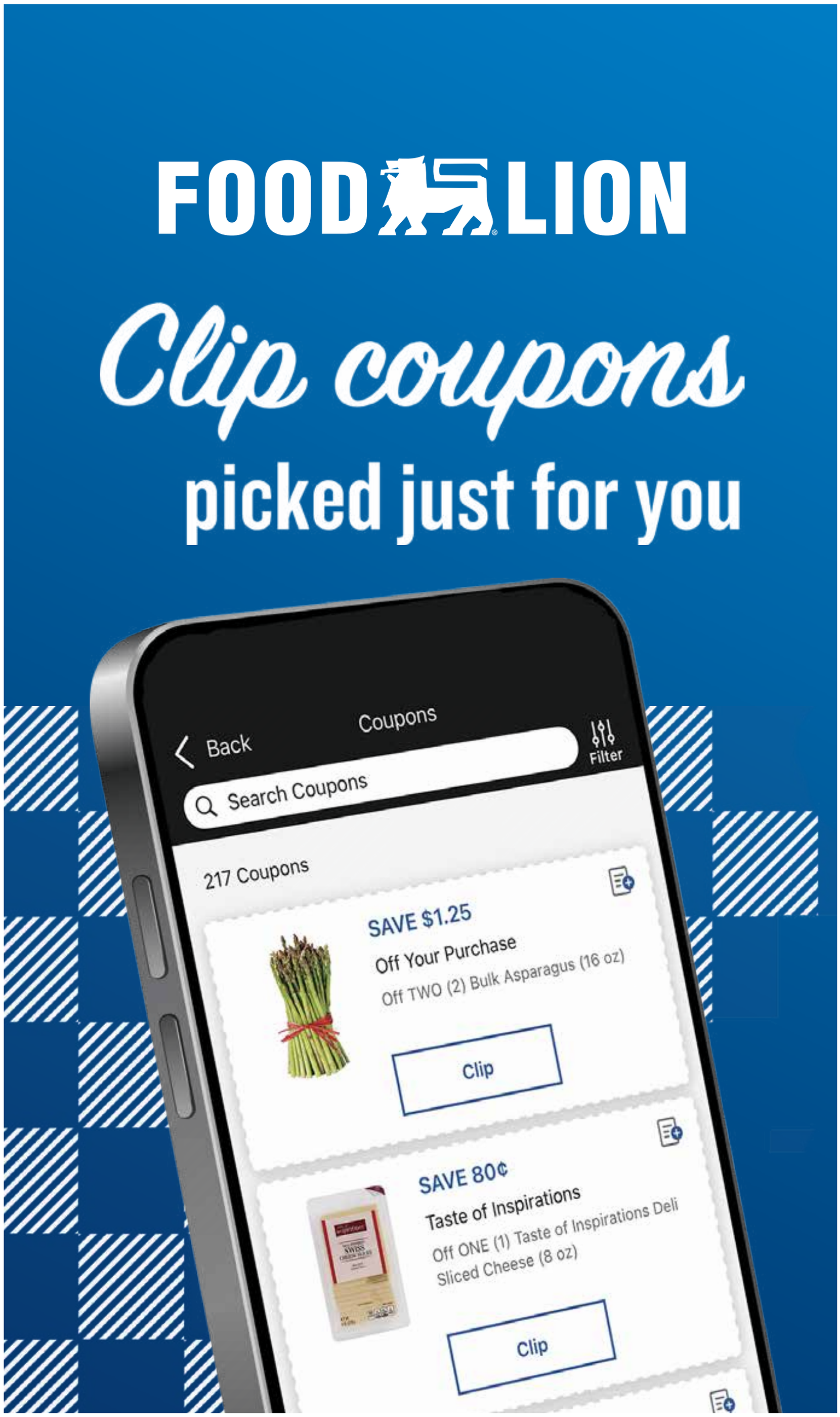
Every year, states must compete for rural funding in the five-year federal program. Federal regulators will take money away from states that do not meet the goals promised in their applications, including whether they designated money to companies for tech innovations.

CMS, which is overseeing the program, released a seven-step guidance document for states to follow when creating the tech catalyst operations. No more than 10% of each state's award can be spent on a rural tech catalyst fund.

States' initial annual progress reports for the rural fund were due at the end of August. CMS has declined to publicly post those reports; it plans to publish an annual report on state progress. States must show that first-year funds will be obligated — but not necessarily spent — by Oct. 30, according to the CMS guidance document.

Daniel X. O'Neil, a technology consultant who advocates for open data and open government, created a state tracker and parsed the original state applications to find dozens that mention catalyst awards and technology funds.

O'Neil said he is "looking forward to the clawbacks and the craziness of October because, you know, that's serious stuff."



Arts & Culture



16th Street Baptist Church Marks Bombing Anniversary

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (AP) — Sixty-three years ago, dynamite planted by Ku Klux Klan members exploded through the 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, killing four girls as they prepared for Sunday services.

Hundreds of people filled the church on Tuesday on the 63rd anniversary of the bombing. The church marked the anniversary with the opening of a new visitors center that leaders said is aimed at educating people about one of the most horrific events of the Civil Rights Movement and urging a recommitment to continue the struggle for justice.

Bryan Stevenson, the founder of the Equal Justice Initiative and the guest speaker for the annual memorial service, said the remembrance falls at a time when politicians are trying to take content out of museums, attacking the Voting Rights Act and turning to the politics of division.

"We're in a critical moment in America. There is a narrative struggle. There are people who are preaching the politics of fear and anger, and they want to govern through fear and anger," Stevenson said.

Stevenson, who helped build memorials and museums tracing the legacy of slavery in America, said a "whole network of elected officials" — not only the Klan — shared responsibility for the climate that led to the deadly bombing.

"And today we have those same voices, and we have to stand against those voices by being committed to truth and justice," Stevenson said.

Klansmen had placed a bundle of dynamite outside the church under a set of stairs. The bombing came during the height of the Civil Rights Movement, eight months after then-Gov. George Wallace pledged "segregation forever."

The girls were gathered in a downstairs washroom before Sunday services when the dynamite exploded at 10:22 a.m. on Sept. 15, 1963. The explosion killed 11-year-old Denise McNair and Cynthia Wesley, Carole Robertson and Addie Mae Collins, all 14. A fifth girl, Sarah Collins Rudolph, the sister of Addie Mae, was in the room and was severely injured but survived.

Three Ku Klux Klansmen were eventually convicted in the blast: Robert Chambliss in 1977; Thomas Blanton in 2001; and Bobby Frank Cherry in 2002.

The opening of the education center comes at a time of uncertainty about how history is presented in national parks and museums. President Donald Trump in March 2025 signed an executive order aimed at defunding museum exhibits and programs that he said promote "divisive narratives."

The church sits within the bounds of the National Park Service's civil rights monument in Birmingham, an area that includes the park where Black protesters were met by police dogs and fire hoses. But the church independently runs the visitors center.

The new center has space for exhibits, oral history initiatives, artist residencies, community quilting projects, public speaker series and other programming.

Church leaders envision the center as a place where people can reflect after visiting the church and bombing site.

"I want them to take away that history is not just in the past. History is also present, and that there's still work to do," said the Rev. Arthur Price Jr., the pastor of 16th Street Baptist. "When we talk about the challenges in our country, when we talk about the injustice, the inequity, and the inequality, there's still a whole lot of work for us to do."

Lisa McNair's sister, Denise, was one of the girls who lost their lives in the 1963 bombing.

"It's part of our shared American history, and if we don't know our history, we're destined to repeat it," McNair said at Tuesday's event.

Converse Pulls Sneaker Ad On Social Media After Racist Imagery Criticism

AP NEWS - The sneaker company Converse has removed a social media ad that sparked outrage among critics who viewed it as evoking the Ku Klux Klan and lynching.

The Instagram ad photo showed K-pop singer Karina wearing a skirt and holding a pair of Chuck 70 X sneakers. Critics lashed out online, saying that a white triangular image created by lighting on the skirt resembled a KKK hood and that the way she held the sneakers made them look like the dangling feet of a lynching victim.

Converse, owned by Nike, issued a statement apologizing and saying it removed the ad.

"We're sorry," said the statement, first released on Friday. "We understand why this image is deeply upsetting and recognize that we got this wrong. We removed it from our channels and are working to remove it everywhere it appeared. This should not have happened and we will do better."



Converse, based in Boston, declined on Sunday to answer questions seeking additional information, including how the company screens ads before they are posted and how the ad was approved.

Karina and her management company, SM Entertainment Group, did not immediately respond to messages through their Instagram accounts.

Retailers and top fashion brands have issued a string of apologies over the years for products criticized as being racially insensitive.

Last month, retailer Target pulled a children's Halloween costume from its shelves after widespread social media backlash, apologizing for selling a garment that critics said evoked racist minstrel caricatures.

The Converse photo sparked swift criticism, including calls for staff involved in the ad to be fired and for a boycott of the company. In a slew of comments on social media, posters questioned how the ad could have cleared the company's advertising vetting process. Other commenters defended Converse, saying they didn't believe it was intentional.

Lee Merritt, a civil rights attorney based in Texas, posted on Instagram that Converse's apology "doesn't undo what got past legal, marketing and leadership at every step."

"We keep having this conversation because corporations keep failing the same test," he wrote. "Do better means catching this before it airs — not after we're offended."

Converse, founded in Malden, Massachusetts, in 1908, makes the iconic Chuck Taylor All Star sneaker. It was first released in 1917 as a non-skid basketball shoe, adding the signature of Taylor — a basketball player who promoted the sneaker — in 1934, according to the company's website.

