The Biden/Harris Administration: What’s in It for Black America?

By Amanda Gorman

"Mr. President, Dr. Biden, Madam Vice President, Mr. Emhoff, Americans and the world:

When day comes we ask ourselves, where can we find light in this never-ending shade, the loss we carry, a sea we must wade?

We’ve braved the belly of the beast, we’ve learned that quiet isn’t always peace. And the norms and notions of what just is isn’t always justice. And yet the dawn is ours before we knew it, somehow we do it. Somehow we’ve weathered and witnessed a nation that isn’t broken, but simply unfinished.

We, the successors of a country and a time where a skinny Black girl descended from slaves and raised by a single mother can dream of becoming president only to find herself reciting for one.

And yes, we are far from polished, far from pristine, but that doesn’t mean we are striving to form a union that is perfect. We are striving to forge our union with purpose. To compose a country committed to all cultures, colors, characters and conditions of man.

And so we lift our gazes not to what stands between us, but what stands before us. We close the divide, because we know to put our future first, we must first put our differences aside. We lay down our arms so we can reach out our arms to one another. We seek harm to none and harmony for all.

Let the globe, if nothing else, say this is true: that even as we grieved, we grew; that even as we hurt, we hoped; that even as we were tired, we tried; that we’ll forever be tied together victorious, not because we will never again know defeat but because we will never again sow division.

Scripture tells us to envision that ‘everyone shall sit under their own vine and fig tree and no one shall make them afraid.’ If we’re to live up to our own time, then victory won’t lie in the blade but in all the bridges we’ve made.

That is the promise to glade, the hill we climb if only we dare it, because being American is more than a pride we inherit – it’s the past we step into and how we repair it.

So let us leave behind a country better than the one we left. With every breath from my bronze-pounded chest, we will raise this wounded world into a won drous one. We will rise from the gold-limbed hills of the west, we will rise from the winds swept north, east where our forefathers first realized revolution. We will rise from the lake-rinsed cities of the midwestern states. We will rise from the sun-baked South. We will rebuild, reconcile, and recover in every known nook of our nation and every corner called our country, our people, our future. We will rise.

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By Amanda Gorman

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ON MY MIND

THOUGHTS FROM THE EDITOR

by Sandra Williams

No Reconciliation without Truth.
No Unity without Accountability!

I don’t think Joe Biden had the chance to even utter the final syllable from his oath of office as the 46th President of the United States before the choruses of “unity” and “the need to reach across the aisle” started echoing across the capital grounds.

Never mind that the grounds on which the Presidential inauguration took place had only days earlier been the site of an attempted coup d’é tat carried out by a crowd that had absolutely no intention of uniting with anybody—except themselves.

It’s like a de ju vu, actually. It seems that every time the folks who have gone out of their way to misuse and abuse their privilege and power, find themselves without the shield of invincibility that comes from that privilege and power, they suddenly want to be besties with the ones that they have been stomping on for years, “for the good of the country.”

No impeachment “for the good of the country.” No focus on punishment “for the good of the country.” No rooting out the men and women sitting in this country’s highest seats of power who colluded with the thugs and criminals that were hell bent on capture and possibly execution of American citizens “for the good of the country.”

Well, read my lips. For the good of this county- No reconciliation without TRUTH. No unity without ACCOUNTABILITY.

The truth is we have a problem with white supremacy in this country. I’m not talking about your run of the mill bigot. Webster, a white supremacist is a person who believes that the white race is inherently superior to other races and that their neighbors might have been there too, if they could have been, and many of the people that we work with. To be honest, I find myself looking at folks a little sideways these days.

The instinct to put bad things behind us is natural. And certainly putting the past four years behind us as fast as possible would help relieve a good deal of collective stress, but if you’re like me, you’re tired of our country circling back to this same exact place every few decades. Ignoring what’s happened doesn’t make it go away. Truth does. Accountability does. Next time we might not be so lucky.

Black folks have been saying forever that our armed forces have been infiltrated by white supremacists. Certainly not every person in the military, but enough of them.

Black folks have been saying forever that our government, from the local municipalities in the smallest of backwater towns, all the way up to the hallowed halls of congress have been infiltrated by white supremacists. Certainly, not all of our elected officials, but enough of them to almost overthrow our government.

We’ve said it. We’ve shouted it. We’ve marched about it. We’ve protested over it. We’ve even called some of them out by name. But in response Crickets.

It seems that as long as those white supremacists were only focusing their attention, their fury, their hatred, on us, you know killing us, the most we could get in response, with few exceptions, was a shrug of the shoulder, a pat on the head, and an admonishment for being “too sensitive” and “playing the race card.”

But then a funny thing happened. On January 6, it seems the whole country in unison realized that we have white supremacists in America. Lots of them.

Teachers. CEOs. Even an Olympic athlete. Many of us are thinking that some of our neighbors might have been there too, if they could have been, and many of the people that we work with. To be honest, I find myself looking at folks a little sideways these days.

The instinct to put bad things behind us is natural. And certainly putting the past four years behind us as fast as possible would help relieve a good deal of collective stress, but if you’re like me, you’re tired of our country circling back to this same exact place every few decades. Ignoring what’s happened doesn’t make it go away. Truth does. Accountability does. Next time we might not be so lucky.

Black folks have been saying forever that our armed forces have been infiltrated by white supremacists. Certainly not every police officer, but enough of them.

SPokane Public Schools Levy

Beginning on Jan. 22, 2021, Spokane residents will be voting on a replacement school levy for Spokane Public School (SPS). The educational program and operation levy is a way for the Spokane community to support SPS students and families by funding extracurricular activities, support for students with special needs, and critical health and wellness services. The 2021 levy replaces the expiring 2018 levy and is not a new tax. Levies support programs and services, such as: Nurses, Counselors, Behavior specialists, Student intervention programs, Special education services, Technological support, Smaller class sizes, Advanced placement courses, Athletics, Arts, music, and drama. Please submit your online and mail registrations, and voter updates, by February 1, 2021. For more information please visit: https://www.spokaneschools.org.

The Black Lens is an independent community newspaper, based in Spokane, WA, that it is focused on the news, events, issues, people and information that are important to Spokane’s African American/Black Community and beyond. The paper is published on the first of each month.

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THIS IS OUR STORY.
THIS IS OUR SONG.

HOSTED BY HENRY LOUIS GATES JR.

THE BLACK CHURCH

Tuesdays, Feb. 16 & 23 • 8 PM

KSPS PBS

www.kspso.org/blackchurch

Major corporate support for THE BLACK CHURCH: THIS IS OUR STORY, THIS IS OUR SONG is provided by Johnson & Johnson. Major support is also provided by Lilly Endowment Inc., Ford Foundation, and by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, PBS and Public Television viewers.
The Confederate Flag 21’

The Confederate Flag is the battle flag for General Robert E. Lee’s Army of North Virginia. While the flag is a symbol of evil and hate to the descendants of slaves, and a symbol of domestic treason to those who supported the union, its current supporters claim the flag represents “heritage, not hate.”

Southern heritage, however, was economically dependent on chattel slavery, a system in direct violation of what was considered God’s “basic laws of freedom.” Chantatted slavery was also in violation of the Declaration of Independence – “…that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness”.

This is in contrast to the words of the designer of the “Stainless Confederate Banner”, William T. Thompson – “As a people we are fighting to maintain the heavenly ordained supremacy of the white man over the inferior or colored race; a white flag would thus be emblematical of our cause.”

Or the words of Alexander Stephens, Vice-President of the Confederacy – “…Our new government is founded … upon the great truth that the negro is not equal to the white man; that slavery, subordination to the superior race, is his natural and normal condition.”

Some Southern Confederate leaders didn’t hold the same cultural fervor for the flag or its heritage, for example President Jefferson Davis: “My pride is that that flag shall not set between contending brothers; and that, when it shall no longer be the common flag of the country, it shall be folded up and laid away like a vesture no longer used.”

And commander of the Confederate Armed Forces, General Robert E. Lee – “Furl this flag and store it in your attics for the rest of your lives.”

On April 12, 1861, South Carolina Militia forces under General P.G.T. Beauregard initiated a bombing campaign against the Union’s Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor, South Carolina. Though none died, after the 34-hour artillery assault, Fort General Robert Anderson and 86 Union troops surrendered, beginning America’s bloodiest domestic war.

When any force fires upon American military installations, jeopardizing American troops, in uniform, on American soil, those forces are immediately classed as foreign, not domestic, invaders and enemies of the state.

For that reason the Confederate flag symbolizes the bloodiest instance of treason in American history.

Sources:

Andrew Brimmer: US Federal Reserve

A writer, an economist and an advocate for affirmative action, Andrew Felton Brimmer is best known as the first African American to hold a governorship on the United States Federal Reserve Bank.

Born in Newelton, Louisiana on September 13, 1926, Brimmer moved to Bremerton, Washington in 1944 and enlisted in the U.S. Army. He served in the Army two years, rising to the rank of staff sergeant. Upon his return, he enrolled at the University of Washington where he received his B.A. in Economics in 1950 and M.A. shortly thereafter in 1951. Brimmer then studied at the University of Bombay for a year and completed a Ph.D. in Economics at Harvard University in 1957.

First and foremost an economist, Brimmer promoted a monetary policy that sought to alleviate unemployment and reduce the national deficit. He also argued that racial discrimination hurt the U.S economy by marginalizing potentially productive workers.

Before assuming his post as Federal Reserve Bank Governor, Brimmer served as an economist at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York in 1955 and in 1956. During that period he was dispatched to Sudan to help that newly independent nation establish a central bank. A teaching position followed in 1958 at Michigan State University and at the University of Pennsylvania’s Wharton School of Business in 1961. In 1963, President John F. Kennedy appointed Brimmer as deputy assistant secretary of commerce for economic policy and then assistant secretary for economic affairs. In 1966, he was appointed to the Board of Governors for the Federal Reserve Bank by President Lyndon B. Johnson.

In 1974 Brimmer took a teaching position at the Harvard Graduate School of Business, and in 1976 founded his own consulting firm, Brimmer & Company, Inc. based in Washington, D.C. In 1995, Brimmer was named by President Bill Clinton to head a financial control board which helped the District of Columbia avoid a financial crisis.

As an author, his writings reflect a deep dissatisfaction with racial discrimination particularly in black education which he blames for income disparity in relation to whites. He has promoted strategies that couple Affirmative Action with African American self-help.

Andrew F. Brimmer’s numerous organizations include president of the Association for the Study of Afro American Life and History (ASALH) and co-chairman of the Interracial Council for Business Opportunity. Among his many accolades are awards from the National Economic Association, One Hundred Black Men and the New York Urban Coalition. He was also a member of Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity.

Dr. Andrew Felton Brimmer died in Washington, D.C. on October 7, 2012. He was 86 at the time of his death.
**Community Superstars**

By Lisa Gardner

Black History Month is a time to reflect and acknowledge the achievements of Black Americans who, despite the obstacles, have made lasting impressions in our culture and American History. Inventors, philosophers, writers, activists, poets, politicians and more. And while we celebrate the path they’ve paved, it is equally significant to recognize and celebrate our current trailblazers who are often unsung, go without notice or simply fall through the cracks.

NAACP President, Kiantha Duncan said, “in addition to highlighting our past, let’s acknowledge and celebrate some of our present and often unsung community leaders—we have superstars right here in Spokane that are paving the way for generations to come.”

Our fearless leader has a point, it is imperative that we pay homage and uplift our current community leaders. During Black History Month on behalf of NAACP we celebrate these Community Superstars.

1. **Adell Whitehead — MLK Food Bank:**
   Food insecurity is something that is sensitive and should be handled with delicate care, and that is what Adell does at the MLK Food Bank at East Central Community Center. Over the years, Adell has seen many people from all walks of life come through her doors in a situation of despair, and it is with understanding and empathy that Adell serves each one. It takes a certain heart and character to care for a community that is vulnerable, overlooked and at times written off, but like a pillar in a storm, Adell remains unmoved, yet a symbol of stability in our community. It’s more than just handing out food, it’s her special way of delivering service with love, care and respect.

2. **Brianna Rollins — Carl Maxey Center:**
   Brianna is young, bright, intuitive and determined. Carl Maxey’s legacy in Spokane as a Civil Rights attorney symbolized strength, intelligence and justice, and Brianna upholds those ideals as the center’s administrator. Coordinating Spokane’s Black Business Alliance—she literally pulls all Black business owners and Black professionals together to move them forward, even in our city’s economic instability, she is finding ways to uplift Black businesses and we strongly value her work.

3. **Alethea Dumas — Better Health Together:**
   The granddaughter of Betty Dumas, affectionately named “momma Dumas” and one of Spokane’s “Woman of the Year”, it is no surprise that Alethea is a future trailblazer in Spokane. Alethea comes from a family that has had roots in Spokane for over 3 generations. Alethea symbolizes legacy in how she is dedicated to her community. With the Dumas name on her back, Alethea soars as the Program Coordinator for Equity & Engagement for Better Health Together. Young, beautiful, talented and inspiring, Alethea is a young superstar in our community.

4. **Dr. Shari Clarke — Eastern Washington University:** Dynamic is too weak of a word to define what Dr. Clarke embodies. Dr. Clarke leaves a lasting impression on everyone she meets and ensures that you’re walking away with a bit more knowledge than you had before you met her. At EWU, Dr. Clarke is the Vice President for Diversity and Chief Diversity Officer.