From The Mollie Huston Lee Collection: Review Of The Book Titled *Black Jacob*

By Jheri Hardaway

Staff Writer

Mollie Huston Lee was the first African American librarian in Wake County and the founder of the Richard B. Harrison Wake County Library Branch. Not only did she leave behind a legacy of helping others and encouraging a love of literacy, but her treasured collection is a rare and special intellectual treat she left for us to share, analyze, and dissect. Mrs. Lee started and maintained a collection chronicling the African American experience locally, nationally, and internationally on the history of the African Diaspora. The literary collection comprises adult and juvenile nonfiction, fiction, journals, even a first edition signed copy of Alex Haley's Roots.

As I continue to explore the collection many books have drawn my attention. One that stood out was a 100 page three by two inch mini book called Black Jacob: A Monument of Grace by A. D. Eddy of Newark, New Jersey. Published in 1842, this quarter sized book is a biography of an African American man born in 1763 near Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Jacob Hodges, was born free, but he was granted no other signal accommodation. The text begins by outlining that, "The family, though extremely depressed, living in ignorance and poverty, were



not, as it is known, ever subjects of slavery. Either from the poverty, ignorance, or wickedness of his parents, Jacob was suffered to spend his early years wholly without education or moral restraint."

Jacob took only what life gave him, as shared by his biographer. He took to trades around the sea and worked jobs on ships which led to drinking in excess and other vices that guided him down the wrong path. Jacob traveled far and wide, seeing many continents and ports in many countries around the world during his time. Eventually, his inability to act or work in a dignified manner, impacted his employment. When his job on the seas came to an end he found himself in rural New York. Eventually, living with his employer he performed common laborer tasks. Jacob's employer, a woman and two men had their eye on a plot of land in the area owned by a Black man. He had fought hard to own the land and remain independently working it with his family. Jacob's employers began to scheme on how they could kill the man and take the land. They enlisted Jacob in this plot and by keeping him drunk and sufficiently employed they were able to persuade him to commit the crime of cold blooded murder.

The tale outlines the extensive trial process and litigation that followed. Jacob was not the only person who went to prison for this crime. His time incarcerated was life changing for him and his community. Entirely ignorant, Jacob was able to forge a relationship with a chaplain who visited consistently in prison. This man of a cloth will eventually use the Bible to teach Jacob to read and guide him towards faith to become a dedicated and faithful believer. The book was all about God and obedience. It was evident to the community that Jacob was changed, man. Upon his release from prison, Jacob was not excited and very fearful of what the world had to offer. The chaplain encouraged him to trust in God to continue on his spiritual path. He was gifted the very Bible that taught him to read, and it became his most prize possession.

Jacob himself began to preach the word, became a trusted member of his community, and a testament to faith, perseverance, deliverance. He was haunted by his crime, his entire life, but committed to serving God in every way.

When I first started reading this book, I had no indication of what direction the story would go in. I was actually shocked that it ended up being such a spiritual book when it started as an adventure with a wild young man who had no moral compass drinking at sea. I read the book 50 pages at a time, you cannot check out books from this collection they're all rare and must be read in the reading room. This book was very delicate and well read from all the spots and marks on some of the pages.

Black Jacob was spoken about affectionately by others according to his biographer. He was proud to carry a key to the home he shared with others, having a key was meaningful to him. He was very proud of this trust that he had built. Trust and faith where the overarching themes of the story. This short book outlined a very meaningful life experience. I can't wait to see what else collection reveals to me.



THE GOLDEN YEARS

By Judykay Jefferson

I argue that what makes America, America is the Constitution. Although it is a constant work in progress, its founding principles remain the rock on which we stand, especially the First Amendment. These are our, those of us legally considered Americans, guaranteed freedoms: Freedom of Religion, Freedom of Speech, Freedom of the Press, Right to Peaceably Assemble, and the Right to Petition the Government. We, the people, take these freedoms for granted, assuming until recently, them to be sacrosanct. It is these freedoms upon which life as we know it depends and although the cord freedoms in the First Amendment have not been changed by amendment since 1791, their constitutional meaning has changed dramatically through Supreme Court interpretation. Right now, the interpretation and limitations of Freedom of the Press are being tested as certain news outlets are being denied access to the White House by order of the President.

We have already experienced the impact on our educational institutions, public and private, of incurring the White House's raft. We've watched Ivy League universities cave to the very real pressure to abandon all things DEI. The message is clear: if these stalwarts of diversity and freedom waved the white flag in surrender to the Executive Office, what choice do the rest of us have other than scurrying like rats on a sinking ship.

Problem is, we, the people, can't afford for this ship to sink.

As a woman of faith, I must believe that this raging tempest can shake us out of our complacency. It may take $5/gallon gas and $10/pound hamburger to wake us up from the braindead coma induced by influence chasers and cheap Chinese goods. Perhaps, we'll connect the dots and recognize our part in what is happening. The fact is we can wrest control of our lives from those who live in a gilded reality vs. the rest of America. We have the opportunity to make ourselves heard in the November elections. We can't afford the luxury of frustration, hopelessness, detachment or disengagement. We must shake the sand out of our eyes and take responsibility by showing up to vote. For one day, delay social media indulgence until after you have voted. If you know you'll need a ride to the polling location, call your local community center, church, or political party headquarters. Reserve your spot. Make a day of it. Go with a friend, vote, go to breakfast or lunch or dinner. Go early. There should be lines. Take a snack and a bottle of water. Once you get your "I Voted" sticker, treat yourself to a fancy coffee beverage.

For me, the bottom line is we must do more than complain and post. Everytime you pass a gas station, think "I will vote." Every trip to the grocery store should trigger the thought, "I will vote." Seniors, ignore what anyone says about the futility of voting. We know what we can do when we show up and we know what is done to us when we don't. Even if you don't understand all of the nuances of shifting political power, between now and election day, November 3, 2026. Don't wait until that day to figure out where you vote. Don't take anything for granted. Have your ID ready. You may not know everyone on the ballot but at least make your decisions, based on what you consider your own best interest, for your U.S. and State House of Representative and Senate candidates. I'm sure sample ballots will come in the mail, they always do. I usually just take them immediately to the trash. Not this year. I need to make informed decisions, not by party but in support of those who support what's best for me, my family, and my community. No one party has a monopoly on right. There are definitely issues that must be addressed and this is the best plan for addressing them.

Voting is free speech. Don't let anything or anyone discourage you from voicing your choice on November 3rd.

37th Annual Haw River Learning Celebration





We would like to invite you to our 37th annual outdoor Learning Celebration, a field trip to the Haw River for 4th graders each fall. The program began in 1990, and over 49,000 students have participated and hundreds of volunteers have given their hearts, hands, and spirits to the continual creation of this legacy community event. From Chatham, to Alamance, to Rockingham counties over 3 weeks, we introduce children to the wonders of the river, nurture a sense of environmental stewardship, and build a passionate and dedicated community who protect and defend the river in their own diverse ways.

Studies continuously show that spending time in nature provides help for mental health and well-being for children (and adults!). Our program uses nature as the classroom - and for many children, this is their fi rst experience ever hiking through a forest and along a river. The Learning Celebration is a hands-on environmental education program for our volunteers who are local teachers, students, and parents. The Haw River Learning Celebration is one of the most intensive volunteer efforts to teach environmental education to school children in the Southeast!

49th Annual Guilford Native American Pow Wow







The Guilford Native American Association held its 49th annual Pow Wow from September 18-20 at Country Park, 3802 Jaycee Park Dr. The event featured hundreds of Native American dancers and drums from various tribes across the country in celebration of their rich history and culture. There were arts and crafts, as well as food vendors. *Mathias Bishop Photos*

Community

The Historic Perry's School Receives Major Grant Funding

By Jheri Hardaway

Staff Writer







Louisburg, NC - The historic Perry's School educational complex in rural Franklin County is still moving forward. Standing as a monument to African American resilience, faith, and community determination, this sprawling site is a profound piece of North Carolina history.

The Perry's School Alumni Association is a recent grant partner of the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation. The organization was selected as one of 34 community projects across rural North Carolina to receive funding under the foundation's Community Progress Fund. These short-term investments are designed to address direct local issues, test innovative ideas, or expand successful local initiatives. The Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation (ZSR) Board of Trustees has awarded 34 grants totaling almost $1.7 million; the website indicates that amounts range from $20,000 to 30,000.

Perry's School has lived multiple distinct lives. Following emancipation, formerly enslaved families in Franklin County recognized that true freedom required empowering both "the heart for God, and then the mind." Communities built local churches and quickly established modest, one-room schoolhouses nearby to educate their children. Local white landowner Joshua Perry donated the acreage to build the first school. In the 1920s, philanthropist Julius Rosenwald partnered with Booker T. Washington to build thousands of state-of-the-art schools for Black children across the South. A larger Rosenwald frame structure was erected to accommodate the growing student population. In 1949, a modern white school building was constructed, followed by a concrete block addition in 1953 and a gymnasium in 1963. Buses traveled massive distances across the county to bring Black students to the high school. Post-integration in 1968, the county stripped the historic "Perry's" name from the high school, re-designating the facility as K-5 Gold Sand Elementary before it permanently closed its doors in 1990.

Today, the vacant campus has a new energy around it, although many of the alumni remain in leadership to see the property back to a state of use. Since its closure in 1990, the building has faced severe challenges. Vandals have shattered windows, and roof leaks have allowed water to warp the walls of the old library. Yet, the bones of the structure remain remarkably resilient, and the passion of the community has not wavered.

What began as a grassroots effort to educate Black children after slavery is now on its fourth life, transitioning from a beloved community beacon to an abandoned structure, and hopefully, now an empowered future with well preserved legacy. The school principal, Mr. Wilson, was remembered by alumni as a loving but firm figure. "All he had to do was walk into a class," a former student laughed. "He didn't have to say one word. You were gonna be quiet." More than anything, the school reinforced a foundational network of character training shared between the home, the church, and the classroom. These buildings harness a vibrant spirit of community and rich heritage. The Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation recognized it, and now more great things can happen in this powerful space.

$2 Billion Wakemed-Atrium Merger —*CONT. FROM PG 3*

fully, and with the citizens of Wake County in mind," she said.

Commissioners who voted in favor pointed to a revised agreement WakeMed announced late last week that added protections beyond the original May proposal. That revision brought an additional $150 million to the county over the next decade for the county-controlled Wake County Whole Health Program, which will fund priorities including foster youth placement, homelessness, supportive housing, food security and senior services.

It also raised WakeMed's minimum indigent care requirement from 4.8% to 8% of annual adjusted revenue, gave commissioners more control over board appointees, limited Atrium's power to alter WakeMed's governing documents, and confirmed that Atrium—not WakeMed—would fully fund the $2 billion in capital investment, which includes roughly half a billion dollars for WakeMed's flagship Southeast Raleigh campus and a new Whole Health Campus in Garner featuring a 150-bed mental health hospital.

"I believe that this action will make WakeMed stronger in the face of growing demands, workforce pressures, rising costs, and the real headwinds facing healthcare today," Mial said.

Commissioner Safiyah Jackson said she saw the vote as protecting WakeMed's mission long-term.

"I believe my vote protects WakeMed's legacy," Jackson said. "It protects our most vulnerable neighbors, and it guarantees great care for our children and grandchildren."

Commissioner Cheryl Stallings credited weeks of negotiation for the improved terms.

"We have worked diligently over the past couple of weeks to secure a stronger agreement," Stallings said. "The $2 billion in capital investments will be coming from Atrium, and not WakeMed. There are sound financial assistance policies in place that have already been presented."

Adamson remained unconvinced and noted that a price-increase cap Gov. Josh Stein had announced with Atrium over the weekend wasn't actually included in the documents commissioners were voting on, meaning the county would still need to finalize that piece separately.

"Quite frankly, the plot twists have been nonstop," she said. "For residents, the questions are real: What will this mean for the cost of health care? What will it mean for access to care? What will it mean for the quality of care? Why give up so much local control to a sole member?"

She argued the board should reject the agreement outright and start over.

"The deal is much better than it was when it first came to county leaders," she said, but added the board should "send it back to WakeMed and get a new board that's willing to do the hard work, the due diligence, to look at hospitals, do a public process, because we're in no hurry."

A county attorney confirmed to Adamson during the meeting that the deal does represent a significant shift in control, with the current board no longer retaining the authority it holds today.

Around 50 people spoke during the meeting's public comment period, the majority opposed to the deal. Many in the packed chamber wore white T-shirts reading "Save WakeMed" and held signs declaring "We Will Remember Every November" and "Patients are Watching." Speakers described the arrangement as a corporate takeover and raised fears about rising health care costs, the loss of local accountability, and reduced transparency; several health care workers testified that mergers of this kind often bring higher patient-to-nurse ratios and declining care quality.

Monday's meeting capped months of public organizing against the deal, which began after it was quietly placed on the commissioners' consent agenda in May and removed following backlash. On July 27, hundreds of people packed Saint Ambrose Episcopal Church in Raleigh for a community town hall organized by The Patients Union, where residents pressed WakeMed and Atrium representatives for guarantees that costs wouldn't rise, and services wouldn't shrink.

Stein, who had raised concerns in a July letter to WakeMed leaders about county oversight of the proposed board, announced Sunday that he no longer opposed the merger after Atrium agreed to two of his requests: capping price increases at WakeMed to no more than 1.5 times the annual increase in Medicare costs for the next five years, and fully funding the $2 billion in capital investment itself rather than relying on WakeMed.

Stein noted he has pushed since his time as attorney general for the General Assembly to grant that office formal authority to review hospital transactions, an effort that included bipartisan legislation he helped draft in 2023 with Sens. Jim Burgin and Julie Mayfield that would let the attorney general block mergers found to raise costs, reduce care quality or harm local communities; that legislation has not yet passed.

The merger is not yet final. It still requires approval from the Federal Trade Commission and the U.S. Department of Justice before Atrium and WakeMed can complete the combination.

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Sports

The College Sports Bill Inches Ahead

WASHINGTON (AP) — Congress has struggled to pass major legislation this year, putting off debates on annual spending, defense, cryptocurrency and artificial intelligence. But in its final weeks in session as the midterm elections approach, the Senate can agree on doing one thing — addressing college sports.

The Senate voted twice this week to move forward on legislation to overhaul the rules and financing around college sports. It's an effort to put guardrails around skyrocketing spending, prevent constant legal battles and restore order to what the bill's supporters say is "chaos" in athletic programs.

More than 70 senators are already backing the bill, which would still have to pass the House. Final votes could come as soon as next week.

Still, some Senate critics say it's far from the most urgent matter in front of Congress — and question why senators aren't focused on what they say are more pressing issues before the midterm elections.

Florida Sen. Rick Scott, a Republican who opposes the sports bill, said Congress should be primarily dealing with affordability issues before lawmakers leave town to campaign. The college sports bill, Scott said, goes "way too far inserting the federal government into collegiate athletics" and could create new problems.

Democratic Sen. Chris Murphy of Connecticut said the Senate should concentrate on other things "when we are in the middle of a disastrous war and a growing cost crisis."

The college sports legislation is addressing "a fake crisis," Murphy said this week. He argued that it doesn't do enough to change the system and protect athletes.

Those backing the bill say it will keep college costs down, give hundreds of thousands of student athletes new health and labor protections and create one set of rules for all colleges.

Senate Majority Leader John Thune, R-S.D., made a commitment this summer to the bill's top sponsors — Commerce Committee Chairman Ted Cruz, R-Texas, and Washington Sen. Maria Cantwell, the top Democrat on the panel — that he would hold a vote on the bill in September. He says there is a "pent-up demand" to fix college sports, "and it's clearly broken."

"I think it's been proven over time that nobody else is going to fix it," Thune said.

Bill would address the 'spending spiral'

The legislation addresses what Cantwell calls "a spending spiral" that has taken hold of college sports as name-image-likeness payments — money that student athletes can earn by monetizing their endorsements, social media, public appearances and more — have led to football rosters with $30 million payrolls.

A report Cantwell issued earlier this year showed there was a $519.9 million increase in institutional and government support of athletic programs between 2015 and 2025 among the 53 schools in the Power Four whose data was publicly available.

The bill would cap the revenue colleges are allowed to share with their players, add a retention pool for schools to keep current players and give conferences the option of pooling TV media rights, which could raise more revenue. It would also restrict player transfers, an effort to rein in the transfer portal that has led to players constantly switching teams.

It would also codify the NCAA's new rule allowing players no more than five years of eligibility, cap agent fees and give the NCAA limited antitrust protections.

Supporters say that the guardrails around big spending would help save money for smaller athletic programs, including women's and Olympic sports, that are lower priority at many schools. And it would put new requirements in place that would allow student athletes to keep scholarships and have longer-term healthcare.

"We can recognize (these rights), enshrine them today, and make sure that these athletes are protected forever," Cantwell said.

Some senators remain critical of the legislation

Senators were still making last-minute changes to the bill on Friday, tweaking a provision that would reduce the wait time if schools want to change conferences and adding language that clarifies the bill does not override other laws that currently address transgender girls and women in sports.



Shaw Bears Powers Past Lincoln, 49-27, in Durham

By Steve Worthy

Photography

DURHAM, N.C. — Shaw University powered its way to a 49-27 victory over Lincoln University on Sept. 19, putting together a strong offensive performance in Durham.

Shaw established its ground game early, with running backs Trey Thorpe and Fabian Diggs helping move the Bears down the field. Thorpe found the end zone during the first half and later dove across the goal line for another score as Shaw built its advantage.

Diggs also played a key role in the Bears' rushing attack. He consistently found running room against the Lincoln defense and broke free for a first down near the goal line during the second half.

Tight end Keyshaun Powell contributed to the offense as well, picking up a first down along the sideline during the first half.

Lincoln managed to generate offense of its own. Wide receiver Kyrie Tyson made a difficult touchdown catch over Shaw defensive back Isaiah Evans in the first half, helping Lincoln stay within reach early in the contest.

The Bears continued to apply pressure after halftime, however, keeping Lincoln from closing the gap. Lincoln defensive back Brandon Robinson attempted to make a play against Shaw's Reggie King Jr. in the second half, but Shaw's offense continued to produce.

By the final whistle, Shaw had scored 49 points to secure a 49-27 victory over Lincoln.



The Sparks Honor Lisa Leslie With A Bronze Statue Outside The Arena

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Lisa Leslie left her mark on the Los Angeles Sparks franchise as one of the top players in its history.

The organization honored her Sunday with a bronze statue outside the arena, immortalizing the WNBA great.

She became the 16th person honored with a statue in Star Plaza in a ceremony that featured Magic Johnson, Candace Parker and Michael Cooper and others.

"I am beyond happy with how beautiful The First Lady looks because they listened to me," the three-time MVP said. "She has her lipstick on, she has on earrings, she has my family's names on my bracelets, which probably people can't see because she's so big. It's gorgeous, and I just love that she has her ponytail, and when little girls walk around and get a chance to see it, they see a woman, The First Lady statue out there. That just means so much to me."





Leslie, who starred for the Sparks from 1997-2009, is the first Sparks player to be honored with a statue. The 11-foot statue with a 4 1/2 foot base depicts Leslie's signature dunk that was the first in WNBA history.