5. **Dr. Oscar Harris — Spokane Public Schools & Ready to Serve Ministries:** As Chief Family & Community Engagement Officer, thoughtful, consistent and intelligent are the three words that define Dr. Harris and his commitment to education and community wellbeing. Dr. Harris supports children, families and the educational workforce in his professional role while also supporting spiritual growth and wellbeing in his vocation as Senior Pastor of Ready to Serve Ministries.

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**We Have Come This Far By Faith**

By Sherri Noble Jones

How far have we really come?” That question comes to mind when I look at the little girl on the cover of this pamphlet.

Standing on the stairs outside of Grant Elementary is a young girl embarking on a historical journey.

When you are young you don’t always realize how you can become the face of history while you are young. As you grow older you realize how you can become the face of history.

Take a look back at this particular moment in time. Segregation may have ended in 1954 due to Brown vs. The Board of Education, but this little girl and her peers would be the first to really invoke that change that Spokane’s Grant Elementary in 1968.

To be apart of desegregation is a remarkable moment. Being placed on the front cover of a pamphlet that was then shared to every elementary student in Spokane about this remarkable moment was a dream coming to fruition.

Dr. Martin Luther King spoke of this dream on April 4th 1968. A speech that would continue to ignite a dream in so many throughout time. A dream calling for equality, change, and opportunities for all people of color.

Jumping ahead, we see that same little girl standing on the same staircase as an adult. She is standing with her brother, Ivan Corley who is currently the principal of Grant Elementary. History coming full circle! Who was that little girl you ask?

That little girl was me. I’m grateful to be apart of a dream and history that I never really understood until now. So I ask you “How far have we really come?” Far, but not far enough!

Let’s keep Dr. King’s Dream alive. “I have a Dream”.

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**The Black Lens Spokane**

February 2021

www.blacklensnews.com

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**NAACP: Uniting Our Region**

By Sherri Noble Jones

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**NAACP Spokane**

http://www.SpokaneNAACP.com

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Prosecutors in Michigan announced on January 14 that former Governor Rick Snyder and several others will face charges for their role in the Flint water crisis.

According to CNN, Snyder faces two counts of willful neglect of duty and has already pleaded not guilty to the charges. Charges were also filed against eight others who were either members of Snyder’s staff, Flint city officials, or state public officials.

Among those charged include Nicholas Lyon, the former director of the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, who faces nine counts of involuntary manslaughter and one count of willful neglect of duty. Each felony manslaughter charge is punishable by up to 15 years in prison.

“The Flint water crisis is not some relic of the past,” Michigan Solicitor General Fadwa Hammoud, one of the prosecutors leading the investigation, said during a news conference. “At this very moment, the people of Flint continue to suffer from the categorical failure of public officials at all levels of government who trampled upon their trust and evaded accountability for far too long.”

Michigan law prohibits prosecutors from providing details about the evidence that resulted in the charges, though Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel, who ended a prior probe in favor of launching a new one last year, released a statement praising the prosecution team. “I trust today’s announcement reflects their professional responsibilities and ethical obligations as the prosecuting authorities in this matter, and that their decisions are based solely on the facts, the law, and the evidence,” Nessel wrote.

The switch was supposed to be temporary while a new supply line to Lake Huron was completed. When the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality failed to properly use public funds by joining a lawsuit against the company supplying Flint with contaminated water, it ate into the city’s iron and lead water pipes and leached into the drinking water.

The contaminated water led to two outbreaks of Legionnaires’ disease, a serious type of pneumonia caused by bacteria. Snyder’s attorney Brian Lennon released a statement calling the charges “wholly without merit,” and added that he was confident that Snyder would be “fully exonerated if this flimsy case goes to trial.”

Today’s charges do nothing to bring justice to the people of Flint,” Lennon said. “These unjustified allegations do nothing to resolve a painful chapter in the history of our state. Today’s actions merely perpetrate an outrageous political persecution.”

I mean, the incompetence of Snyder and his team resulted in the deaths of 12 people and 80 more being sickened. I might be out of my element here, but I don’t think it’s a stretch to think the people of Flint would like to see the people whose decisions led to their pain be held to account. Granted, these are white men we’re talking about, so I understand that accountability isn’t a word in their vocabulary.

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The grand juries, who remained anonymous to protect their identities, said of the jurors, “It is truly a testament to the Kentucky Constitution that they are able to be here today and to expose injustice and demand public accountability.”

Attorney Kevin Glogower added, “I am honored and humbled to serve them.”

“The Grand Juries did not choose this battle,” Glogower said. “This battle chose them. These are randomly selected citizens who were compelled to sit on a grand jury and were terribly misused by the most powerful law enforcement official in Kentucky.”

According to Louisville, Ky., public radio station WFPL Friday’s petition states, “Attorney General Cameron deceived the American people and the citizens of this Commonwealth with regard to his office’s handling and involvement in the Breonna Taylor investigation and the resulting legal actions.”

The petition also reportedly claims that Cameron improperly used public funds by joining a lawsuit against the officers, with none of the officers faces with charges specifically related to Taylor’s death.

Since the grand jury ruling, however, multiple jurors in the case have come forward saying their findings were misrepresented.

Breonna Taylor Grand Jurors File Impeachment Petition Against Attorney General Daniel Cameron

By Celine Castronuovo
(Reprinted from The Hill, thehill.com)

Three grand juries from the investigation into the police raid that killed 26-year-old Breonna Taylor are now calling for Kentucky Attorney General Daniel Cameron (R) to be impeached over allegations that he mishandled the case.

The juries on Friday filed a petition with the state House of Representatives, arguing that Cameron breached the public’s trust and also misrepresented key grand jury findings, according to the Louisville Courier Journal, which first reported the complaint.

A press release from the attorney representing the grand jurors, who remained anonymous to protect their identities, said of the jurors, “It is truly a testament to the Kentucky Constitution that they are able to be here today and to expose injustice and demand public accountability.”

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Henry Louis “Hank” Aaron Passes Away at 86

Legendary baseball player Henry Louis Aaron was born February 5, 1934, in Mobile, Alabama, the third of eight children to Herbert Aaron, a shipyard worker at Alabama Drydock and Shipbuilding Company, and his wife, Estella. According to a ProPublica report, hundreds of Black officers have filed racial discrimination suits against the law enforcement agency since 2001. The agents alleged they endured significant abuse, like white colleagues calling some Black officers the n-word, hanging nooses in an officer’s locker and white officers, who had Black colleagues as friends, were called “FOGs,” or “friends of gangsters.” These issues were also prominent during the Obama administration. Attorneys for the American government.

Black Capitol Police Officers Warned about Racism Prior to Insurgency

by Keka Araújo
(Reprinted from Black Enterprise, black-enterprise.com)

Black Capitol police officers are very aware of the racism they say has been prevalent for years at the government building. The insurgency at the Capitol on Jan. 6 reinforced what they’ve known all along.

According to a ProPublica report, hundreds of Black officers have filed racial discrimination suits against the law enforcement agency since 2001. The agents alleged they endured significant abuse, like white colleagues calling some Black officers the n-word, hanging nooses in an officer’s locker and white officers, who had Black colleagues as friends, were called “FOGs,” or “friends of gangsters.”

These issues were also prominent during the Obama administration. Attorneys for the agency denied any wrongdoing occurred. Black police officers were subjected to “unprovoked stops” from coworkers. One Capitol cop alleged a white officer audaciously told someone, “Obama monkey, go back to Africa.”

According to the report, a former chief attempted to bring some semblance of justice to the department. Kim Dine, who retired from the department after a three-year stint, inherited the bigoted department in 2012.

In the interview, Dine spoke of having to inherit the bigoted department in 2012. He continued to hit home runs in remarkable fashion for the next two decades. Aaron was the only major league player to hit at least twenty home runs in every season for twenty consecutive years, at least thirty for fifteen years, or at least forty for eight years. He was the first player to record more than 3,000 hits and 500 home runs.

The Milwaukee Braves became the Atlanta Braves in 1966, and Aaron moved south with the team. On April 8, 1974, Atlanta hit its 715th career home run, breaking the record held by Babe Ruth since 1935. His achievement came before a crowd of 53,775, the largest ever at Atlanta-Fulton County Stadium and was off a 4th inning pitch by Los Angeles Dodger Al Downing.

In the period when Aaron was closing in on Ruth’s home run record, he grew angry and disillusioned by the hate mail and physical threats he and his family received on a daily basis. When asked if he threw out the hate mail, Aaron replied that “No, I didn’t. That will never be thrown away. We still have to be reminded that things are not as good as we think they are.”

Although he will be remembered as the player who broke Babe Ruth’s home run record, “Hammerin’ Hank” Aaron set a number of other records in Major League Baseball. He holds the record for most career home runs (755), most runs batted in (2,297), and most games played (3,298). Aaron also won three consecutive Gold Glove awards from 1958 through 1960, played in a record-tying twenty-four All-Star games and was named National League MVP in 1957.

Hank Aaron was inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame in 1982. The Hank Aaron Award is given annually to the best overall hitter in each league. In 2002, Henry Aaron was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by President George W. Bush, the highest honor given to a civilian by the American government.

Henry Louis “Hank” Aaron passed away in Atlanta, Georgia on January 22, 2021 at the age of 86.

Black Capitol Police Officers Warned about Racism Prior to Insurgency

A veteran on the force told Buzzfeed he received a tip from an acquaintance.

“Henry Louis “Hank” Aaron passed away in Atlanta, Georgia on January 22, 2021 at the age of 86.

A veteran on the force told Buzzfeed he received a tip from an acquaintance.

“I found out what they were planning when a friend of mine sent me an Instagram story from the Proud Boys saying, ‘We’re breaching the Capitol today, guys. I hope you’re ready,’” the officer told the publication.

The agent acknowledged that upper management told them to prepare for protesting, but they failed to warn them about the gravity of the insurgency brought on by Trump’s instigation.

One of the anonymous officers admitted thinking that Black protestors would not have been met with the same grace as the MAGA insurgents.

“If you’re going to treat a group of demonstrators for Black Lives Matter one way, then you should treat this group the same goddamn way. With this group, you were being kind and nice and letting them walk back out, ” the officer shared with BuzzFeed. “Some of them got arrested, but a lot of them didn’t.”

The older of the two officers explained to Buzzfeed that he was exasperated and angry over the deadly insurgency. The Capitol Police department’s lack of urgency and response to the situation didn’t help. The devastated agent sobbed in the Rotunda of the Capitol.

“I sat down with one of my buddies, another Black guy, and tears just started streaming down my face,” he said. “I said, ‘What the f**k, man? Is this America? What the f**k is this America?’”

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Vogananda Pittman appointed acting Capitol Police Chief following insurrection.

“Everything ever really was resolved. Congress turned a blind eye to racism on the Hill. Blackmon-Mallory told ProPublica. “We got Jan. 6 because no one took us seriously.”

She retired as a lieutenant in 2007 and lead her own complaint against the department in 2010. The veteran officer now serves as the U.S. Capitol Black Police Association vice president, which held 16 demonstrations protesting alleged discrimination between 2013 and 2018.

According to Buzzfeed, two Black police officers alleged higher-ups left law enforcement agents unprepared and unguided for the deadly riot. They remained anonymous in fear of retaliation from the department.
Amnesty International Accuses Nigeria of Covering up Protest killings

By Rédaction Africanews with AFP

(Reprinted from Africanews; Photo Credit: Reuters/Temilade Adelaja)

Amnesty International accused the Nigerian government on Thursday of attempting to cover up the killing of a dozen citizens during peaceful protests in Lagos last October.

Youth-led demonstrations in Nigeria began against police abuse, quickly spiraling into broader calls for reform. But they ended weeks later when security forces shot at demonstrators in Lagos – killing at least 12 people, according to the rights body.

At a judicial panel, the army denied using live rounds but the government promised to disband the much-hated police unit, the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS), which had been the main target of protests over brutality.

“Nigerian authorities have failed to bring to justice those suspected to be responsible for the brutal crackdown by security forces on peaceful #EndSARS protesters at Lekki toll gate and Alalala in Lagos in October 2020 and have brazenly attempted to cover up the violence,” Amnesty said.

“Since the assault by security forces, which killed at least 12 people, Nigerian authorities have targeted supporters of the protests against police brutality by the disbanded SARS,” Amnesty’s country director Oas Oigboh said in the statement, released to mark 100 days since the shootings.

She said some of the movement’s supporters have had their bank accounts frozen.

The London-based rights body challenged the Nigerian government to suspend accused officials, pending investigations, and to ensure victims access to justice.

In November, the Lagos State government set up a panel of inquiry to investigate the bloodshed and wider allegations of abuses by SARS featuring testimony by the army that presented videos to back its claims.

The government has promised a string of reforms in response to the protests, and disbanded SARS, replacing it with Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) forces.

Nigeria, where the median age is 18, is a tinderbox of deep economic and social grievances, and the demonstrations snowballed from anger over police violence to broader demands.

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DR Congo Parliament Votes to Remove Prime Minister Ilunga

Legislators in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) have voted to remove Prime Minister Sylvestre Ilunga Ilunkamba, collapsing the government and handing President Felix Tshisekedi a chance to appoint loyalists to key ministries.