"First of all, she's cute," Leslie said of the statue when it was unveiled. "I was so worried. I did not want to look like a linebacker up here. But she's cute. I wanted to make sure that this statue was a perfect blend of fearlessness and the competitor that I was and I am and I'll always be. But also ... I wore my ribbons, I had my nails polished, which y'all can't see, but the girl got her polish on because I never wanted the boys or the men to think that I was a boy."

Leslie helped the Sparks win consecutive titles in 2001 and 2002.

Ten Years Later, Colin Kaepernick Says Action Matters More Than Fear

By Chris Pugh

Yahoo Sports

Colin Kaepernick says the question that guided his protest a decade ago remains just as important today: What happens if people decide not to act?

The former San Francisco 49ers quarterback and civil rights activist discussed that idea during an appearance on "The Daily Show" with host Josh Johnson while promoting his new memoir, "The Perilous Fight." During the interview, Kaepernick reflected on the 10th anniversary of his decision to kneel during the national anthem in protest of police brutality and racial injustice.

Kaepernick said the country has seen progress in some areas since 2016 but argued there is still significant work to do. He told Johnson that public frustration with political and corporate institutions has grown and said seeing people become more active in their communities gives him hope for the future.

A major theme of the conversation centered on activism. Kaepernick rejected the idea that people must achieve success, wealth or influence before speaking out. Instead, he argued that involvement in community issues is a responsibility shared by everyone and pointed to local activists and organizations he says are making a difference by working directly in their neighborhoods.

Much of Kaepernick's memoir focuses on the years before his protest became a national flashpoint. He said readers often know the headline version of his story but not the experiences that shaped him, including his childhood, football career and growing understanding of racial inequality. According to the book's publisher, the memoir explores how those experiences eventually led to his decision to kneel during the anthem.

Looking back, Kaepernick said there are a few things he might have handled differently. One involved preparing more organized support systems before the protest became national news. He said he had no way of knowing how large the reaction would become but now believes additional preparation could have helped sustain long-term efforts tied to the movement.

He also discussed the criticism he faced after kneeling and said he often chose not to respond directly to attacks because he wanted attention focused on the issues that inspired the protest. Even now, he remains uncertain whether confronting critics more aggressively would have improved public understanding of his message.



One of the interview's most notable moments came when Kaepernick described what he considers the most important question for activists. Rather than focusing only on personal consequences, he said people should also consider the cost of doing nothing. He pointed to concerns such as inequality, incarceration and barriers to economic opportunity as examples of problems that can worsen when people choose not to act.

Kaepernick also said collective action can reduce the pressure placed on any one person. When individuals stand alone, he argued, they are easier to isolate. When communities act together, the risks can be shared across larger groups.

The former quarterback said reactions to his protest have evolved over time. While some early supporters later distanced themselves, he said he has also encountered people who initially opposed his actions but have since reconsidered after learning more about his goals and activism.

Published on Sept. 15, "The Perilous Fight" arrives almost exactly 10 years after Kaepernick's protest became one of the most debated moments in modern sports. The book examines his personal journey, NFL career and the events that led to one of the most significant acts of athlete activism in recent American history.



Agent Shaq... FBI



Yahoo Sports—Shaquille O'Neal, an NBA Hall-of-Famer known locally for his support of law enforcement, was honored by the Federal Bureau of Investigation recently.

Shaq was named an honorary FBI special agent after graduating at the FBI National Academy session 299, FBI Director Kash Patrol said on X on Sept. 17.

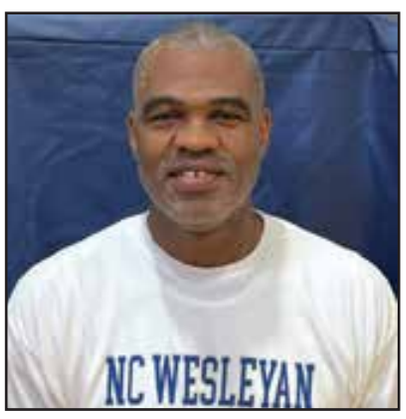
"This session is historic - FBI was honored to be joined by one of the best supporters of law enforcement in the country - @Shaq - who graduated with this session and became an honorary FBI Special Agent," Patel said.

Shaq is involved in the local community and was named Henry County Police Department's community relations chief late last year, as reported by Channel 2 Action News.

NC Wesleyan University To Add Women's Flag Football Beginning In Spring 2028

ROCKY MOUNT, NORTH CAROLINA – North Carolina Wesleyan University is expanding its athletic offerings with the addition of NCAA Women's Flag Football, with the Battling Bishops set to begin competition in Spring 2028 as a member of the USA South Conference.

Kenny Inge has been named the inaugural coach of the Women's Flag Football program. Wesleyan will begin recruiting student-athletes for the new program in Fall 2027, allowing the inaugural team to prepare for its first competitive season in Spring 2028.



"North Carolina Wesleyan is excited to announce that we will be starting a new athletic program, Women's Flag Football, in Spring 2028," said Wesleyan Director of Athletics John Thompson. "An emerging sport over the last several years, flag football is rapidly growing, and we believe the time is right to add to our sport offerings for women."

The addition of Women's Flag Football comes as the sport continues to gain momentum at the collegiate and national levels. In January 2026, the NCAA officially added women's flag football to its Emerging Sports for Women program. During the 2025-26 school year, 135 high schools across North Carolina had women's flag football teams, reflecting the sport's continued growth throughout the state.

Wesleyan will join a growing group of North Carolina colleges and universities offering women's flag football, including Meredith College, Guilford College, Wingate University, Barton College, Lees-McRae College, Catawba College and Lenoir-Rhyne University.

Within the USA South Conference, Meredith College is currently the only other member institution offering women's flag football.

"We are excited to bring this growing sport to North Carolina Wesleyan and to provide another opportunity for women student-athletes to compete at the collegiate level," Thompson said. "We look forward to building a strong program and welcoming our inaugural student-athletes to Wesleyan."

Church

Mount Vernon Baptist Church Celebrates 140 Years in Durham's Historic Black Community

By Jordan Meadows
Staff Writer



Mount Vernon Baptist Church marked its 140th anniversary in late September, tracing its official founding to 1886 even though the congregation's roots reach back further, to a two-room mission on Queen Street where seven or eight formerly enslaved worshippers first gathered in 1880 seeking spiritual independence.

That founding group included Dolly Best, Isabella Gilmore, Will and Polly Lassiter, and Julia Richmond. The property housing that early mission was gifted in 1884 by R.L. Blackwell.

The congregation formally organized in 1887 following a spiritual revival at the Masonic Hall on Fayetteville Street, selecting the Rev. J.K. Butler as its first pastor; Butler was, at the time, simultaneously serving as pastor of First Baptist Church, which later became the historic White Rock Baptist Church.

The church's identity and name trace to a separate transaction: a lot purchased for $300 from tobacco industrialist W.T. Blackwell at the corner of Mount Vernon Avenue and South Queen Street, which anchored the congregation both physically and in name for decades to come.

As the congregation grew through the early 20th century, its original wood-frame building could no longer accommodate the membership. Under the Rev. J.H. Thomas, who led the church through both the Great Depression and World War II, the congregation drew up plans for a larger home, completing a Colonial Revival masonry brick structure at 1007 S. Roxboro St. in 1940 and 1941. The original building at 504 S. Queen St. was eventually abandoned and demolished during mid-20th-century urban renewal projects that reshaped the Hayti neighborhood; the highway construction that followed paved over the original street grid entirely, and the footprint of the first church now sits beneath the parking lot of a local car dealership.

That Roxboro Street site remains the church's home today, in the heart of Durham's historic African American community, near the Durham Freeway that cut through Hayti during urban renewal and close to two other historically Black congregations, Gethsemane Baptist and St. Mark AME Zion.

The area has continued to face pressure from gentrification; downtown revitalization efforts since 2019 have not translated into growth for Black-owned businesses, which still make up less than 4% of local businesses both downtown and countywide.

During the civil rights demonstrations of the 1960s, the church served as a safe haven, coordinating meals and logistics for protesters marching against segregation, and it continues to host local NAACP chapter meetings today.

More recently, the congregation has taken direct action against displacement pressures in downtown Durham, engaging in strategic land banking by purchasing surrounding plots to shield them from aggressive commercial development rather than yielding to rising property values. The church has also partnered with Durham Habitat for Humanity, contributing its own historically held properties — including the site of its former parsonage — toward the construction of affordable single-family homes intended to keep working-class families anchored in the neighborhood.

The 140th anniversary celebration opening with a performance by the Michael Jones Trio, followed by a reception and a time capsule burial ceremony, and closing with an anniversary worship service held under the theme "For the Greater Glory!" Church leaders have said Mount Vernon has no plans to leave its Roxboro Street home even as gentrification and rising property values continue to close in around it.



A Different Voice



By Dorothy Shaw Thompson

LIFTED UP FOR A TESTIMONY

In Sunday's service at First Baptist, Dr. Bowie took his text from 2 Corinthians, the story of Paul's experience of what I'd call an out-of-body experience. He says whether in the body or out of the body, he knows not. Clearly, Paul had a spiritual experience that even he was not sure of, but he described the experience that led to an infirmity. He didn't dwell on the experience, nor did Dr. Bowie in his sermon, and neither do I, except to say that it informs me when I read the reports of people today who report near-death experiences. I am a believer. So far, I have never had an NDE, but there are many experiences I've had and many I've never had that are information for my faith. Paul, as Dr. Bowie preached about, had an aftermath experience in his body that was the focus of the sermon.

He described it as a thorn in the flesh, the human body, that was difficult enough that he tried to pray it away to no avail. Who cannot identify with coming to a place in your life where something occurred that you thought you had no preparation for and got on your knees to fervently pray it away? I certainly have. Paul's answer, he says, is that his spiritual experience was so marvelous that God knew he needed that thorn to remind him not to boast. I am persuaded that this is too often a non-mature Christian response to things that appear to make us special. How many times have you said, or heard it said, "I'm blessed and highly favored"? And yes, you are, unless you don't realize that the person you are talking to is also. If you don't realize that, I think you missed the point of being blessed.

Paul is a good study for recognizing this factor of human fragility, for he had at least two instances that would have made him continue to think of himself as more than a messenger for God. His experience on the Damascus Road is one, and there are others in the scripture where he was the recipient of miracles of which he was a personal witness and has shared them. I believe that God, who chose him, chose him because He made him able to be humble. The Bible gives us story after story where God has to remind us, through life circumstances, that we are not here to glory in our blessings, gifts, talents, physical holdings, looks or intelligence. Instead, we are made to be a blessing.

Feed and provide healthcare for the sick. "When I work for my money, I don't want to share it. I want to take my ball and go home." The Bible says, "Judge not, that ye be not judged," but we say, "Sorry, I'm not listening to that wimpy stuff. I'm telling you that gays are going to hell, and those who choose abortions are going to be right down there with them. I'm the judge and the jury, not God. God told me so. It's right there in the Bible," by their interpretation. "I hate, I hate, I hate. It's off to work I go. Hi-ho. I hate Jews. I hate Blacks, Mexicans, Indigenous people, women, all the labels that I think don't apply to me."

This is where we are, but it's not where we have to be. We can turn the uplifting we've all received at some time or another into the testimony of the goodness and righteousness of God. We can decide to fight environmental toxins, as did Dollie Burwell in Warren County, North Carolina, inspiring her minister, Rev. Leon White, to join her. We can press the government for one bus so our children don't have to walk miles to school, as did Joseph DeLaine in Clarendon County, South Carolina, and watch God turn it into a Supreme Court decision. We can fight racism as did [unclear] Williams and John Lewis, Stokely Carmichael and H. Rap Brown.

To others, and when we are not, we become depressed or miserable. I think we are living in such a time as this for a purpose, if we will only pay attention. I also think that this present day will become a Bible for the next generation of earthly inhabitants, for clearly evil is trying hard to overtake all the good that humans have tried to evidence for us all to share in. Right now, as we live and breathe, we have an administration that denies all the truth that God has taught us. The Bible says we can't buy favor, but the president and Elon Musk say, "Well, we surely are trying." The Bible says, "Welcome the foreigner and treat him as though this is his home, just as it is yours." This administration says, "You gotta go away from here. You are killing us, raping us, even eating our pets. We will snatch you out of your homes and send you back where you come from, or at the least, away from us, and not care whether you or your family live or die." The Bible says, "Love your enemy. Pray for those who despitefully use you," but we say, "Keep the liberal woke stuff to yourself. That's why we are in this mess, because you want to feed the sheep."

We can go into the South and bring the enslaved out of slavery, as did Harriet Tubman, and speak out like Sojourner Truth. Or we can simply carry a bowl of soup to our next-door neighbor who has the flu. We can feed, clothe and house the homeless, not worried about raising the money first, as did Jesus when He fed the thousands. All of those and more we can do, for that's why we're here. Our job is to listen, trust and obey, for there's no other way. We are not here to condemn, but to uplift. Our testimony. We need more John Brown Christians in America, more Martins, Malcolms and [unclear], but you might say, "Aren't all of them dead?"

My answer is true, and yet so also shall we die. And it's better, since we're going anyway, to leave a testimony behind and to carry the other, so I carry it to the other side.

Practical Biblical Principles

A TOUCH OF FAITH
MARK 5:21-29
By John L. Caldwell, Pastor
New Jerusalem Baptist Cathedral

When we read the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, we see the fast pace of Jesus as He went about His ministry. Can you imagine the energy it took for our Lord to minister to the people who called upon Him for healing.

It appears that more people called upon Jesus for healing more than needing to hear His teachings about the Kingdom of Heaven.

Today we hear of no such healing in our communities, Why not? Sin could be the reason. Yet spiritual healing is taking place here in America. But we don't hear much about it. Apparently very few people are testifying to this fact. Today we hear more about hospital healings than spiritual healings. Has the hospital replaced Jesus when it comes to physical healing? If so, this makes the Bible story of healing seem like a fairy tale.

The last notable event of spiritual healing in America, which led to the birth of the Pentecostal movement in America was the Azusa Street Revival held in Los Angeles, CA. This revival lasted from 1906-1915. This basically was a healing revival which drew large interracial crowds. This revival was led by a black preacher, by the name of William J. Seymour.

Church services were held daily each week. Highlights of the services were healing events. Powerful testimonies of healing the sick and lame ear marked these services in the news media. No religious event such as the Azusa revival has been held here in America since.

Jesus spent a lot of time and energy healing people whether they believed in Him or not. Jesus was no respecter of person when it came to healing. He healed all who came to Him.

God, the Father, gave Jesus the power to heal, forgive sin and perform miracles to impress upon the people He is the Son of God, the long-awaited Messiah.

Jesus still holds this power to heal today. Our Lord faced heavy opposition when He first came on the scene preaching about the Kingdom of Heaven. Preaching the Kingdom of Heaven to the Old Testament crowd created resentment among many who heard Him. Jesus was attracting many to His ministry and at the same time creating jealousy among the temple priests in Jerusalen. Yet He did not stop healing. Jesus had only three years to complete His Fathers assignment to die and take away our sin. This is why He took on many assignments of healing who and where.

Jesus had just taught His disciples a lesson in faith as they rebounded from that wind and storm swept experience in the boat as they crossed the sea of Galilee. Previously Jesus told His disciples to go with Him on the eastern side of the Sea of Galilee. Now when they arrived on the other side, they met a man who was demon-possessed coming toward them. This man lived among the tombs and had an unclean spirit. The disciple witnessed Jesus cleansing the man of his unclean spirit and the pig rodeo running down the hill and drowning in the sea.

Now when Jesus crossed back over to the Capernaum side of the sea, He was met with a large crowd. There a man named Jarius, a ruler of the synagogue, met Jesus and fell at His feet worshipping Him saying, "Come, Lord and heal my young daughter who is at the point of death." Jesus agreed to go with the synagogue ruler.

Jesus being enroute to Jarius' house, unexpectedly encountered a woman who had an issue of blood for twelve years and was considered unclean by Moses's law. She had spent all of her money on doctors. She had heard about Jesus. This lady's faith caused her to violate social norms and be in public. She pushed her way through the crowd to get the chance to just touch the hem of Jesus' garment. If this woman had touched the skin or persons in the crowd, then she would have contaminated and made unclean all the people she touched as she forced her way to Jesus. This woman had suffered much under the hands of the doctors given the medical procedures available for women with her problem. This woman only wanted to touch the hem of Jesus's garment, His clothing and not His person. This way she did not make Jesus unclean when she touched Him. Yet this woman drew healing virtue out of Jesus. Jesus felt a part of His righteousness go out from Him. When He said, "Who touched Me? Are people today touching Jesus with their healing request?

Church, Faith comes from hearing (Romans 10:17). This statement is true. There were no Bibles written during the time of Jesus only prayers were available. Where did our healing faith go? Here Jesus showed His disciples He had power over nature, demons, and physical healing. Should this not build our faith in our Lord, even today?





Classifieds

DURHAM COUNTY

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Having qualified as Administrator of the Estate of WILLIAM MANUEL VIERRA, SR., deceased, this is to notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the Estate of WILLIAM MANUEL VIERRA, SR. to present them to the undersigned on or before the 24th day of December, 2026,
or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

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

This, the 22nd day of September, 2026.
EDWARD J. FALCONE
Attorney for the Estate of WILLIAM MANUEL VIERRA, SR.
120 E. Parrish Street, Suite 200
Durham, North Carolina 27701
(919) 682-9273
9/24, 10/1, 10/8, and 10/15/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File No: 26E000942-310

Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of JAUN GILBERTO RODRIGUEZ ZEPEDA, 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 24th 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 24th day of September, 2026.
Erika Rodriguez, Executor
c/o Justin L. McCarthy
Bagwell Holt Smith P.A.
111 Cloister Court, Suite 200
Chapel Hill , NC 27514
9/24, 10/1, 10/8, and 10/15/2026
NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS

All persons, firms and corporations having claims against RAY CAPLE, deceased of Durham County, North Carolina, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before the 24th day of December or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This the 24th day of September 2026.
Carlous Caple, Administrator
c/o Trusts and Estates Law Group
4141 Parklake Avenue, Suite 310
Raleigh, NC 27612
9/24, 10/1, 10/8, and 10/15/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File No: 26E001101-310

Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of JUDITH BEVERLYN CRABTREE, 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 24th 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 24th day of September, 2026.
Eddie Crabtree, Executor
c/o Christopher Hill
311 E. Main street
Durham, NC, 27701
9/24, 10/1, 10/8, and 10/15/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
File No: 26E000549-310

ALL PERSONS, firms and corporations having claims against DAVID LEE HARRISON, deceased, of DURHAM COUNTY, NC, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before December 24, 2026 or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors
of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment.