The vote marks the latest episode in a power struggle that has roiled sub-Saharan Africa’s biggest nation for months, pitting Tshisekedi against loyalists to former president Joseph Kabila, who ruled the DRC for 18 years.

Last month Tshisekedi moved to end a coalition formed with Kabila that has constrained his authority since he took office in January 2019.

This culminated in Wednesday’s no-confidence vote against the prime minister, one of the last vestiges of Kabila’s hold on government. It passed with 367 of 377 votes.

Under the DRC’s constitution parliamentary censure requires the prime minister to step down within 24 hours.

“One of my missions is to control the executive which, if it does not meet the concerns of the people, must be removed,” member of parliament and author of the no-confidence motion, Cherubin Okende, told Reuters news agency.

Kabila’s allies, including Ilunga, boycotted the vote, saying the interim speaker of parliament did not have the constitutional authority to oversee a motion of no confidence.

Tshisekedi’s new political alliance, known as the Sacred Union, is yet to be officially formed, but is likely to be comprised of more than 20 parties, giving him an overwhelming majority to pass legislation.

However, political analysts say Tshisekedi may also find it difficult to juggle the diverging interests of his coalition.

Tshisekedi won a controversial presidential election in December 2018 on a platform vowing to fight corruption, reduce inequalities and improve government.

But he says his campaign of reforms has been thwarted by Kabila’s lieutenants, who account for two-thirds of the vast 65-member coalition government.

Still only 49 years old despite his 18 years in office, Kabila retains clout through allies in politics, the military and business.

He took the helm of the DRC in 2001, succeeding his father, Laurent-Désire Kabila, who was assassinated by a bodyguard.

The younger Kabila’s rule was fiercely criticised for corruption and poor governance.

But it ended peacefully when he stepped down, in the DRC’s first-ever bloodless transition since gaining independence from Belgium in 1960.

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Young African Entrepreneurs to Watch

Vanessa Zommi, 21, is one of Cameroon’s brightest young minds. She was just 17 when she started her venture Emerald Moringa Tea, a product aimed at fighting diabetes by reducing blood sugar levels.

After her mother was diagnosed with the diabetes, Vanessa set out to find an inexpensive but effective remedy, and she discovered it in the Moringa tree. This remarkable tree is known for its medicinal benefits, with its leaf containing antioxidants that enable it to treat various types of diabetes and boost the immune system.

Vanessa started processing the leaf and packaging it in the form of tea for easier and enjoyable consumption. What motivates her to expand her business is that her product keeps her community healthy, and tackles her country’s chronic diabetes problem.

To read the full article “10 Young African Entrepreneurs to Watch” visit: africa.com/top-young-african-entrepreneurs.
So much has happened since the last edition of the Black Lens: the Good, the Bad and the Ugly. We have seen so many images on TV, in print and on the Internet from our country that were unbelievable, surreal, and historic. But the one I want to celebrate and highlight is the Inauguration of President Biden and Vice-President Harris. To me, it felt like America was holding its collective breath and waiting to exhale. We were witness to the second most powerful person in our government, a “sista” being sworn in! Take that glass ceiling!

Kamala is an inspiration to the young but she is also an inspiration to the women and people of color who have stepped up or even thought about public service... Ya’ll know in our faith we believe, “All things are possible if you only believe.” So when preparation meets opportunity, LOOK OUT!

In this historic moment and in celebration of Black History Month, I want to remind us of the Black Leaders of our Downtown Core. This event will only be held on Zoom to join zoom link

For Quick Access
Join us on Zoom
8431645000

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Betsy Wilkerson, Spokane City Council

Continued on Page 32
The Origins of Black History Month

The story of Black History Month begins in Chicago during the summer of 1915. An alumnus of the University of Chicago with many friends in the city, Carter G. Woodson traveled from Washington, D.C. to participate in a national celebration of the fifteenth anniversary of emancipation sponsored by the state of Illinois.

Thousands of African Americans travelled from across the country to see exhibits highlighting the progress their people had made since the destruction of slavery. Awarded a doctorate in Harvard three years earlier, Woodson joined the other exhibitors with a Black history display. Despite being held at the Coliseum, the site of the 1912 Republican convention, an overflow crowd of six to twelve thousand waited outside for their turn to view the exhibits.

Inspired by the three-week celebration, Woodson decided to form an organization to promote the scientific study of Black life and history before leaving town. On September 9th, Woodson met at the Wabash YMCA with A.L. Jackson and three others and formed the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (ASNLH).

He hoped that others would popularize the findings that he and other Black intellectuals would publish in The Journal of Negro History, which he established in 1916.

As early as 1920, Woodson urged Black civic organizations to promote the achievements that researchers were uncovering. A graduate member of Omega Psi Phi, he urged his fraternity brothers to take up the work. In 1924, they responded with the creation of Negro History and Literate Week, which they renamed Negro Achievement Week.

Their outreach was significant, but Woodson desired greater impact. As he told an audience of Hampton Institute students, “We are going back to that beautiful history and it is going to inspire us to greater achievements.” In 1925, he decided that the Association had to shoulder the responsibility. Going forward it would both create and popularize knowledge about the Black past. He sent out a press release announcing Negro History Week in February, 1926.

Woodson chose February for reasons of tradition and reform. It is commonly said that Woodson selected February to encompass the birthdays of two great Americans who played a prominent role in shaping Black history, namely Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass, whose birthdays are the 12th and the 14th, respectively.

More importantly, he chose them for reasons of tradition. Since 1865, the Black community, along with other Republicans, had been celebrating the fallen President’s birthday. And since the late 1890s, Black communities across the country had been celebrating Douglass’. Well aware of the pre-existing celebrations, Woodson built Negro History Week around traditional days of commemorating the Black past. He was asking the public to extend their study of Black history, not to create days of commemorating the Black past. He spoke of a shift from commemorating the Black past to promote, research, preserve, interpret and disseminate information about Black life, history and culture to the public.

Well before his death in 1950, Woodson believed that the weekly celebrations—no the study or celebration of Black history—would eventually come to an end. In fact, Woodson never viewed Black history as a one-week affair. He pressed for schools to use Negro History Week to demonstrate what students learned all year. In the same vein, he established a Black studies extension program to reach adults throughout the year. It was in this sense that Blacks would learn of their past on a daily basis that he looked forward to the time when an annual celebration would no longer be necessary.

Generations before Morgan Freeman and other advocates of all-year commemorations, Woodson believed that Black history was too important to America and the world to be crammed into a limited time frame. He spoke of a shift from Negro History Week to Negro History Year. In the 1940s, efforts began slowly within the Black community to expand the study of Black history in the schools and Black history celebrations before the public. In the South, Black teachers often taught Negro History as a supplemental to United States history. One early beneficiary of the movement reported that his teacher would hide Woodson’s textbook beneath his desk to avoid drawing the wrath of the principal.

During the Civil Rights Movement in the South, the Free-dom Schools incorporated Black history into the curricu-lum to advance social change. The Negro History move-ment was an intellectual insurgency that was part of every larger effort to transform race relations.

The 1960s had a dramatic effect on the study and cele-bration of Black history. Before the decade was over, Ne-gro History Week would be well on its way to becoming Black History Month. The shift to a month-long celebration began even before Dr. Woodson’s death. As early as the 1940s, Blacks in West Virginia, a state where Woodson often spoke, began to celebrate February as Negro History Month.

In Chicago, a new forgotten cultural activist, Frederick H. Hammaurabi, started celebrating Negro History Month in the mid-1960s. Having taken an African name in the 1930s, Hammaurabi used his cultural center, the House of Knowledge, to further the cause he saw as his duty. Dr. Hammaurabi worked coast to coast.

Within the Association, younger intellectuals, part of the awakening, prodded Woodson’s organization to change with the times. They succeeded. In 1976, fifty years after the first celebration, the Association used its influence to institutionalize the shift from a week to a month and from Negro History to Black History. Since the mid-1970s, every American president, Democrat and Republican, has issued proclamations endorsing the Association’s annual theme.

What Carter G. Woodson would say about the continued celebrations is unknown, but he would smile on all honest efforts to make Black history a field of serious study and provide the public with thoughtful celebrations.

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Howard University
Vice President of Program, ASALH
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The Association for the Study of African American Life and History (EIN: 53-0129640) is a tax-exempt 501 (c) (3) organization. The mission of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH®) is to provide, research, preserve, interpret and disseminate information about Black life, history and culture to the global community.
2021 Black History Month Theme - The Black Family: Representation, Identity, and Diversity

The black family has been a topic of study in many disciplines—history, literature, the visual arts and film studies, sociology, anthropology, and social policy. Its representation, identity, and diversity have been revered, stereotyped, and vilified from the days of slavery to our own time. The black family knows no single location, since family reunions and genetic-ancestry searches testify to the spread of family members across states, nations, and continents. Not only are individual black families diasporic, but Africa and the diaspora itself have been long portrayed as the black family at large. While the role of the black family has been described by some as a microcosm of the entire race, its complexity as the "foundation" of African American life and history can be seen in numerous debates over how to represent its meaning and typicality from a historical perspective—as slave or free, as patriarchal or matrific, as single-headed or dual-headed household, as extended or nuclear, as fictive kin or blood lineage, as legal or common law, and as black or interracial, etc. Variation appears, as well, in discussions on the nature and impact of parenting, childhood, marriage, gender norms, sexuality, and incarceration. The family offers a rich tapestry of images for exploring the African American past and present.

To purchase the Black History Bulletin - Family Issue visit: https://asalh.org/document/the-black-history-bulletin
February 2021

The Dawn is Ours

Aaahhh – yes! I remember now. This is what it feels like to breathe; to have air actually fill my lungs to capacity. It’s an unfamiliar sensation after four years of shallow, rapid breath brought on by the stress, worry and fear that comes when the body and mind are faced with ever-present crisis and ever-threatening danger.

I didn’t think there would be such a bright line of visceral relief on January 20, 2021 when Joseph R. Biden took the oath of office, officially becoming President of the United States. But I was overwhelmed with a feeling of liberation!

I didn’t know how much unbridled pride and joy I would feel watching Kamala Harris raise her right hand and pledge to defend the Constitution of the United States as the first woman, moreover the first Black and South Asian woman to be elected Vice President of the Nation.

I’ve never in my life become emotional at the singing of the National Anthem, but Lady Gaga had me in tears. I couldn’t have imagined being awestruck by the recitation of The Hill We Climb, the Inaugural Poem, written by the youngest known Inaugural Poet in American history. An extraordinary young Black woman, Amanda Gorman’s words were so powerfully and passionately delivered, so honest, brave, wise and hopeful, they must surely have resonated in all but the most hardened of hearts and most closed of minds. CNN’s Anderson Cooper cried, as he stated in an interview with the poet, he was rendered speechless.

As we were periodically reminded by commentators and pundits all throughout this day, this peaceful transfer of power and the celebration thereof came perilously close to not being. It’s still hard for me to wrap my mind around the hours-long attack and siege on the Capitol, mounted by a delusional, conspiracy-crazed, lie-fueled mob of Donald Trump supporters seeking to overturn our democratic republic at the urging of the outgoing President of the United States. As investigations go on, it is becoming apparent that it was a siege in some part methodically planned and executed.

It was a reminder that as dysfunctional and imperfect as this country is, it is a country that must be preserved and defended. And against all enemies foreign and domestic.

Donald Trump’s name was never said in the verse. He would rise, this morning, February 20th, and assume his position as 46th President of the United States. But I was overwhelmed with a feeling of liberation!

The refrain in the song America the Beautiful says, “America, America, God shed His grace on thee.” God’s grace is indeed shed on America, but God’s grace shines on the rest of the world as well. So often when I hear people say God Bless America, I believe what they’re really praying is for God to bless America and no place else. God bless my tribe and no other tribe. God bless my cause and no other cause. God’s on my side, not your side. These are the lies we tell ourselves. These are the lies the violent mob who stormed the Capitol believe.

God’s grace is always freely given, and God’s light is always shining on everyone, everywhere. But we’ll never see that light through lenses of hate and fear, mistrust and injustice, greed, and hubris. Divine Light is always ours to receive, but we can’t take it into our hearts unless we make room for it.

Breath is life. Yes, I am breathing again; breathing in renewed life; breathing out gratitude, healing, hope, resolve. Amanda Gorman ended her poem with these words, the dawn blooms as we free it. For there is always light, if only we’re brave enough to see it if only we’re brave enough to be it May we take them to heart.

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Rev. Beverly Spears is an ordained American Baptist minister, teacher and preacher of Evolutionary Christianity.

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WHO IS ELIGIBLE?
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WHO USES MEDICAID AND CHIP?

Nearly 87% of all eligible uninsured children are school-aged.

Percentage of school-aged students (ages 6-18) who receive health coverage through Medicaid and CHIP.

Almost 2 out of 5 school-aged children received health coverage through Medicaid and CHIP in 2016.

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We created an online form to collect data on incidents of hate and bias, which happen often to people who are: LGBTQ+, of various religious affiliations, people of color, people with disabilities, and any other targeted communities.

To report an incident visit ReportHateBias.org. These reports are not connected to law enforcement; if you are a victim of a hate crime and need the police to respond, call 911.
What is Black Love?