This the 24th day of September 2026.
Carl D. Harrison, David D. Harrison/ Executors of the Estate,
c/o MONROE JENKINS, PA
PO Box 12534
Durham, North Carolina 27709
9/24, 10/1, 10/8, and 10/15/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS

All persons, firms and corporations having claims against KIRSTEN KAY KLUMP, deceased of Durham County, North Carolina, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before the 24th day of December or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This the 24th day of September 2026.
Bradley S. Klump, Executor
Estate of Kirsten Kay Klump, Deceased
c/o Trusts and Estates Law Group
4141 Parklake Avenue, Suite 310
Raleigh, NC 27612
9/24, 10/1, 10/8, and 10/15/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
File No: 26E001079-310

Having qualified as Public Administrator of the Estate of RICHARD M. ALLEN, SR., deceased, of 114 Laurel Avenue, Durham County, Durham, NC 27701, 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 18, 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 17th day of September, 2026.
Jeffrey L. Austin
Public Administrator of the Estate of Richard M. Allen, Sr.
c/o Law Office of Jeffrey L. Austin, PLLC
500 Westover Dr. #32043
Sanford, NC 27330
9/17, 9/24, 10/1, and 10/8/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
File No: 26E001080-310

Having qualified as Public Administrator of the Estate of JAMES MICHAEL DAVIS, deceased, of 901 Wood Chapel Lane, Durham County, Durham, NC 27703, 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 18, 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 17th day of September, 2026.
Jeffrey L. Austin
Public Administrator of the Estate of James Michael Davis
c/o Law Office of Jeffrey L. Austin, PLLC
500 Westover Dr. #32043
Sanford, NC 27330
9/17, 9/24, 10/1, and 10/8/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File No: 26E001098-310

Having qualified as CO-EXECUTORS of the Estate of FRANCES OLIVIA GARRETT, 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 17th 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 17th day of September, 2026.
Frederick Wayne Garrett, Co-Executor
316 Olive Branch Rd.
Durham, NC 27703
Janet G. Bennett, Co-Executor
712 E. Enon Rd.
Oxford, NC 27565
Tommy D. Garrett, Co-Executor
3606 E. Greer St.
Durham, NC 27704
9/17, 9/24, 10/1, and 10/8/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS AND DEBTORS OF Judy Frances Cosler

All persons, firms and corporations having claims against JUDY FRANCES COSLER, late of Durham County, North Carolina, are notified to exhibit them to Heather Batt as Executor of the decedent's estate on or before December 19, 2026, c/o Janet B. Witchger, Attorney at Law, 1414 Raleigh Rd., Ste. 203, Chapel Hill, NC 27517, or be barred from their recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment to the above-named Executor.

This the 17th day of September 2026.
Heather Batt, Executor
c/o Janet B. Witchger, Atty.
TrustCounsel
1414 Raleigh Rd., Ste. 203
Chapel Hill, NC 27517
9/17, 9/24, 10/1, and 10/8/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
File No: 26E001104-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 8th day of September 2026, as Executor of the ESTATE OF NELSON LUTHER HOWER, III, 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 18th 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 17th day of September 2026.
EMILY KATE HOWER
EXECUTOR
ESTATE OF NELSON LUTHER HOWER, III
c/o Jennifer Dalman, Attorney
Walker Lambe, PLLC
240 Leigh Farm Rd, Ste 100
Durham, North Carolina 27707
9/17, 9/24, 10/1, and 10/8/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File No: 26E001096-310

Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of DAPHINE JEAN BRADSHER A/K/A DAPHINE NORWOOD BRADSHER, 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 17th 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 17th day of September, 2026.
LaJean Cris Bradsher, Executor
2194 Lauren Mill Drive
Oxford, NC 27565
9/17, 9/24, 10/1, and 10/8/2026
Estate of Leonard Edward Gethers, Durham County Estate
File No. 26E001121-310:

All persons, firms and corporations having claims against LEONARD EDWARD GETHERS, deceased, of Durham, N.C., are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before December 21, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This the 17th day of September 2026.
Lauren Elizabeth Gethers, Administrator
C/O Elizabeth Boyette, Boyette Law, PLLC
4509 Creedmoor Road
Suite 201
Raleigh, NC 27612
9/17, 9/24, 10/1, and 10/8/2026
DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File No: 25E001016-310

Having qualified as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of BETTY HARRINGTON, 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 17th 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 17th day of September, 2026.
Mike Wills, Administrator, c/o Richard F. Prentis, Jr., 4 Consultant Pl., Durham, NC 27707.
9/17, 9/24, 10/1, and 10/8/2026
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
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

IREDELL COUNTY

NORTH CAROLINA
IREDELL COUNTY
NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION
In The General Court Of Justice
District Court Division
26CV005116-480

DESIREE LEWIS, Plaintiff, vs. DEOJUNIQUE FLIPPIN, SR., Defendant.

To: Deojunique Flippin, Sr.

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 seeks a final determination of legal and physical custody of the minor child identified in the Complaint, together with such other and further relief as the Court deems just and proper.

You are required to make defense to such pleading not later than forty (40) days from the first date of this publication, and upon your failure to do so the party seeking service against you will apply to the court for the relief sought.

This the 24th day of September, 2026.
KOONTZ LAW, PLLC
Brandy E. Koontz,
Attorney for Plaintiff
NC State Bar #45458
181 South Main Street
Mocksville, NC 27028
Telephone: (336) 751-6235
Fax: (336) 751-7929
9/24, 10/1, and 10/8/2026

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Classifieds

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: 26E003477-910

Having qualified as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of JOHN TIMOTHY RHODES, 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 24th 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 24th day of September, 2026.
Shannon Williamson, Administrator
2644 Wintergreen Rd
Nashville, NC 27856
9/24, 10/1, 10/8, and 10/15/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY
NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION
In The General Court Of Justice
District Court Division
File No. 25CV011670-910
LAKEMA BENTZEL, Plaintiff,
v. JACOB BENTZEL, Defendant.
TO: JACOB BENTZEL

TAKE NOTICE that a pleading seeking relief against you has been filed in the above-entitled action.

The nature of the relief being sought is as follows: Complaint for Absolute Divorce.

You are required to make defense to such pleading not later than November 3, 2026, which is forty (40) days from the date of the first publication of this notice. Upon your failure to do so, the party seeking service against you will apply to the court for the relief sought.

This the 24th day of September 2026.
Lakema Bentzel, Plaintiff Pro Se
622 Georgetown Road
Raleigh, NC 27608
9/24, 10/1, and 10/8/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY
NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION
IN THE GENERAL COURT OF JUSTICE
DISTRICT COURT DIVISION
FILE NO. 25CV045670-910
CHETACHI NWOKEJIOBI, Plaintiff,
v. TABATHA TOMRA TURNER,
Defendant.
TO: TABATHA TOMRA TURNER

TAKE NOTICE that a pleading seeking relief against you has been filed in the above-entitled action in the District Court of Wake County, North Carolina. The action concerns temporary and permanent custody.

You are required to make defense to such pleading within the time prescribed by law following the first publication of this notice, and upon your failure to do so, the party seeking service against you will apply to the Court for the relief sought.

The matter is presently scheduled for hearing on November 10, 2026, at 9:00 a.m. in Wake County Courthouse, Courtroom 2A, Wake County, North Carolina.

Chetachi Nwokejiobi
Plaintiff, Pro Se
2917 Little John Road
Raleigh, NC 27610
9/24, 10/1, and 10/8/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File No: 26E001811-910

Having qualified as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of EVELYN VERNELL HINTON, 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 17th 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 17th day of September, 2026.
Vivian Beatrice Logan,
Administrator
5408 Kincross Ct.
Raleigh, NC 27610
9/17, 9/24, 10/1, and 10/8/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY
NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION
In The General Court Of Justice
District Court Division
File No. 26CV023452-910
MICHAEL OAKLEY and EVA OAKLEY, Plaintiff v.
MEQUINTA OAKLEY and UNKNOWN FATHER, Defendants
TO: MEQUINTA OAKLEY AND THE UNKNOWN FATHER OF THE MINOR CHILD

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 custody of the minor child.

You are required to make defense to such pleading not later than forty (40) days after the first date of publication of this notice. Upon your failure to do so, the Plaintiff will apply to the Court for the relief sought.

This the 17th day of September, 2026.
Michael Oakley, Plaintiff
Eva Oakley, Plaintiff
2301 Catfish Creek Ct
Raleigh, NC 27604
9/17, 9/24, and 10/1/2026
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

MBE WANTED

BCS needs bids for installation of 6-inch and 2-inch water mains, gate valves, fire hydrants, blow off hydrants, water services and a factory-built booster pump station including electrical, site piping, and site improvements. BCS will break down or combine elements of work into economically feasible units to facilitate minority participation. We will try to negotiate joint ventures to help increase minority participation. BCS will also provide quick pay agreements to meet cash flow demands. Need bids by October 19th by email at bcscontractors@embarqmail.com. Plans/specs may be viewed at our office (call 252-903-4102) or emailed to you.

HBCU Enrollment Surges As Black Colleges Navigate Growing Pains

INSIDE HIGHER ED - oncerns about enrollment plague college leaders across the country, who fear what will happen to their institutions as fewer 18-year-olds graduate from high school and fading faith in higher education deters others. But even as many predominantly white, regional and private colleges struggle to fill seats, some historically Black colleges and universities are seeing heightened—in some cases record—interest, applications and enrollment.

As one expert put it, the increased interest in HBCUs can be explained by a long-standing message on a digital billboard on a Baltimore campus: "Morgan State University, where Black lives have always mattered."



Across the country, 42 of 101 HBCUs grew their enrollment between 2019 and 2024, according to federal data. Many increased head count significantly in that period: Howard University grew by 50 percent, Morgan State by 42 percent, Virginia State University by 27 percent and Elizabeth City State University by 23 percent. Since then, enrollment has continued to climb, according to several colleges that provided enrollment figures to Inside Higher Ed. (Some predominantly white institutions have also seen unexpected enrollment gains.)

Not all HBCUs have been so lucky. A few have maintained relatively stable enrollment, while others faced major enrollment declines and, in the case of St. Augustine's University in North Carolina, serious financial trouble and bankruptcy.