Black Love is the most beautiful thing on earth
Black Love transcends all barriers
Black Love is pure and sublime
Black Love only gets better over time
Black love overcomes all obstacles
Black love is proving anything is possible

And when I say Black Love
I do not mean just the romantic love connection shared between
A Black Man & Black Woman
Black Man & Black Man
Black Woman & Black Woman

The Black Love I’m talking about is strictly platonic
Purely spiritual free from any sensual desires
The Black Love I’m talking about
Forever burns bright like an eternal fire

See society does not promote this kind of Black Love
Society hates us and wants us to destroy ourselves
Society understands if we come together
The results will be catastrophic
We would transform the world and not a soul could stop it

Black Love is so powerful it could initiate a wave of change
Never leaving our society the same
They are afraid because they know
We are powerful beyond measure
They know we are capable of things
They are too fearful to imagine

They tried to break our spirits with slavery
But we rose against that adversity
And even though we are still not free
They know when we drop all our pride and truly unify
We will be the ones with limits past the sky
Black Love together we rise

Power 2 The Poetry
Sending vibrations of Love,
Lyte & Peace

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Imagine Jazz Keeping the Music Playing
February Workshops & Concert

Despite the pandemic, Imagine Jazz is still bringing premium content to Spokane in the virtual form of livestream concerts and zoom webinars. Recent presentations this winter included Carl Allen, Jaleel Shaw, Marcus Strickland, El Strickland, Greta Matassa and Jason Palmer. These events were made possible from grant support by Spokane Arts.

Imagine Jazz founder Rachel Bade-McMurphy recognizes that the virtual events are met with different feelings and levels of engagement. She states, “It feels like we are working underground. We are still working very hard and doing very important work. But a lot of it is unseen, and the experiences are personal victories rather than social endeavors.” The last in-person presentation was in March of 2020.

Coming up on February 5th, Imagine will air a concert that was recorded exclusively for them by Legendary pianist George Cables, with trumpet sensation Jeremy Pelt. Cables is a national treasure who toured and recorded with such historic legends as Sonny Rollins, Freddie Hubbard, Woody Shaw, Dexter Gordon, Sarah Vaughan, Dizzy Gillespie and more. Jeremy Pelt is one of Imagine’s most frequent collaborators, appearing in Spokane six times in four years, each time with a different band and format including the Black Art Jazz Collective in 2019.

The Cables/Pelt footage was shot on Jan 19th in Cable’s beautiful living room using three angles and high-quality microphones. The concert will air virtually on Feb 5th, staying available for 48 hours so that as many people can enjoy the concert as possible. Bade-McMurphy is scheduled to interview Cables prior to the show and the footage will be streamed via youtube and facebook.

February presentations also include a Virtual workshop day on February 20th. Three artists will be featured that day including saxophonist Todd Delguidice presenting “finding your voice as a soloist”; drummer Christopher Brown “Using Jazz as a Lens to reference the Gravity of Communication” and Grammy-nominated vocalist Rene Marie presenting a vocal jazz topic. The webinars are made available to all ages and levels. Community members are encouraged to attend. The webinars include lecture and demonstration by the artist as well as question and answer sessions. Those who cannot be present, can still receive access to the video afterwards for a limited time.

Tickets to the virtual concert and workshops are available at www.imaginejazz.org

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Elements of a Successful Reentry:
A Letter From a Confused Child Entering Prison and Leaving a Changed Man

By Gregory Torres

As for me, I’m up to the same old stuff, just working on self. It is actually fascinating to consciously peel back and analyze the many layers of my own character. I try to set small goals for myself, to have something to strive towards as a means to account for each day in the aspect of growth and productivity as an individual. In doing so, I’ve come to a realization that initially upon my incarceration I had the farfetched notion that how you start, how you finish and reputation is everything, based on the hype and recognition acquired in the wake of violence. If you do decide to exercise your opinion, it comes with consequences,” Williams said.

Today, that reality is no longer the case. Freshly out from what was his home for most of his adult life, Williams is still very much connected to those impacted by prison. Now, the director of a new non-profit in Spokane called Freedom Project East, Williams is doing more than just sharing his opinion by addressing the systemic causes and impacts of mass incarceration and the ways it devalues communities of color.

Williams states, “It’s important for me to do this work because I know how difficult it was for me from an emotional and psychological standpoint when I was first released from confinement and now I think of people who suffer a similar plight. I want to do everything possible to make their transition a more humane one.”

Freedom Project East strictly focuses on supporting Black, Indigenous and People of Color in Eastern Washington and the Spokane area. The non-profit is a grassroots project that works to serve and support those most marginalized and one of the most glaring manifestations of racial inequality — mass incarceration. Freedom Project East offers both short-and-long-term programs such as trauma intervention activities, providing basic needs (resources, housing, etc.), and Anti-Oppression training.

Black people are disproportionately arrested in Spokane: while they make up 2.5% of the population but are arrested over 7.5 times more than people who identify as white. A white person in Spokane has a 1 in 30 chance of being arrested, but if you are Black, your chances are 1 in 5 of being arrested.

According to a Spokesman-Review analysis of recently released data, “Of those who were arrested in the last five years, Black people were also about twice as likely to experience police use of force. These findings come from arrest data and use-of-force records released by the Spokane Police Department and 2019 census estimates.”

These disproportionate rates of arrest have their roots in systemic racism and impact families, children, and entire communities. Freedom Project East seeks to address these systemic impacts while also providing support to families and the community dealing with the trauma of racism and incarceration.

Not even a year out from being incarcerated, Jermaine Williams has hit the ground running since being released, and he has not slowed his efforts in trying to create positive change in a community that desperately needs it.

Williams has a message for those directly impacted by mass incarceration, “for those people who are formally incarcerated, and you’re out here in the community trying to establish yourself, believe that you can and that you will… understand that you have value, you have worth and you have something amazing to contribute to this community.”

For more information contact Jermaine Williams at jermaine@freedomprojectwa.org or visit https://freedomprojectwa.org.
Tyler Perry & BET to Air COVID-19 Vaccine Special

(Source: Shanelle Genai, https://thegrapevine.theroot.com)

BET & media mogul Tyler Perry are teaming up for a news special to help address COVID-19 vaccine concerns and fears within the Black community.

Per a press release sent to The Root, Perry plans to sit down with top medical experts from the Grady Health System for one-on-one interviews in a half-hour program entitled COVID-19 Vaccine and the Black Community: A Tyler Perry Special.

Executive produced by Perry for Tyler Perry Studios, the special will provide helpful and factual information for viewers looking to protect themselves and their families from this unprecedented crisis. Executive Associate Dean at the Emory School of Medicine at Grady Health System Carlos del Rio, MD and Professor of Medicine at Grady Health System Kimberly Dyan Manning, MD will be answering the tough questions on what families should and need to know when it comes to the vaccine.

Deadline also reports that ahead of the broadcast, Perry spoke to CBS This Morning’s Gayle King where he spoke on his interest behind the special and touched on the skepticism concerning the vaccine, specifically as it relates to the Black community. Admitting to initially being hesitant himself, Perry cited Henrietta Lacks and the Tuskegee experiment as historic and particularly horrendous circumstances that often “raise flags for us as African American people” and make it harder to trust what’s really inside the vial.

But overall, Perry still asserts that a lack of trust or doubt isn’t worth skipping out on getting the vaccine—and that’s exactly why he went to hear the experts and get the vaccine shot for himself.

“I’m not taking this vaccine because I want you to take it, I want to give you the information so you make your own choices. I think that’s what it’s about, education and information. I think that’s just important that people know that, if you take your chances with Covid you never know how it’s going to affect you and it could affect your long-term health.”

COVID-19 Vaccine and the Black Community: A Tyler Perry Special will premiere Thursday, January 28 at 9pm ET, on BET and BETHer.

When should I get tested for COVID-19?

Get tested if you are showing symptoms or have been near someone else who tested positive. Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure.

COVID-19 symptoms may include:
- Loss of taste or smell
- Fever
- Shortness of breath
- Headache
- Chills
- Muscle pain
- Sore throat

What if I don’t have symptoms?

Even if you aren’t showing symptoms, you can still transmit the virus to others! Self-isolate until you know your results.

Where do I get tested?

Health care providers
Community clinics, health centers and pharmacies
Drive thru and walk-up testing sites

Is the vaccine safe? Should I get it?

Yes. The vaccines available today were only approved after a rigorous, multi-step testing process.

1. Each vaccine goes through multiple clinical trials, first with a small group of volunteers, then hundreds, then thousands.
2. Thousands of people from all backgrounds participate in clinical trials.
3. Independent review verifies the efficacy and safety for all approved vaccines.

Find when and where locally you can get the vaccine:

coronavirus.wa.gov
But Still, Like Air, I'll Rise
By Jiemei Lin
FUTURE is ours TO TELL

@expertink
emma
noyes.

1/26/21

...our medicine people, often they were afflicted with grave illness before they came to know their own healing power...

Like the Corona Virus?

ahh the Corona virus. That was when your grandmother was a little girl, a little younger than you.

Is it safe?

This is no kind of childhood to have.

Wash them again.

When will Coyote Kill the Virus?

No school. Let’s go to the river.

No. The Corona virus was different.

Hey! Remember, keep a distance.

mask on! Now!

No, we can’t see grandma.

No powwow this year.
Did she get it?

No, no, no. She did not.
The people looked to their elders again and the elders accepted the vaccines. It was then upon the younger ones and they too got the vaccines.

But how was it different?

It was an affliction for no one individual. Many died and it was a tragedy that could have been prevented. It was not for a lone medicine person, but for all the people to recognize the hurt and the disconnection. Slowly, the people came to know their power. They then started to move with their power. Together, they became a different kind of medicine...

Medicine for the future.
Viewing the Pandemic Museum’s Room of Masks:
The Smithsonian, Washington, DC, in the Year 2051

Cy-Docent No.16-C guided the guests through the labyrinth of corridors and the museum’s suites of galleries, their voice undulated like a spoken word poem. “Had there been conflict? Oh, yes, there’d been tension, in the planning stages of the Pandemic Museum, before ground had broken for its place, its own space, on the National Mall.”

They stopped momentarily to survey an expanse of wall within the rotunda; an installation of N-95 PPE appeared. At first the masks seemed to be apparitions, like holograms from a Disney’s theme park. But then it became obvious that they were actual—that the masks had been concealed within the wall, that the masks were the wall. An optical illusion. Each mask, hundreds, perhaps thousands of them, lifted off from the achromatic wall and took flight like a kaleidoscope of silver butterflies heading into the dome of the rotunda. The visitors let out a collected gasp.

“The installation you just witnessed is called The Living and the Dead. And it is a kinetic assemblage in homage to those who perished, and the loved ones of those who perished, during the 2019-2021 Covid Pandemic.”

Several, if not most of the guests, recalled those times, some thirty years ago, when the world had been plunged into crisis. And so many lives had been lost. Following an attempted siege of the Capitol, and after a new administration took power, a shift of consciousness and intention was enacted, ushering in greater equality and prosperity for the people, and a healing of the earth, including deadly contagions.

The last of the butterfly masks fluttered through the top of the dome. Blue sky and sunshine shimmmered beyond.

Cy-Docent No.16-C shuttled the visitors to the opposite side of the gallery where a Cy-Harpist played a spirited interlude. The guests took up the live wicks offered and alit the rows upon rows of candles—a numinative mood enshrined the chambers.

Cy-Docent No.16-C continued leading the guests down to the end of the hall that led to another ornate gallery. And beyond that room was another. And then another.

~Tiffany Midge

**QUESTIONS ABOUT THE COVID VACCINE?**

**DID YOU KNOW?**

Black community members are suffering higher rates of Covid-19 and more hospitalizations, as well as death rates.

**WE MUST PROTECT OURSELVES.**

The vaccine is safe and is the next step to reversing those numbers and saving ourselves.

---

**Have an Appointment, But Need Transportation?**

If you already have Paratransit bus card or are over the age of 60, Paratransit door-to-door service is available. If you do not have a Paratransit bus card, it is $2 each way, $4 for round trip. Cash only. Call 509.328.1052 to schedule a Paratransit ride at least one day in advance of your appointment.
HOW DO BLACK FOLKS REALLY FEEL ABOUT THE VACCINE?
LET’S TALK ABOUT IT.

A {VIRTUAL} COMMUNITY CONVERSATION

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FROM A PANEL OF BLACK MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS.

ON ZOOM
SAT. FEBRUARY 20TH
10 AM

Visit CarlMaxeyCenter.org for Zoom Link
Amid COVID and Racial Unrest, Black Churches Put Faith in Mental Healthcare

By Aneri Pattani
Reprinted from Kaiser Family Foundation (kff.org/news)

Wilma Mayfield used to visit a senior center in Durham, North Carolina, four days a week and attend Lincoln Memorial Baptist Church on Sundays, a ritual she’s maintained for nearly half a century. But during the past 10 months, she’s seen only the inside of her home, the grocery store and the pharmacy. Most of her days are spent worrying about COVID-19 and watching TV. It’s isolating, but she doesn’t talk about it much.

When Mayfield’s church invited a psychologist to give a virtual presentation on mental health during the pandemic, she decided to tune in. The hourlong discussion covered Covid’s disproportionate toll on communities of color, rising rates of depression and anxiety, and the trauma caused by police killings of Black Americans. What stuck with her were the tools to improve her own mental health.