But among those seeing an upswing, experts said a combination of factors is driving the interest. For one thing, students are growing more aware of HBCUs—thanks to high-profile HBCU alumni such as former Vice President Kamala Harris and the ever-growing use of social media to document campus life. At the same time, students may be deterred from predominantly white institutions for a number of reasons, including acts of racist violence like the 2020 murder of George Floyd, the Supreme Court's ban on the consideration of race in admissions and the Trump administration's campaign against all things diversity, equity and inclusion.

"Seeing this on display really calls us to understand what we call 'home' and where we are thriving—in environments that were created for us and that are foundational to our identities," said Leslie U. Ekpe, a professor of higher education at East Texas A&M University. "We talk about belonging in higher education and how critical it is to one's well-being and success, and I think HBCUs have paved the way to show that Black students are welcome, they're celebrated."

Ekpe, who researches minority-serving institutions, said heightened interest in HBCUs serves as a reminder that "we should have never been looking at HBCUs through a deficit lens."

More Students, More Challenges

But more students means more pressure on HBCUs to accommodate them. Jorge Burmicky, a professor of higher education leadership and policy studies at Howard University, said that as enrollment grows, HBCU leaders must consider the demand on faculty and staff to meet students' needs.

Students need to be connected with advising and tutoring, gain entry to required classes, get help from financial aid officers when necessary, and access mental health services in a timely manner, Burmicky said. As part of a separate research project, Burmicky recently interviewed faculty and staff from six HBCUs, many of whom reported struggling to meet student demand as enrollment at their institutions grew.

"It's fine for us to celebrate growing enrollment—for a lot of HBCUs that's been a blessing. But equally as important is making sure that we are investing in the capacity so that we're not so stretched thin," Burmicky said. "Because the reality is that it doesn't just hurt faculty and staff, it also hurts the student experience."

Kara Turner, senior vice president of enrollment management and student success at Morgan State, said the university's enrollment growth can be attributed not just to the growing interest in HBCUs in general, but also to her institution's concerted recruiting effort.

During the pandemic, university officials realized they could reach more students using virtual recruitment sessions and campus tours, she said. Eventually they hired a recruiter based in the Midwest to expand the university's geographical reach.

The effort paid off: Enrollment exploded from 7,151 students in 2019 to 12,477 in 2026. But that rapid growth has created new challenges.

In the last few years, the university has built three new residence halls (two of which are open now) and remodeled several others. To fill the gaps, the university leased units from nearby apartment complexes so that students could still get their housing through Morgan; others are being temporarily housed in hotels until the new residence halls open, Turner said.

"Of course there are growing pains when you grow and you grow fast. But the university has been nimble," Turner said. "We wanted the students. The students were interested and we wanted them and so we said, 'All right, we're going to figure this out.'"

North Carolina A&T University, which grew from 13,300 students in 2021 to 15,713 this fall, also put students up in hotels as a new residence hall was under construction.

Beyond housing, university leaders have had to consider how their swelling student body can get their financial aid and register for classes on time, said Dawn M. Nail, the university's interim associate vice provost for enrollment management. The university moved the treasurer, registrar and financial aid offices into one building to make the process more efficient.

The pressure on HBCUs has manifested in different ways. Howard University disenrolled 502 students over the summer and then re-enrolled about 200, after officials said the students hadn't met their payment deadline. Keyana Scales, Howard University's senior vice president for enrollment management, told WJLA News 7 that it was a matter of reduced resources. A spokesperson from Howard declined to answer questions about enrollment growth for this article.

At some HBCUs, the enrollment figures do not necessarily reflect the extent of their increased popularity. For example, Spelman College in Atlanta has seen such a rise in applications that the admissions rate went from 51 percent to 19 percent in the last five years, largely because leaders have chosen to keep enrollment relatively stable.

"There's a real energy to it. A more geographically diverse and competitive applicant pool means more perspectives in the classroom, even as we stay intentional about our size," Chelsea Holley, Spelman's director of admissions, said in an email.

Holley said the college is building two residence halls because they want to accommodate all the Spelman undergraduates who choose to live on campus for all four years.

"Our goal isn't to become huge," Holley said. "We're a small liberal arts college, and we want to expand the resources that support students throughout their time here, not the number of seats."

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Politics & Election News

Christine Kushner—CONTINUED FROM PG 2

around the calendar and bell schedule," she said.

One issue still bothers her: the early start times for high schools.

"I know high school students should start later," she said, but the school system did not have the buses and resources to make the change.

After leaving the school board, Kushner joined the Wake County Health and Human Services Board. The position exposed her to a different part of county government: public health, social services, foster care, environmental health, and programs serving residents in crisis.

She talks about the experience almost as a continuation of her education work.

One example she cites is the county's foster care system.

At one point, she said, roughly 20 children were staying in the social services building because the county could not find appropriate placements for them. County staff worked to reduce the number of children staying in the building and expand placement options. Kushner specifically praised the county's use of a program called “Kinship Care”.

"The fact that these children can stay with an aunt, or grandparent, or an uncle, or a cousin, I mean, it's powerful for that child to be able to remain in their family, and it's led to greater stability," she said. "And also that the system and staff are able to support that extended family who help those children."



Housing, Transportation, Growth

Kushner identifies three issues particularly pressing for Wake County: the strain placed on local governments by state and federal funding decisions, underfunded public schools and increasing homelessness.

Kushner credits local leaders with attracting businesses, expanding parks and greenways, supporting schools and building an arts and cultural economy. But she also sees the consequences of growth: higher housing costs, busy roads, crowded schools and residents who have not shared equally in the county's economic expansion.

"A lot of our issues around housing affordability and homelessness and social services are regional issues," Kushner said. "People are coming to Wake County because they see us as a place of opportunity, and some land on their feet, and some do not. So how do we think regionally to get state support for folks who are immigrating and coming into Wake County? Another issue of regional work needs to be around transit and traffic."

She wants the county to work more closely with local governments and more county services delivered through the county's five regional centers so residents do not always have to travel downtown for government services.

Education

Kushner's school board background is likely to be particularly relevant if she joins a commission responsible for funding county government and providing financial support to Wake County Public School System.

She has criticized the state's approach to public education and said the county has increasingly had to fill funding gaps. The issue became especially visible in 2025, when the commission increased school-system funding by $40 million—less than the approximately $60 million the school board had requested.

Kushner has called the decision difficult but argues that the underlying problem is larger than one county budget. She points to state funding for private-school vouchers and what she considers inadequate state support for public schools.

"The state government and legislature have a constitutional obligation to fund public education for every child," Kushner said. "Public schools serve every child. Every child has the right to a public education, and they're inclusive schools, no matter where students come from, their zip code, their race, their background, their status; public schools welcome everyone."

Her focus is particularly strong on students who require additional services, including special education students and children living in poverty. She also wants the county's health and human services resources — nurses, social workers, psychologists and mental-health professionals — better connected to schools.

Property Taxes and Data Centers

Rising home values have increased the financial pressure on some longtime homeowners, particularly people living on fixed or limited incomes. Kushner supports expanding means-tested property-tax assistance rather than broadly reducing taxes. She also favors preserving existing affordable housing because, in her view, keeping an existing affordable home is often faster than creating a new one.

Her broader concern is that the county's growth could increasingly benefit residents who arrive with the resources to take advantage of it while pushing out people who have lived here for years.

Some of that divergence has influenced her support for a moratorium or pause on large data-center projects while local officials establish stricter rules. Her concerns are primarily infrastructure and environmental: water consumption, electricity demand, and who pays for the infrastructure required by massive facilities. She also wants data centers to shoulder more of those costs themselves.

Public safety and Health Policy

Asked about large gatherings of young people that have prompted police responses and arrests, she said law enforcement needs to protect the public but also argued for safe places for young people to gather. She has emphasized coordination among the county, municipalities, police departments, parents and families.

Kushner has also focused heavily on maternal health and racial disparities in health outcomes. She pointed to county efforts examining maternal health and said she would support expanding health and social services for Black women and families.

"We do know that Black women have worse outcomes in the healthcare system," she said. "We know that we need to educate our providers to be more responsive to Black women in pregnancy, both prenatally and postnatally, to take the prevention issues seriously to help make sure they have healthy pregnancies, but also the postpartum issues so that they are supported."

Kushner's health policy background also informs her view of the proposed combination of WakeMed and Atrium Health. She has said WakeMed may not be able to remain independent indefinitely, but she believes the decision to approve the merger deserved more public discussion and remains concerned about governance and oversight.

On Sept. 21, commissioners voted 5-2 to approve changes to WakeMed's governing documents that allow the proposed combination with Atrium to proceed, with Tara Waters and Vickie Adamson voting against it. WakeMed says it will remain a nonprofit with local leadership and that the county will continue appointing a majority of its board.

Kushner's concern is consistent with an issue she raises elsewhere in her campaign: who is accountable when an institution provides a service that residents depend on?

US And Greenland—CONTINUED FROM PG 1

in Greenland for decades but, since 1945, the U.S. military presence in Greenland has decreased from thousands of soldiers on 17 bases and installations to roughly 200 soldiers on the remote Pituffik Space Base in the northwest. The base supports missile warning, missile defense and space surveillance operations for the U.S. and NATO.

Addressing the United Nations General Assembly ahead of the signing, Trump said the U.S. would “immediately begin the process of developing a large military presence in the appropriate locations,” including “building two very major military bases.”

Denmark’s parliament approved a bill last year to allow U.S. military bases on Danish soil, widening a 2023 agreement made with the Biden administration that gave U.S. troops broad access to air bases in Denmark.

Trump previously insisted the U.S. needed to “take Greenland,” to prevent Russia or China from doing the same. Though Trump said he would rather “ make a deal ” for the territory, he added, “one way or the other, we’re going to have Greenland.”



The agreement, released by all three governments after the signing, allows for Washington to “modernize and expand” its activities at Pituffik.

It also says the U.S. can set up “defense areas” at Narsarsuaq in the south and Mestersvig in the east, and that it “may establish additional defense areas in Greenland and strengthen its military operations or facilities.” Washington is to award contracts for goods and services related to setting up, maintaining or dismantling such bases “to Greenlandic sources to the maximum extent possible.”

The accord calls for wide U.S. military mobility on Greenland’s territory, including “undersea access.” It says the signatories share an interest in allowing the U.S. military access to Greenland to defend the NATO area, Greenland itself and the American continent — including through “Golden Dome,” Trump’s planned missile defense system. Frederiksen said no decision had been made on the specifics of that system.

No non-NATO country will be allowed to set up “its own manned or unmanned military installations in Greenland,” or to have a “persistent” military presence unless the signatories agree otherwise.

The accord “does not have an end date” and, if Greenland chooses to become independent, it will agree to remain in NATO and take on Denmark’s rights and obligations under the deal.

Frederiksen on Tuesday called the agreement a “deal that can last forever,” labeling it as good for the U.S., Greenland, Denmark and the broader NATO alliance.

“Mr. President, you have been very clear: You don’t want adversaries to come too close,” she said. “I fully agree.”

Jens-Frederik Nielsen, Greenland’s prime minister, called it “a win-win-win agreement.”

“Your security is our security,” he said, “and our security is your security.”

NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte, who helped turn down the temperature at the height of the crisis in January, celebrated the accord’s signing, writing on X that “this agreement, along with NATO’s growing role in securing this vital region, enhances our collective security and supports a safer and more stable future for us all.”

But the standoff won’t be forgotten quickly.

Black Caucus Launches Effort To Boost Voting Among Blacks, Rural And Also Young People

WASHINGTON (AP) — A nonprofit run by Black federal lawmakers launched a multimillion-dollar effort Tuesday to engage lower-propensity voters in key districts in the midterm elections, following years of dissatisfaction over traditional efforts to reach such voters.

The Congressional Black Caucus Institute’s “SO VOTE” campaign will seek to register and mobilize young voters, as well as voters in majority-Black and rural communities, across the South, Midwest and West. The campaign involves partnerships with dozens of local organizations, the institute said, with in-person and online outreach to voters often sidestepped by major political campaigns.

“For decades, as far as I can remember, there are those of us who have always complained about the fact that neither party spends the significant and requisite time with Black and brown and poor and rural communities,” said Marcia Fudge, a former Democratic congresswoman from Ohio who served as the secretary of Housing and Urban Development during the Biden administration.

“So we finally decided to take it upon ourselves to do something that we didn’t think anybody else in the industry was doing,” said Fudge, who is spearheading the new effort alongside former Black Caucus colleagues.



Effort blends old tactics with new technologies to boost turnout

Voter engagement efforts will cover outreach across Georgia and Mississippi, as well as target voters in 16 congressional districts that are likely to determine control of the House.

Instead of traditional television advertising, the campaign will convene local civic groups and houses of worship, as well as fraternities and sororities. The effort will also use some now-widespread techniques in political campaigns, such as geotargeting online ads and partnerships with local content creators for audiences who mainly receive their news online.

While the voter engagement efforts are officially nonpartisan, the Black Caucus’ targeted races are in many regions where Black voter turnout could prove key to whether a Democratic candidate prevails in closely divided House districts. Cedric Richmond, a former Louisiana Democratic congressman who served as a senior adviser to President Joe Biden, said the effort would focus on repeatedly engaging voters in rural communities who feel alienated from Democratic campaigns.

“If you’re not happy with the way things are going, then voting is part of the solution, but it takes constant communication,” Richmond said.

The Black Caucus’ institute has raised about $1 million for the campaign, primarily from individual donors, and plans to spend at least $4.5 million in the midterm election cycle.

Campaign responds to GOP redistricting and disappointing turnout in the past

The new outreach effort follows years of disappointment and frustration among some in the Black Caucus at the broader Democratic Party’s efforts to court Black, rural and younger voters.

Rep. Jim Clyburn, an influential South Carolina Democrat who decried the lackluster voter turnout in the 2024 election, said the campaign “allows us to put to practice that which we have been proposing, and we have never had the resources to do it. But this year we do.”

The effort is also a response to Republican-led redistricting efforts in multiple states, said Rep. Bennie Thompson, a Mississippi Democrat.

“These Southern states are trying to minimize Black political participation and ultimately Black political strength,” he said. “So what we have to do is take that low-propensity voter and elevate their participation so they become an additional voice to be reckoned with.”



Ques Hold Political Forum

The topic of increasing civic engagement in the current political landscape was one of several topics discussed during a non-partisan forum, recently hosted by the Wake County chapters of Omega Phi Fraternity Incorporated, at the Omega Multipurpose Center, in Garner.

The Omegas of Raleigh co-hosted the forum representing the fraternity’s Sixth District Political Action, Voter, Registration, Education & Mobilization (VREM), and NAACP’s committees. The fraternity’s Sixth District consists of chapters located in North and South Carolina.

Randall Eaton, the Sixth District VREM Chair for the fraternity said that one issue that became a key take away from the forum is increasing engagement participation from young voters, in the 18-to-29 age bracket.

“We heard some ideas tonight that suggest we need to get away from the microphones and forums and go where the potential voters are - in the communities, churches, it doesn’t matter,” said Eaton.

Eaton added that in order to increase civic engagement among young potential voters and the disenfranchised citizens, it’s going to take the community to come together to take action.“Here in North Carolina we [fraternity] have done some great things in the last 6 years, such as participating in the D9 Legislative Day at the General Assembly, where all of the historically black fraternities and sororities come together for a common goal of encouraging our communities to take action by voting.”

Political experts attribute low voter turnout among African-Americans, and particularly young people between the ages of 18-to-24, to nationwide redistricting efforts to dilute the vote and attempts to purge voter rolls, causing some to question whether their vote matters.

One of the forum participants, retired North Carolina Supreme Court Justice Michael Morgan, who has been a member of the fraternity for over 50 years, said it’s critical to remind African-American voters on the importance of making their voices heard. “We’ve had generations of individuals in our community to make sure that all persons have a right to vote," said Morgan.

“It’s important that we don’t forget from whence we came, because we still have much to do to ultimately arrive at where we want to go.”

America 250: Should We Update the Constitution? Thomas Jefferson Said Yes



By Jheri Hardaway

Staff Writer

As we approach the tail end of our America 250 celebrations, we have a ripe opportunity to explore our founding documents and ideals. Thomas Jefferson, a man of many perspectives, shared one in particular that has been glossed over yet remains relevant now more than ever. Jefferson was a staunch proponent of the idea that constitutions should not be treated as permanent, untouchable scripture. Our celebrated founding father intended our legal frameworks to flow with the generations. While serving as minister to France during the outbreak of the French Revolution, Jefferson sent a letter to James Madison proposing that every constitution, law, and public debt should naturally expire after 19 years. Jefferson calculated this using mortality tables as the lifespan of a single generation of adults. According to /AskHistorians Reddit, “In the 1700s and 1800s, overall average life expectancy at birth was only about 30 to 40 years. This low number was heavily skewed by extremely high infant and childhood mortality. If a person survived childhood, their chances of living into their 60s, 70s, or even 80s were quite reasonable.”

Jefferson wrote to James Madison on September 6, 1789, “The question, Whether one generation of men has a right to bind another, seems never to have been started either on this or our side of the water... But it is a question of such consequences as not only to merit decision, but place also, among the fundamental principles of every government... I set out on this ground, which I suppose to be self-evident, 'that the earth belongs in usufruct to the living'; that the dead have neither powers nor rights over it."

Jefferson’s 19 Year Rule, housed in The Papers of Thomas Jefferson, Princeton University Press / National Archives Founders Online, states simply, "Every constitution, then, and every law, naturally expires at the end of 19 years. If it be enforced longer, it is an act of force, and not of right." Written plainly, the intention of the writer of our Declaration of Independence is clear. The United States Constitution, at 238 years old since it was signed, or 237 years old since it went into operation, should have lived 12.5 lives by now; yet it is still the archaic document signed by slave owners, lawyers, merchants, planters, and public officials who did not reflect the wider society's perspectives and experiences.

Decades later, in his retirement, Jefferson reiterated this philosophy to Virginia lawyer Samuel Kercheval. He explicitly criticized "sanctimonious reverence" for the Constitution and advocated for periodic revision conventions roughly every generation. In Jefferson to Samuel Kercheval July 12, 1816, “Laws and institutions must go hand in hand with the progress of the human mind... As new discoveries are made, new truths disclosed, and manners and opinions change with the change of circumstances, institutions must advance also, and keep pace with the times. We might as well require a man to wear still the coat which fitted him when a boy, as civilized society to remain ever under the regimen of their barbarous ancestors." An excerpt of this quote is engraved directly onto the wall of the Jefferson Memorial in Washington, D.C.

Well, here we are with an old raggedy coat. Modern legal scholars argue about the founders' intentions. In February 1790, James Madison argued that periodic constitutional overhauls would breed severe instability, encourage bitter factional fighting every two decades, and destroy public confidence in the rule of law. This contrasted with the fact that the primary author of the Declaration of Independence never wanted future generations bound to 18th-century rules. This is a concept that ‘We The People’ should reckon with. Amendments are rare in modern times, the 27th Amendment was ratified in 1992, but proposed in 1789! Learning of Jefferson’s vision has me ready for new clothes.

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