“They said to get up and get out,” she said. “So I did.”

The next morning, Mayfield, 67, got into her car and drove around town, listening to 103.9 gospel radio and noting new businesses that had opened and old ones that had closed. She felt so energized that she bought chicken, squash and greens, and began her Thanksgiving cooking early.

“It was wonderful,” she said. “The stuff that lady talked about [in the presentation], it opened up doors for me.”

As Black people face an onslaught of grief, trauma and how we can help congregations and tools people can use immediately, Breland-Noble, who gave the presentation, has noticed for years.

“The trend is that psychologists Afie Breland-Noble, who gave the presentation, has noticed for years.

Through her nonprofit organization, the AAKOMA Project, Breland-Noble and her colleagues often speak to church groups about depression, recognizing it as one of the best ways to reach a diverse segment of the Black community and raise mental health awareness.

This year, the AAKOMA Project has received clergy requests that are increasing urgently, asking to focus on coping skills and tools people can use immediately, Breland-Noble said.

“After George Floyd’s death, it became: ‘Please talk to us about exposure to racial trauma and how we can help congregations deal with this,’” she said. “Because this is a lot.”

Across the country, mental health needs are soaring. And Black Americans are experiencing significant strain. A study from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention this summer found 15% of non-Hispanic Black adults had seriously considered suicide in the past 30 days and 18% had started or increased their use of substances to cope with pandemic-related stress.

Yet national data shows Blacks are less likely to receive mental health treatment than the overall population. A memo released by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration this spring lists engaging faith leaders as one way to close this gap.

The Potter’s House in Dallas has been trying to do that for years. A megachurch with more than 30,000 members, it runs a counseling center with eight licensed clinicians, open to congregants and the local community to receive counseling at no cost, though donations are accepted.

Since the pandemic began, the center has seen a 30% increase in monthly appointments compared with previous years, said center director Natasha Stewart. During the summer, when protests over race and policing were at their height, more Black men came to therapy for the first time, she said.

Recently, there’s been a surge in families seeking services. Staying home together has brought up conflicts previously ignored, Stewart said.

“Before, people had ways to escape,” she said, referring to work or school. “With some of those escapes not available anymore, counseling has become a more viable option.”

To meet the growing demand, Stewart is adding a new counselor position for the first time in eight years.

At smaller churches, where funding a counseling center is unrealistic, clergy are instead turning to members of the congregation to address growing mental health needs.

At Catalyst Church, a member with a background in crisis management has begun leading monthly COVID conversations online. A deacon has been sharing his own experience getting therapy to encourage others to do the same. And Gerow, the senior pastor, talks openly about mental health.

Recognizing his power as a pastor, Gerow hopes his words on Sunday morning and in one-on-one conversations will help congregants seek the help they need. Doing so could reduce substance use and gun violence in the community, he said. Perhaps it would even lower the number of mental health crises that lead to police involvement, like the October death of Walter Wallace Jr., whose family said he was struggling with mental health issues when Philadelphia police shot him.

“If folks had the proper tools, they’d be able to deal with their grief and stress in different ways,” Gerow said. “Prayer alone is not always enough.”

Laverne Williams recognized that back in the ’90s. She believed prayer was powerful, but as an employee of the Mental Health Association in New Jersey, she knew there was a need for treatment too.

When she heard pastors tell people they could pray away mental illness or use blessed oil to cure what seemed like symptoms of schizophrenia, she worried. And she knew many people of color were not seeing professionals, often due to barriers of cost, transportation, stigma and distrust of the medical system.

To address this disconnect, Williams created a video and PowerPoint presentation and tried to educate faith leaders.

At first, many clergy turned her away. People thought seeking mental health treatment meant your faith wasn’t strong enough, Williams said.

But over time, some members of the clergy have come to realize the two can coexist, said Williams, adding that being a deacon herself has helped her gain their trust. This year alone, she’s trained 20 faith leaders in mental health topics.

A program run by the Behavioral Health Network of Greater St. Louis is taking a similar approach. The Bridges to Care and Recovery program trains faith leaders in “mental health first aid,” suicide prevention, substance use and more, through a 20-hour course.

The training builds on the work faith leaders are already doing to support their communities, said senior program manager Rose Jackson-Beavers. In addition to the tools of faith and prayer, clergy can now offer resources, education and awareness, and refer people to professional therapists in the network.

Since 2015, the program has trained 261 people from 78 churches, Jackson-Beavers said.

Among them is Carl Lucas, pastor of God First Church in northern St. Louis County who graduated this July — just in time, by his account.

Since the start of the pandemic, he has encountered two congregants who expressed suicidal thoughts. In one case, church leaders referred the person to counseling and followed up to ensure they attended therapy sessions. In the other, the root concern was isolation, so the person was paired with church members who could touch base regularly, Lucas said.

“The pandemic has definitely put us in a place where we’re looking for answers and looking for other avenues to help our members,” he said. “It has opened our eyes to the reality of mental health needs.”
COVID-19 & Mental Health

Events over the last year have caused many people, especially young people, to feel more depressed and anxious than usual. This is normal and if you feel this way, you are not the only one. Here are ways to support yourself or others when things feel overwhelming.

Look for Signs

Changes in mood, sleep, appetite, or the ability to concentrate are all things that could signal that somebody needs support.

Check-In

It is OK to ask somebody if they are struggling. You could even set up a weekly check-in with your kids or other loved ones to make sure everybody is feeling supported.

Listen

Listen. Listen. Listen. It is important for a person who is struggling to feel heard. Let them know it is normal to feel sad or anxious and that it is OK to ask for help.

Washington Listens 833.681.0211
24/7 Regional Crisis Line 877.266.1818

A free, anonymous service for people who feel sad, anxious, or stressed due to the events of this year.

Connects people to services for and on behalf of individuals whose health or safety is in danger because of a mental health or substance use condition.
Five Tips to Set Your Business Up for Success in 2021

Published by BlackPressUSA
Wells Fargo Bank, NA

The challenges created by the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting economic hardships can make 2020 a difficult year to look back on. 46% of small business owners surveyed in the Q4 Wells Fargo Small Business Index reported decreases in revenues, while the prospect of closing their business was most frequently ranked as the top concern. Nonetheless, even the most challenging times can yield opportunities for the future. 2020 provided hard truths, but also valuable insights that small business owners can use at the outset of 2021 to move forward.

Get online

Nearly one third (29%) of businesses planned to start using a website in 2020.1 Lucky for those that followed through on that plan, 2020 showed that having a strong online presence, user experience and functionality can not only be a competitive advantage in the marketplace, but also critical to a business’s survival. 86% of consumers rely on the internet to find a local business.2 With a well-rounded digital strategy, including a website and social media, business owners can build awareness and leverage how people are searching for information online. Further, ensuring a positive user experience with these channels can help set up an environment for business growth.

Key questions:
1. Is my website mobile friendly?
2. Can customers place orders or make payments online?
3. Is my website mobile friendly?

Check your tech

Almost one third (29%) of business owners said in November 2020 that the closure of their business was their top concern, while 57% said they did not anticipate recovery for businesses like theirs until at least the second half of 2021. With recent surges in COVID-19 cases, one key thing business owners can do to withstand these challenges and to help safeguard negative impacts to the business down the line is to ensure the right technology is fully utilized to serve operations, including sufficient internet bandwidth and wireless capabilities.

Key questions:
1. Am I using all of the available features for my online banking service?
2. Have I downloaded any requisite applications so I can use tools like mobile deposit?

Take advantage of digital banking

Online and mobile banking can help business owners monitor finances more easily. In fact, 73% of small businesses utilize online and mobile banking to help mitigate potential negative impacts of unforeseen circumstances.

Key questions:
1. Can I use accounting software to better analyze sales, costs, and opportunities in 2021?
2. Am I using all of the available features for my online banking service?
3. Have I downloaded any requisite applications so I can use tools like mobile deposit?

Create a plan B and a plan C

Networking can help small business owners through crises like COVID-19 and help facilitate a potential reset or even rebuilding of a business in the coming year. Whether it’s a traditional chamber of commerce or networking group or an online or social media-based community, networking groups can provide ideas and resources for growth, and may also help with recruiting talent, finding vendors, or even generating sales.

Key questions:
1. Are there trade groups or industry organizations in my area?
2. Could I start an informal network of business owners?

informatics and capabilities.

Like these can provide extra insurance against potential challenges that may arise.

Create a plan B and a plan C

The possibility of not seeing economic or business recovery until at least mid-2021 highlights the importance of planning for multiple scenarios. Having a backup plan for each area of your business, from sales to operations to marketing, will help mitigate potential negative impacts of unforeseen circumstances.

Key questions:
1. What happens if there’s another shutdown in 2021?
2. What happens if 2021 sales return to 2019 levels?
3. What happens if costs increase?

One key thing to remember is the lesson that permeates all of the others listed here: flexibility is key. Planning is as important as ever, but the ability to shift those plans based on the realities of a situation could make the difference between continuing toward recovery or facing a business closing.

As the New Year is upon us, it is important for business owners to reflect on the past year and plan for success in 2021.


Spokane Black Business Directory

Welcome to:
BlackSpokane.com

The Carl Maxey Center is excited to share Spokane’s Black Business Directory at www.BlackSpokane.com. The businesses were listed in alphabetical order and searchable by category.

This is just the beginning. Our goal is to eventually make this a comprehensive snapshot of Black Spokane, including Black businesses, organizations, professionals, churches and events.

If you are an African American professional or a business that is at least 51% Black owned and would like to be included in the directory, please contact the Carl Maxey Center at carlmaxeycenter@gmail.com.

To add your business call 509-795-1886.

Spokane

Starting a Business?
Get Free Advice Today.

www.scorespokane.org
509.353.2821
scorespokane@gmail.com
SEATTLE—The Washington Black Lives Matter Alliance released the Road Map to Liberation in December, its agenda of priorities for the Washington State Legislature’s upcoming session.

Priorities include pushing for policies that protect and liberate Black Lives through investments in Black arts and culture, economic freedom and generational wealth, fully funding public education, access to health, affordable housing and equity in criminal justice.

“Over the past six months we have witnessed hundreds of thousands of people across Washington state take direct action, whether it be in marches, law suits, strikes, or contacting their local and state elected officials to demand action for the liberation of Black Lives,” said Ebony Miranda, WA BLM Alliance steering committee member and board chair of Black Lives Matter Seattle-King County. “These priorities represent a mandate of the people; Washington state must dismantle its anti-Black infrastructure and policies across the board.”

The Washington Black Lives Matter Alliance is a non-partisan, statewide coalition launched by Black Lives Matter Seattle-King County. Members from organizations across the state work to eradicate anti-Black racism and all forms of oppression so that Black people and all people can thrive. Its Steering Committee includes leaders from Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle, NAACP Spokane and Seattle King County NAACP, the Puget Sound Chapter of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, Eastern Washington University, Byrd Barr Place, and more.

“This Alliance allows for organizations across Washington state to identify priorities and co-create the future we want to see for Black Washingtonians moving forward,” said Kiantha Duncan, steering committee member and president-elect of the Spokane NAACP.

As the pandemic enters its second year, racism continues to worsen its health and economic effects. WA Black Lives Matter Alliance’s agenda demands a statewide declaration that racism is a public health crisis. Additional priorities include:

- Protect and invest in Black expression, arts and culture;
- Ban the Box on tenant applications of disclosure of convictions, evictions, and bankruptcies;
- Police tactics and accountability;
- End youth incarceration; close Naselle;
- End money bail and pre-trial detention;
- Ensure anti-racist LGBTQIA+ health services for Black and IPOC Washingtonians;
- Create access to culturally relevant mental health services; ensure Medicaid parity so clinicians are appropriately compensated and services available;
- Remove barriers to access to culturally responsive care for our elders;
- System-wide reform of cannabis industry;
- Restoring voting rights for incarcerated people;
- Repealing I-200 and protecting affirmative action;
- End state-sanctioned trafficking of Black children; preserve, reunify, and support families;
- Ensure Black communities have food access and security for all;
- Extend the evictions moratorium until 2025; fully fund dispute resolution services;
- End systematic racism in welfare eligibility and delivery;
- Creating a capital gains tax to fully fund education.

“In 2020, people took to the streets for Black Lives,” said Dr. Shari Clarke, steering committee member and university administrator at Eastern Washington University. “With this road map, those streets lead to Olympia. We’re turning that energy into action for policy that can bring seismic change for Black Lives across the state.”

“Our fight is about the whole of Black Life—our labor, our education, our health, our economic security,” said Kevin Allen, steering committee member and executive board member of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, Puget Sound Chapter. “This is our voice. This is our power.”

The Washington Black Lives Matter Alliance is a non-partisan, statewide coalition of Black Lives Matter Seattle-King County. It is led by a steering committee of Black leaders representing organizations from across the state. Visit: blmalliancewa.org
20 Years of Student Loan Repayments Still Leave Black Borrowers Owing 95 Percent

By Charlene Crowell
(TriceEdneyWire.com) - Although the year 2020 has been dominated by continuing news coverage of the COVID-19 pandemic’s rising death toll that has now claimed the lives of nearly 300,000 Americans, it is not the only challenge facing the nation. Amid rising unemployment and food insecurity, an estimated 45 million Americans struggle at the same time with the crushing weight of more than $1.7 trillion in student debt.

A disproportionate amount of this financial burden is carried by Blacks and other borrowers of color. These racial disparities in student debt cannot be ignored: massive debts delay, if not deny, wealth-building opportunities for Blacks and others who believe that higher education remains the bridge to a financially secure future.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic and its resulting recession one of every four student loan borrowers was in default or delinquency. Black student experience default at a much higher rate (37.5%) than their peers who are Latino (20%), or White (12.4%), according to an independent report by the Brookings Institution. Even after 20 years of loan repayments, the typical Black borrower still owes 95% of the original cumulative balance.

A new research report, jointly released by the National Consumer Law Center (NCLC) and the Center for Responsible Lending (CRL), outlines the financial toll taken by this unsustainable debt and pinpoints remedies to systematically address the crisis.

In part, the report states: “Pursuit of education in America should not be such a high stakes gamble…Borrowers who took out loans to access an education should not have those debts follow them to the grave.”

Entitled, Road to Relief: Supporting Federal Student Loan Borrowers During the COVID-19 Crisis and Beyond, the report encourages President-Elect Biden to keep his campaign promise to cancel significant amounts of student debt among his first executive actions taken on his first day of office, and specifically recommends:

Across-the-board debt cancellation. All federal student loan borrowers (including PLUS loan borrowers and those with commercially- or institutionally-held loans) should have their balances reduced. This ensures that the benefits of cancellation reach all of the most vulnerable borrowers and will spur economic recovery;

2. Clearing the books of bad debts. After cancellation, the federal government should clear the books of debts currently held by borrowers that have been in repayment for longer than 15 years, debts that have been in default for three or more years, and debts held by borrowers who have been receiving some federal means-tested benefits for three or more years;

3. Restoring limitations on collections. Federal student loans should have common-sense consumer protection standards. Guarantors should include a broader set of limitations, preventing the sale of the Earned Income Tax Credit and Social Security benefits, limitations on the amount that can be seized, and limits on how long creditors can inappropriately collect. Student loans should also be dischargeable in bankruptcy;

4. Making repayment truly affordable and budget-conscious. All borrowers on an income-driven repayment (IDR) plan of more than 50 days delinquent at the end of the COVID-19 pandemic should be auto-enrolled in a new IDR plan, the Affordable Budget-Conscious (ABC) repayment plan, that sets monthly payments based on no more than 8% of discretionary income above 250% of the poverty line.

Continued on Page 30

The Four Milestones

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For high school students who want more information on taking college classes:

High school students and parents of high school students interested in Running Start can learn more at spokane.edu/running-start or email us at SCC.RunningStart@scc.spokane.edu or OCEP@sfcc.spokane.edu

*Students must be in grades 11 or 12 and enrolled in a Washington public high school to participate in Running Start. They must meet the same enrollment eligibility and course requirements as other college students.
Structural Racism & Black Health

I am glad Covid has “laid bare” structural racism and inequalities in healthcare and health for some folks. Welcome. We are happy to have you join us in the fight of our lives.

—Dr. Robin Stevens

By Glenn Ellis
(TriceEdneyWire.com) - Throughout modern U.S. medical history, official reports and statistics have documented, and confirmed, the disproportionate burden of health carried by the Black community. Now, COVID-19 has not only brought incredible attention to myriad of chronic diseases and social determinants that lead to those health outcomes but has made clear and indisputable how systemic racism works.

For all of us in the United States, the phrase “health disparities” or “health inequities” has never been made clearer than what we are seeing with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Black communities. For what is arguably the first time in this nation’s history, the entire country is witnessing exactly what has been historically denied the Blacks in healthcare. For generations, health disparities were thought on us as though it was something “biological wrong” with us.

Many of us, and the rest of America, actually believed that we were supposed to have higher rates of high blood pressure; diabetes; obesity; asthma; and many other chronic diseases. That had led to societal acceptance of the rate with which we die so prematurely; without any medical or public health intervention.

High blood pressure is one of those “Black” diseases that is not only a chronic condition itself, but also is linked to heart attacks and strokes. For Blacks, the risk of being diagnosed with diabetes is 77 percent higher than for whites. A similar gap, with poor outcomes, follows with all other chronic conditions.

It was an acceptable fact that mistrust in the medical system was a direct result of our physical and mental functioning. Those individuals with a history of childhood abuse suffer greater early death and sickness from a range of chronic diseases. We find the same principle in those elderly who have had a lifetime of economic hardship ending up experiencing a more rapid decline of physical and mental functioning.

All of this previously unknown information is a clarion call for Blacks to be vigilant in chronic disease management and pay close attention to diet, lifestyle, and primary healthcare. We all know that, “when America catches a cold, Black people get pneumonia. Whether it’s COVID-19; chronic diseases, HIV/AIDS, or any of the other health issues that wreak havoc on us, we’ve got to realize that only we can save ourselves, and live healthy, productive lives.

Chronic diseases represent 75% of all health care costs in the United States and are 60 percent of all Americans have at least one chronic disease, representing 70% of all deaths. By 2030 that the total number of Americans will exceed 170 million.

Chronic diseases are linked strongly to the effects of structural racism on Blacks, but we don’t have the luxury of waiting for the system to change. We are not capable, on our own, of eliminating structural racism in our society, particularly in healthcare and medicine. What we can do is take care of ourselves as best of our abilities. Diet; lifestyle; chronic disease management and pay close attention to diet, lifestyle, and primary healthcare. We all know that, “when America catches a cold, Black people get pneumonia. Whether it’s COVID-19; chronic diseases, HIV/AIDS, or any of the other health issues that wreak havoc on us, we’ve got to realize that only we can save ourselves, and live healthy, productive lives.

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Chronic diseases are linked strongly to the effects of structural racism on Blacks, but we don’t have the luxury of waiting for the system to change. We are not capable, on our own, of eliminating structural racism in our society, particularly in healthcare and medicine. What we can do is take care of ourselves as best of our abilities. Diet; lifestyle; stress management; and physical activity are things that help us all protect our health, particularly from chronic diseases.

It is even more important to be behaviors that Blacks have to pay even closer attention. There is much more to be done, as great disparities in this country in wealth, income, and education continue to plague our community.

Remember, I’m not a doctor. I just sound like one! Take good care of yourself and live the best life possible!

The information included in this column is for educational purposes only. I do not dispense medical advice or prescribe the use of any technique as a replacement form of treatment for physical, mental or emotional problems by your doctor either directly or indirectly. Glenn Ellis, MPH is a Visiting Scholar at The National Bioethics Center at Tuskegee University and a Harvard Medical School Research Bioethics Fellow. He is author of Which Doctor? and Information is the Best Medicine. Ellis is an active media contributor on Health Equity and Medical Ethics. For more good health information visit: www.glennellis.com

87% OF SENIORS WANT TO STAY IN THEIR HOMES
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Annette, Age 57, Diagnosed at 52
New York

A TIP FROM A FORMER SMOKER
Guardrails should include a statute of limitations, preventing the seizure of the Earned Income Tax Credit and Social Security benefits, limitations on the amount that can be seized, and limits on how long creditors can involuntarily collect. Student loans should also be dischargeable in bankruptcy; and

Making repayment truly affordable and budget-conscious. All borrowers on an income-driven repayment (IDR) plan or more than 30 days delinquent at the end of the COVID-19 pandemic should be auto-enrolled in a new IDR plan, the Affordable Budget-Conscious (ABC) repayment plan, that sets monthly payments based on no more than 8% of discretionary income above 250% of the poverty line.

“To taken together, these steps will ensure that all federal borrowers, accounting for over 90% of the outstanding student loan balances, receive substantial relief. Public investment, not reliance on loans, should once again be the foundation of how we pay for higher education,” states the report.

“The federal government must stop borrowers from continuing to drown in student debt by a system that has been inequitable and broken for decades,” continued Yu. “Abusive debt collection practices seize critical funds, such as Social Security and the Earned Income Tax Credit, and with no time limit on collection these practices can follow borrowers to the grave.”

Ashley Harrington, CRL’s Federal Advocacy Director and Senior Counsel spoke directly to the racial equity implications.

“For many, especially Black and Latino borrowers, repayment has been too onerous and too long, preventing them from achieving financial security even under normal circumstances,” noted Harrington. “Short-term payment suspension alone will not help struggling borrowers who have lost their jobs or who were already in default or serious delinquency before the public health crisis started.”

“To address our current recession and stimulate economic recovery, we urge President-Elect Biden to immediately redirect these dollars to better participate in the nation’s economy. Starting a business or transitioning from renters to homeowners are but two examples of new wealth-generating opportunities and future Black Americans can secure and find security,” says Harrington.

Despite noble contributions and achievements, there is no doubt that as a people we continue to be financially short-changed. Now as we approach a New Year and a new White House, systemic changes are both needed and possible.

Cancelling student debt and reforming the repayment system are vital for Black borrowers and communities. But targeted actions in other areas of concern are also necessary before this and future Black Americans can secure financial stability or build wealth. An even longer road map to relief – beyond student debt – must address other root causes of the racial wealth gap among young people,” states the Brandeis report. “It has saddled young borrowers of color, particularly Black borrowers, with debt that creates economic insecurity for decades and limits new wealth-generating opportunities such as homeownership.”

For example, a 2019 research report by Brandeis University’s Institute on Assets and Social Policy found that after 20 years of student loan repayments, the median debt of White borrowing students has been reduced by 94 percent— with almost half holding no student debt— whereas Black borrowers at the median still owe 95 percent of their cumulative borrowing total.

“This is clear that in the context of existing inequalities in wealth and assets by race/ethnicity, the privatized system of higher education financing serves to further exacerbate the racial wealth gap among young people,” states the Brandeis report. “It has saddled young borrowers of color, particularly Black borrowers, with debt that creates economic insecurity for decades and limits new wealth-generating opportunities such as homeownership.”

New Hope Baptist Church
9021 E. Boone Avenue
Spokane Valley, WA 99212
509.335.1336
NewHopeSpokane.com
Pastor James and First Lady Shawn Watkins

Student Loan Repayments
Continued From 28
The 2021 Activist In Residence is Jac Archer.

Jac Archer (they/them/theirs) is an activist in the Inland Northwest. Archer moved to the Spokane area in 2013 where they work as an activist, community organizer and educator in the fields of diversity, equity, civic engagement and sexuality. Archer has delivered lectures and training workshops throughout the community, including Whitworth University, and has previously served on panels at Eastern Washington University and Gonzaga.

While earning their bachelor’s degree from Eastern Washington University, Archer served on the Multicultural Coalition from 2015-2017, where they represented the Black Student Union and Scary Feminist Club. Archer currently serves on the Spokane Community Against Racism (SCAR) steering committee, the Peace and Justice Action League (PJALS) board, Spokane Human Rights Commission (SHRC) and the Washington State LGBTQ Commission.

Archer has a passion for organizing, institutional policy, and making difficult concepts easily accessible. They also enjoy writing, singing, performance and podcasts.

**Activist in Residence Workshops and Panels**

All workshops and panels will occur via Zoom on Wednesdays from 3:30-5 p.m., starting on Jan. 20. Some workshops and panels will be offered in-person at Eastern Washington University and Gonzaga.

**Registration is Free.**

For more information or to register, please email gan83@ewu.edu. To register visit: ewu.edu/air2021.

Questions about the Activist in Residence Program? Reach out to Lisa Logan at 509.359.2898 or llogan83@ewu.edu. To register visit: ewu.edu/air2021. Registration is Free.

**Wednesday, Feb. 3 — Black Activism: Our Local Ecosystem**

Learn about activist campaigns in Spokane, and hear from members of the Spokane Community Against Racism (SCAR) steering committee as they discuss the tactics they’ve used individually and as a group to affect local policy.

**Wednesday, Feb. 10 — Planning the Fight: The Basics of an Activist Campaign**

Check out the big picture and discover how petitions and protest actions in the street relate to long term change in communities and government. Explore the basics of campaign planning, what it is, and how to do it.

**Wednesday, Feb. 17 — Campaign Tactics: How to Plan an Action**

Every campaign is made up of actions. Discover the strategy, planning, and detail behind the most visible part of activism, and learn how to plan an action for yourself.

**Wednesday, Feb. 24 — Zooming In: Exploring Activist Campaigns in Spokane**

Learn about activist campaigns in Spokane, and hear from key local organizers of the Activist In Residence (AIR) program on the Gender, Women’s & Sexuality Studies Program and the Women’s and Gender Education Center are the lead organizers of the Activist In Residence (AIR) program on the EWU campus in Cheney, WA.

For an eighth year, AIR will bring an activist to campus to work with EWU students, staff, faculty and community members during winter quarter of 2021. The 2021 Activist In Residence is Jac Archer.

**ADDENDUM**

The Gender, Women’s & Sexuality Studies Program and the Women’s and Gender Education Center are the lead organizers of the Activist In Residence (AIR) program on the EWU campus in Cheney, WA.

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COVID-19 also continues to ravage the American economy. According to the Department of Labor, the 4-week moving average of first-time filings for un-employment insurance claims was 834,250, an increase of 18,250 from the previous week’s revised average.

Also, 30 to 40 million Americans are on the verge of being evicted from their homes in the dead of winter and in the midst of a pandemic. The world also knows as W.E.B Du Bois wrote, that the problem of the 20th century is “the problem of the color line.” In 1967 The Kerner Commission warned, “Our nation is moving toward two societies, one black, one white—separate and unequal” and COVID-19 has highlighted deep-rooted systemic racial disparities in health care; highlighting the adage, when America catches a cold, Black America gets pneumonia.

As the Biden administration implements its COVID, economic, social justice, education and other programs; African-Americans must be at the forefront of articulating the needs of and for the African American community. “This is no time to engage in the luxury of cooling off or to take the tranquilizing drug of gradualism. Now is the time to make real the promises of democracy.” It will be fatal for the community if it overlooks the urgency of the moment.

How quickly Biden appeared to set aside the fact that Black voters saved his candidacy and put him in the White House. He was about to drop out of the race until African-American voters in South Carolina delivered him a resounding win.

Yet, in December, civil rights leaders had to demand a meeting with the then President-elect in order to express their concerns about a lack of focus on racial equity, social justice, and increased diversity in the Biden-Harris cabinet. South Carolina Rep. Jim Clyburn is on record saying, not enough Black Americans have been nominated to join the incoming Biden administration. “I want to see where the process leads to…. But so far it’s not good.”

Biden has confused gender diversity and diversity of phenotype and pigmentation with the diversity of perspective and policy. Look at the names and records of his cabinet selections and nominees. For the most part it’s “Clinton/Obama retreads” – the same people and perspectives that have given us the neoliberal and imperialists policies that have driven the country into the ditch. Republicans have contributed to this as well. But right now, the focus is on President Biden and Vice President Harris.

Frederick Douglas told us, “Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will. Find out just what any people will quietly submit to and you have found out the exact measure of injustice and wrong which will be imposed upon them… The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppress.”

What is the African-American community willing to demand?

We need a Marshall Plan for the African-American community. If the U.S. could spend $515B to rebuild Europe after the devastation of WWII and pass a $740B Defense Authorization Act, the U.S. can invest the needed dollars to rebuild the American communities of color that it devastated with the Tulsa race riot, the Red Summer of 1919 and the gutting of urban centers with the building of the highway system of the 50’s, 60’s and 70’s.

The African-American community saved Biden’s bid for the Democratic presidential nomination and put him in the White House. The African-American community saved the Senate for the Democrats with its successful efforts in Georgia.

The question is not what rewards the Black community will be given for its efforts. Instead, the Black community must decide what it is willing to demand.
By Marc H. Morial
(TriceEdneyWire.com)

“...The Civil coup is the mirror we needed to overcome our warped sense of American exceptionalism. Becoming a truly equita-
ble democracy requires work. It requires actively working against ideological forces that try to make America great for only a few. It means realizing that the American Civil War and Nazi Germany began just like this: It means being courageous to ad-
mit that what happened at the Capitol is who we are at the United States. It means realizing that being silent on this issue is ac-
cepting the side of white supremacy. So, if you are worried, scared, or fearful, you should be. How will we respond to fight for the soul of America?”
— Kathleen Ray, University of Maryland Sociology Professor and

This week I was called to testify before the Congressional Black Caucus at an emer-
gency hearing entitled “January 6, 2021: U.S. Capitol Insurrection: White Suprem-
acy on Display.”

I used the opportunity to shine a light on the stark disparity between law enforce-
ment response to the attack on the Capi-
tol and the response to Black Lives Matter protests over the summer.

On June 2, 2020, racial justice protesters peacefully gathered at the Lincoln Memo-
rail to protest the death of George Floyd and other Black Americans at the hands of police. They were met with row upon row of military police in fatsigues and armor lin-
ing the Memorial’s steps.

The day before, on June 1, at least nine military and police aircraft hovered in the sky. Two helicopters eventually swooped low in a tactic usually reserved for combat zones, battering the protesters with tropical storm-level winds.

Park Police infamously unleashed tear gas and fired rubber bullets to clear a nonvio-
cent crowd from Lafayette Park so Presi-
dent Trump could stage a photo-op.

D.C. Metropolitan Police arrested 316 pro-
testers on June 1, 2020

“The FBI knew that extremists were pre-
paring to travel to Washington to commit violence and “war” on January 6. The in-
surrection was openly plotted on social media. One post on the platform 8kun declared “We will storm the government buildings, kill cops, kill security guards, kill federal employees and agents.”

There were no National Guard troops in riot gear awaiting them. No military he-
licopters. There was no tear gas deployed as the mob shoved its way past barricades. Vastly outnumbered police stepped aside and allowed the mob to storm the Capitol.

D.C. Metropolitan Police made only 61 "unrest-related" arrests on January 6. U.S. Capitol Police arrested just over a dozen.

Many Capitol Police executed their duty bravely and with honor. Officer Eugene Goodman, for example, is being hailed as a hero for luring a mob away from the Sen-
ate Chamber. However, another officer did exactly the opposite, offering the rioters di-
rections around the building as he donned a "Make America Great Again" cap.

January 6th may have been one of the most egregious examples, but it was certainly not the first. Again and again and again: In the eyes of far too many law enforce-
ficers are under investigation for actively participating.

On January 6, we witnessed a violent mob motivated by racial resentment, by a conspiracy theory rooted in the effort to invalidate Black votes. The mob was met with empathy and deference from a law-enforcement and military establish-
ment that harbors white supremacists among its own ranks.

The national reckoning over racially-moti-
vated police misconduct and brutality that began this summer cannot move forward until the institutions entrusted with public safety and national security rid themselves of the cancer within.
We cannot heed the hollow cries for “unity” from the very collaborators who fanned the flames of insurrection and promoted racist lies. You cannot cure cancer by ignoring it. It must be cut out and burned away.

Reform efforts such as the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act are a necessary step, but only one part of the solution. We must use every means at our disposal to shine a light on racial injustice and fully commit, as a nation, to a zero-tolerance policy with regard to white supremacy in law enforce-
ment and the military.

We are truly at a crossroads in America. The precedent we set here will have a pro-
found impact on future generations. The world is watching.

Marc H. Morial is the President and CEO of the National Urban League. Morial served as Mayor of New Orleans, from 1994 to 2002, President of the United States Conference of Mayors in 2001, and as a Louisiana State Sen-

Trump, As President, Was Not An Aberration

By A. Peter Bailey
(TriceEdneyWire.com) - In June 2019, I wrote a column entitled “No. 45 Is Not An Aberration” that included the follow-
ing: “The American news media is deceiving the world when it consistently describes No. 45 (Donald Trump) as an aberration in the history of the United States presidency... Rather than being an aberration he is a direct descen-
dant of former presidents, most notably Saint George Washington and Saint Thomas Jefferson who bought, sold, owned and ex-
plotted African men, women and children.”

How can Trump be an aberration when he is the direct de-
scent of a president who wrote the Declaration of In-
dependence while being an enslaver of over 200 Africans?

How can he be an aberration when he’s the direct descen-
dant of former presidents who helped write the United

Trump has no jurisdiction in those arenas. It was up to individual states, they said, to deal with the situation.

We cannot heed the hollow cries for “unity” from the very collaborators who fanned the flames of insurrection and promoted racist lies. You cannot cure cancer by ignoring it. It must be cut out and burned away.

-Mark Morial

The Black Lens Spokane
www.blacklensnews.com
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amendment to the Constitution that declared enslaved Africans as three-fifths of a person?

How can he be an aberration of former presidents who from the Reconstruction Era through the 1950s passive-
ly looked on as white supremacist terrorists killed several thousand Black people and viciously oppressed millions of others?

How can he be an aberration when presidents since the 1960s passed Civil Rights legislation only for foreign pol-
icy considerations?

American presidents have never voluntarily supported civil and human rights for Black people in this country. They always took the position that the federal government had no jurisdiction in those arenas. It was up to individual states, they said, to deal with the situation.

Trump, as President, was not an aberration. He was just more outwardly flagrant with his actions than most of his pre-
decessors.

A possible positive result of his presidency may be that more Black people than ever before during the past 50 years will now understand that we must organize ourselves economically, culturally, politically, educationally, techno-
logically, legally, health-wise and self-defense wise in or-
der to promote and protect our vital interests.

A. Peter Bailey is a journalist, author, lecturer and University of the District of Columbia Professor. He was a founding member of the Organization of Afro-American Unity (OAAU), organized in 1964 by Malcolm X. A former President of the New York Associ-
ation of Black Journalists, Bailey received Lifetime Achievement awards from the National Newspaper Publishers Association and the New York Association of Black Journalists.
White Allies: You Don’t Get to Not Be White Right Now

By Elyse Cizek

Two weeks ago a dear white friend of mine reposted a TikTok video in her Instagram story of a clever white young man saying “I don’t enumerate my whiteness. I’m off-white, I’m beige, you can call me pink, you can call me snowflake… I don’t care what you call me just don’t call me white. Those people on the news — those are white people…”

I couldn’t formulate a complete sentence in response to that video because I was experiencing trauma in real time. How dare you.

I have wanted so badly to write about my feelings after seeing the attack at the Capitol live on television but I feel I’m out of words. I was in line at a COVID test facility, waiting in my car with 1/4 battery on my phone receiving countless texts from friends saying “how do you feel about this yet?” And I had. I had seen it. And I couldn’t stop watching.

I don’t know what I expected to see that day. I have lived as an American too long to have hope in a savior. I have lived as a Black woman in America too long to believe that this was an accident, an unfortunate event, or even anything but a predictable demonstration of the force of white supremacy. I watched that day, expressionless and cold, as the veil of “well maybe it was just…” was lifted, revealing the man behind the curtain to in fact be droves of white fear and entitlement, fighting for the perpetuation of an evil so many of them deny, exists let alone exists within them.

I felt as if I was a child terrorized by a monster that hid in my closet, my parents finally discovering it was real, but only after it had swallowed me whole.

What we witnessed was the malignant cancer of American white supremacy. What you questioned when you played devil’s advocate, you referred to what Black America experienced as a kind of 4D chess game that was the source of heated conversation in Facebook threads and maybe deserved a rewatch, but too many of you refused to acknowledge that it lives among you — often inside you. And yes, it has been this obvious to us the whole time.

The mob at the Capitol was made up of your uncles that I’ve wanted you to admit that you had to learn about anivestisance and relevance is assumed because you are white. I don’t care what you call me just don’t call me white. Those people on the news — those are white people…”

The most effective way to use your white privilege is to recognize that it allows you to have the hard conversations that marginalized peoples cannot have without the threat of being completely invalidated as human beings. Your existence and relevance is assumed because you are white. So now, if you are disgusted or horrified by what you saw on January 6th, 2021, you do not get to denounce your whiteness. You need to fucking use it.

In a perfect world there would be a TikTok challenge encouraging white people to share how they learned that they benefit from white supremacy. Or maybe a series encouraging white people to admit they’ve been racist, made in-compulsively demonizing comments about marginalized peoples from a place of caste entitlement, or maybe even a #ididittoo hashtag for people who didn’t stand up where they know they should have. But right now, this viral TikTok video is making a clever joke out of the very whiteness that has threatened the lives of all non-white races since the colonization of this country, and ya’ll think it’s cute to say it’s not you. It isn’t cute. This is you, too.

Yes it’s hard. Yes it feels like you’ve done a lot this summer, or maybe in the past few years, part of the healing process that this nation is dying for is acceptance of what is. These radical insurgents are members of your community. We work with them, drank with them, and voted for them. But someone along the way shared their knowledge with relitives, our high school friends, our acquaintances, and our neighbors. Rather than being willing to be in acceptance of your whiteness and the violent history of your ancestor’s thirst for blood and money, you think that reading a few good articles, marching a few times with your friends, and watching a few documentaries cleans your name? I’m glad you’re starting to admit that the problem exists but when do you admit you benefit from it?

I sat down with a friend the other day and I asked her what she felt her responsibility is in today’s social climate. She is a cis, white, queer femme artist with a large platform and a support for social justice. Her answer was this: “I can never opt out of the hard conversations.”

No, we cannot change everyone’s mind. But imagine for a second that everyone who has had a personal wake-up call this year was able to simply plant a seed in someone else. Maybe sending one great link could send one of these people down a YouTube algorithm rabbit hole ending up in a sea of TED talks from Black educators and not conspiracy theories, even if just for one afternoon. Maybe instead of appropriating Black anger and trauma and playing the victim in a discussion of social justice you could have shared the story of a great Black leader, or even said “Ooh! Let’s watch this documentary together. It’s what really changed my perspective on that!” Send an article directly to someone who doesn’t seem to understand and help them understand, as others have helped you. This is a time when you could use your whiteness to get through to those unwilling to listen to me.

I know you’re tired. I know you’re disgusted. But you have no idea what your Black friends are going through. Not because you don’t care, but because we don’t have words anymore. You’ve seen it now. You’ve been to the marches. You’ve watched the videos. You’ve read the stories. You’ve done your research. Now is not the time for you to say “don’t call me white.” This is the time to use that whiteness to do what we can’t. Be the ally. Be the strong white ally you needed to be from the strong Black women who don’t have the fucking stones right now to fight your fight. This is no longer on us. It’s on you.

You have the tools. You have the knowledge. You have the power. You have the privilege. Use it.

Elyse Cizek is a writer, model-actress, singer-songwriter, and talk artist living in Los Angeles, California. Read more of Elyse’s writing at elysecizek.medium.com.
Our System is Rigged So the Minority Can Rule

By Jesse Jackson

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - The majority does not rule in the United States. The foundation of any democracy — one person, one vote — is mocked by institutionalized impediments that allow the minority to win even when they lose at the ballot box. In this era, even when Democrats win, they lose. And the will of the majority of the people is frustrated by a system rigged to empower the minority.

Consider: Democratic candidates have won the popular vote in seven of the last eight presidential elections but have become president only five times. Trump became president four years ago despite losing the popular vote by nearly 3 million votes. Presidents who lost the majority of the votes have nominated five of the nine Supreme Court justices. The reason, of course, is the Electoral College, which tallies votes by state, not by voter.

This institution is a legacy of slavery, designed by the founders to ensure that the less populated slave states would be able to balance the free states that had nearly three times the population. In frustrating the popular vote, the Electoral College puts the democracy at risk. Because of the Electoral College, Trump’s margin of defeat wasn’t 7 million across the nation, but about 65,000 votes in three states and the 2nd District of Nebraska.

That helped empower him to mislead millions by claiming the election was stolen, despite Biden’s landslide popular vote victory. In the Senate, Democrats and Republicans each have 50 senators (with Vice President Kamala Harris the tie-breaking vote). The 50 Democrats represent 41 million more voters than the 50 Republicans. Smaller, more rural states with few people, like Wyoming or Idaho, have as many senators as large populous states like California and New York.

To add insult to injury, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, which have more voters than several states, are deposed in statehood with no final vote on any legislation. It’s meant, among other things, that three Supreme Court justices — Neil Gorsuch, Brett Kavanaugh, and Amy Coney Barrett — were all nominated by a president who lost the popular vote and confirmed by a bloc of senators who represented states that were more than 59 million Americans live under minority rule in a state where the party with fewer votes controls a majority of the legislative seats. In Wisconsin, 44.7% of voters cast ballots for Republican Assembly candidates, but the GOP won 64.6% of the seats. With gerrymandering, voters are often choosing their representatives; representatives are choosing their voters.

The right-wing Supreme Court majority has ruled that money is speech and that corporations are citizens, so their ability to throw money into elections cannot be limited. The result, not surprisingly, is that Americans elections get more costly and big money and entrenched interests grow more powerful. The fix is in — and the results are ruinous.

Today, Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell is refusing to agree to rules to govern the Senate unless Democrat Kamala Harris is not present. The filibuster — the requirement that virtually any legislation receive not a majority of the vote but a supermajority of 60 votes — is the instrument McConnell used to obstruct virtually everything President Obama wanted to do, in the stated purpose of making him a one-term president.

The result is a Senate that is frozen in the midst of cumulating crises. Even Joe Biden’s pandemic emergency rescue package is stalled. America becomes more and more dysfunctional as it becomes less and less democratic. The Democratic majority in the House has passed legislation — HR 1 in the last session of Congress — that would remedy some of these inequities.

The 51-vote majority in the new Senate wants this to be its first act. But of course, if the filibuster is sustained the minority will block even these common-sense reforms. The sacking of the Capitol sent a message around the world that America’s democracy is literally under siege. The reality is worse, as it becomes less and less democratic. The Democratic majority in the House has passed legislation — HR 1 in the last session of Congress — that would remedy some of these inequities.

Thus, Mayor Muriel Bowser has her hands tied, as prior mayors of DC have. Congress has intruded into DC internal affairs, appointing a “Control” Board (I called it the Out of Control Board) in 1995 to oversee DC financial decisions that should have been the Mayor’s purview. Congress meddles in DC in ways it could not interfere in any other jurisdiction. DC deserves autonomy, and the debacle with the National Guard on January 6 is the most recent illustration of the reason. If you believe in equal rights, this is an issue for you whether or not you live in DC. The Biden-Harris administration must prioritize this, and you should too.

By Dr. Julianne Malveaux

(blackcommentator.com) The District of Columbia has 715,000 residents, more than the states of Wyoming and Vermont. We pay taxes, just like citizens in all 50 states. But our citizens are second-class citizens. We have no voting representation in the House of Representatives or the United States Senate. We have taxation without representation.

Nonvoting Congressional representative Eleanor Holmes Norton (D) has served in Congress since 1991. She has tirelessly fought HR 51 on the very first day of the 117th Congress, on January 3. She has 202 co-sponsors of the legislation, all Democrats. Not a single Republican thinks that the residents of the District of Columbia deserve equal rights. Norton has introduced legislation to establish DC statehood since 1991. Republicans don’t support this because they think Democrats get an edge if a voting representative and two senators are Dems. Would disenfranchising California because Democrats do better there?

The insurrection on January 6 illustrates one of the many reasons that DC deserves statehood. Mayor Muriel Bowser cannot assemble the DC national guard on her own. She has to ask for federal government “permission” to get our national guard, made up of DC residents, to protect our citizens and our streets. Any other governor can ask for National Guard assistance, but the DC Mayor has to go, in hand, to the feds, who have traditionally hosted our city.

This is the most recent attack on DC sovereignty. In past years, Congress has passed laws that directly contradict laws the DC City Council has passed. Congress has offered scant respect for DC leaders. But DC voters, through charter amendment, made the DC Attorney General an elected position. Karl Racine was elected in 2014 and reelected in 2018. He has aggressively challenged the status quo, suing the Trump administration for its chiropractic. He has also defended DC independence and pushed back on attacks to DC sovereignty. The blessing of having an independent Attorney General (as opposed to someone appointed by the Mayor) is that the AG can play a different kind of politics than the Mayor must.

The DC statehood issue affects you whether you live in DC or not. When you hear voter suppression, think DC. A few years ago, DC was majority Black (now it’s at least 45 percent). Republicans weren’t about to put a congressional voting seat and two senatorial seats to Black folks. Just like they would scheme and connive to keep Black voters away from the polls in North Carolina, Georgia, and other states. You can’t talk about gerrymandering in ways it could not interfere in any other jurisdiction.

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EMPLOYMENT & BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

**CAREER OPPORTUNITIES SPOKANE**

We are seeking energetic and hard-working individuals to join our teams at our manufacturing plant and corporate office. We are actively hiring within the following departments!

**MANAGEMENT • SALES**

**ADMINISTRATIVE • PRODUCTION**

**WAREHOUSE • DRIVERS**

To view our current openings and apply, please visit SCAFCO.com/Careers or CWallA.com/Careers or email your resume to Careers@StoneGCO.com

- Medical, Dental, Vision Insurance, Paid Vacation, Paid Holidays and Many More!
- Excellent Ways to Prepare for Your Future: 401K with Company Matching and Profit Sharing along with Life Insurance.

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**FXD Moderate Means Supervising Attorney**

Gonzaga University is recruiting for a fixed term, part-time Moderate Means Supervising Attorney.

This position is responsible for Gonzaga Law School’s participation in the statewide Moderate Means Program (MMP). MMP is a collaboration among Gonzaga University School of Law, Seattle University School of Law, the University of Washington School of Law, and the Washington State Bar Association (WSBA), designed to expand access to affordable legal representation to individuals who are ineligible for free legal services but unable to afford such services at prevailing market rates.

To learn more or apply please visit our site at https://gonzaga.peopleadmin.com/postings/14916

Gonzaga University is a Jesuit, Catholic, humanistic institution, and is therefore interested in candidates who will contribute to its distinctive mission. Gonzaga University is a committed EEO/AA employer and diversity candidates are encouraged to apply. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to their disability status and/or protected veteran status.

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**Habitat for Humanity - Spokane**

Habitat for Humanity - Spokane brings people together to build homes, community, and hope. Our vision is a world where everyone has a safe, decent, and affordable place to call home.

We are searching for dynamic, mission driven collaborators to join our team in creating more affordable homeownership opportunities in Spokane County.

If you are have a passion for servant leadership, apply today!

**Through shelter, we empower.**

For more information and to apply, please visit https://habitat-spokane.org/about-us/employment

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**Whitworth University**

Whitworth University Seeks to Fill Several Vacant Positions:

- Adjunct Faculty in Mathematics and Computer Science
- Area Coordinator in Residence Life
- Program Assistant in Chapel & Campus Ministry
- Program Coordinator of Major Gifts in Institutional Advancement
- Application Engineer in Information Systems

Whitworth has a Christ-centered commitment to the principles of diversity, equity and inclusion. In that spirit, the university encourages individuals from historically underrepresented populations to apply. Successful completion of a background check required.

For more information and to apply, please visit www.whitworth.edu/careers.

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For more information and to apply, please visit www.whitworth.edu/careers.
EMPLOYMENT & BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

Join Our Team

Volunteers of America is a family, where everyone truly cares and works hard.

To us and to those we serve, all our staff are heroes and we’d love for you to join our ranks!

Health Coverage - Retirement - Flexible Schedule - Paid Vacation

For more information please visit https://www.voaspokane.org/jobs

Ready for a Career in Construction?

Skilled Trades Preparation (STP) prepares you to successfully apply to apprenticeships in the construction trades. Area apprenticeships are looking for more qualified women and minorities.

STP is the first step on your way!
Tuition is only $25
Visit: scc.spokane.edu/STP to learn more.

The Washington State Department of Transportation recognizes the importance of supporting new apprenticeships in our region and has made funding available specifically for STP students. This funding may pay for:

- Work clothes
- PPE
- Tools
- Minor car repair
- Transportation
- Program testing

Contact us now to determine your eligibility.
(509) 533-4600
ABEInquiry@scc.spokane.edu
“Diversity Dialogues:
“I see you. I hear you. I feel you.”
CONVERSATIONS ABOUT RACE AND EQUITY

January
20
Marlon James
5:00pm

February
17
Kevin Young
5:00pm

March
03
Anu Taranath
6:30pm

March
10
Tracy K. Smith
5:00pm

April
14
Carlos Gil
6:30pm

April
27
Angie Thomas
5:30pm

May
12
Luis Rodriguez
6:30pm

June
02
Hilton Als
5:00pm

June
09
Omari Amili
6:30pm

Learn more at scc.spokane.edu/HaganCenter
Events are open to the public and available via livestreaming on YouTube at scc.spokane.edu/live.

I, too, sing America.
I am the darker brother.
They send me to eat in the kitchen
When company comes,
But I laugh,
And eat well,
And grow strong.

Tomorrow,
I’ll be at the table
When company comes.
Nobody’ll dare
Say to me,
“Eat in the kitchen,”
Then.

Besides,
They’ll see how beautiful I am
And be ashamed—
I, too, am America.
FEBRUARY 10
FUSE DIVERSITY BOOK CLUB
Brown Girl, Brown Stones by Paule Marshall
(Footnote)
The first novel by internationally recognized writer Paule Marshall, published in 1959. The somewhat autobiographical story describes the life of Barbadian immigrants in Brooklyn during the Great Depression and in WWII.

FEBRUARY 15
NAACP GENERAL MEETING
Join the NAACP for our monthly general membership meeting. For more information please check social media at facebook.com/spokane.naacp or contact the NAACP at 509-209-2425 or visit naacpspokane.org.

FEBRUARY 11
BIPOC AFFINITY SPACE
A virtual People of Color specific space for the BIPOC Spokane community to gather, breathe and heal.

Virtual Discussion
If you would like to attend or want more information contact exceleratesuccess@unitedwayspokane.org.

FEBRUARY 15
SPEAK UP SCHOOL
Learn effective skills for public speaking and how to express yourself effectively in public hearings. Get information about Washington's upcoming redistricting process. Sponsored by the League of Women Voters
For more information and to register visit LWVSpokane.org

FEBRUARY 17
DIVERSITY DIALOGUES
Kevin Young
Hogan Center Speaker Series. Conversations about race and equity.

FEBRUARY 17
SPOKANE COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH FORUM

Virtual Discussion
For information visit: betterhealthtogether.org/calendar/communitymentalhealth

FEBRUARY 20
SPEAK UP SCHOOL
Learn effective skills for public speaking and how to express yourself effectively in public hearings. Get information about Washington's upcoming redistricting process. Sponsored by the League of Women Voters
For more information and to register visit LWVSpokane.org

FEBRUARY 20
HOW DO BLACK FOLKS REALLY FEEL ABOUT THE COVID VACCINE?
The Black Lens, Spokane NAACP, Carl Masey Center and Spokane Ministers Fellowship are hosting a virtual community discussion about the Coronavirus vaccine. Questions & answers from Black professionals and community members.

FEBRUARY 24
5TH AVENUE INITIATIVE MEETING
The City of Spokane wants to hear from the community about the 5th Avenue initiative.

FEBRUARY 25
BIPOC AFFINITY SPACE
A virtual People of Color specific space for the BIPOC Spokane community to gather, breathe and heal.

Virtual Discussion
If you would like to attend or want more information contact exceleratesuccess@unitedwayspokane.org.

FEBRUARY 27
SPOKANE COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH FORUM

For more information visit: betterhealthtogether.org/calendar/communitymentalhealth

Send information about upcoming community events to sandy@blacklensnews.com or call 509-795-1964 with information.
RIDES FOR SENIORS

Socially-distanced travel to work, grocery stores, medical appointments, and all your destinations.

People age 60 and over can use STA Paratransit vans to travel to destinations without other passengers for only $2 each way.

CALL 328-1552 TO SCHEDULE YOUR TRIP