



Volume 76 No. 7

"And Ye Shall Know The Truth..."

February 1, 2023

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Milestones "Woman On The Rise" Honoree!



Toledo Lucas County Public Library's Erin Baker

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When We Recognize the Metaphors for our Oppression

By Rev. Donald L. Perryman, Ph.D.

The Truth Contributor

They'll focus on the fact that the Memphis officers were black as it helps masquerade the blue that perpetuates anti-black violence.

– Francis Maxwell



A meditation by Rev. Susan K. Smith:

In 1961, James Baldwin was interviewed by Studs Terkel. He shared how, while he lived in Europe, he relied on the music of Bessie Smith. Listening to her song, "Back Water Blues," Baldwin said that she helped him "dig back to the way" he had been as a child. He shared that he had never listened to her while he lived in America, "in the same way that I never touched watermelon, but in Europe, she helped me reconcile myself to being a nigger."

He said that while in Switzerland, he played Bessie Smith every day as he wrote *Nobody Knows my Name*. Asked if he felt a sense of shame about a heritage "that is really so rich when he accepted the white man's stereotype of him," he answered:

I'm afraid that is one of the great dilemmas, one of the great psychological hazards, of being an American Negro. In fact, much more than that. I've seen a great many people go under because of this dilemma. Every Negro in America is, in one way or another, menaced by it. One is born in a white country, a white Protestant Puritan country, where one was once a slave, where all standards and all the images – when you open your eyes on the world, everything you see, none of it applies to you.

Like everybody else, you go to white movies, fall in love with Joan Crawford, and root for the Good Guys who are killing off the Indians. So it comes as a great psychological collision when you realize all of these are really metaphors for your oppression and will lead you into a kind of psychological warfare in which you may perish.

His words reminded me of how I came to an "aha" moment not long ago when I realized that as a little girl watching television, I bought into the images and stories on television much in the way Baldwin is talking about. I believed that the Indians were "the bad guys." I didn't think about how the programs like "Leave it to Beaver," the Andy Griffith Show," and "Father Knows Best" were set in all-white neighborhoods, spaces where neither I, as a little Black girl, nor my family would have been welcomed.

... continued on page 12

Honoring

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

"Everybody can be great...because anyone can serve." – Martin Luther King, Jr.

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Dying Without Really Trying

By Lafe Tolliver, Esq

Guest Column

Which one of the following traffic incidents with police could result in you being in a morgue?

- (1) driving while Black
- (2) broken taillight
- (3) sitting in your car doing nothing
- (4) sleeping in your car
- (5) driving left of center
- (6) speeding
- (7) not using turn signals
- (8) fleeing from the police
- (9) no car tags
- (10) expired driver's license
- (11) making a "furtive" gesture when you are stopped
- (12) arguing with police about why you are being stopped
- (13) all the above

Recently, you may have heard of the traffic stop in Memphis Tennessee involving a young Black male, Tyre Nichols, and five Black police officers.

Apparently, when the driver was stopped, he eventually was able to flee from them (his house was about 80 yards away from the stop) but the enraged bunch of cops caught him; and according to a report from one of his attorneys, he was beaten, "like a pinata."

The medical cause of death was excessive bleeding as a result of a severe beat down. Mr. Nichols died three days later in the hospital. The beat down was three minutes in duration.

The five craven Black cops were fired even before a formal investigation due to the outrageous acts committed by the five cops against an unarmed man who repeatedly was asking them, "What did I do?"

Rightfully so, the minority community in Memphis is outraged that such blatant police brutality was so glaringly manifested in their presence.

But, to see five Black police officers engage in such heinous conduct against a Black person was a shocker to say the least.

... continued on page 12

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From Cops to Cons, From Memphis to Misery!

By Bishop Marjorie Holt, PhD

Guest Column

The world has had to witness one of the most egregious acts performed by some who were sworn IN to SERVE but bowed OUT to flex. I am sure that the whole of the environment that was established in the S.C.O.R.P.I.O.N. Unit, a/k/a Street Crime Operation to Restore Peace In Our Neighborhood, the undercover crime suppression Unit of the Memphis Police Department, seemingly escaped or aborted the real intent for the Unit being created.

The Unit chose to create and initiate its own behavioral context and content that would be uniquely shared and functioned in to squarely define them in a "closed, exclusive, yet selective manner" with no threshold that is/was able to measure eminent risk of their service/lack of service.

The question remains how does one evaluate and derive at that which makes sense when there is no leadership or supervision relevant to the task at hand, which is to minimize the risk(s) or maximize the outcome(s)?

And as a professional with a background in sociological ideologies, the study of social causes and the consequences of human behavior, it is baffling that an operation of this magnitude would be implemented upon the request from the powers to be, the community, or rankings and ratings of the proliferation of crime, that no tool or instrument would have been implemented to trace the relevancy of or the magnitude of hopeful results that were intended to be used as a model in and throughout the U. S. with



Bishop Marjorie Holt,
PhD

the potential to decrease crime throughout volatile metropolitan cities.

We must ask relating to this brutal killing of Tyre Nichols, where was the mental acuity of each of the Officers that prompted such action without regard to the life of an individual that looked like them, all of them?

We live, AFRICAN Americans, with the fear of White Police Officers on a daily basis because of the historical perspective that looms personal reflections and references to actions that have led to death of family members. So it prompts me to ask: at what point do you stop being Black to become Blue and take on the juxtaposed culture of the BLUE and forget the history of the BLACK?

Did not the sacrifices of our past create a path for your future and how was it so easy for you, all of you, to vacate that significance? Even in the wake of another tragedy, the lens at which we look through this one, reminds us of the power of togetherness even when one looks like us, even when it's wrong, and how it is that acculturation in this case, usurps commitment, as well as exhibited the absence of detachment physically, psychologically, intellectually, spiritually and, yes, morally.

We do applaud the quick response on the part of the D. A. and the Police Chief of the Memphis Police Department but there is a much larger systemic issue that must be addressed, not just the inactivation or elimination of this unit.

Rather there needs to be an overall overhaul of the total operation of each Police Department nationally, the purposes for each unit/special units being created, developed, initiated and how each will function, with the overriding and humbling mission that must never be aborted or interrupted, and that is how do you understand what it means TO PROTECT AND TO SERVE and what will your commitment look like with or without monitoring?

It is unfortunate that the absence of humanity, along with the distorted egos of these disguised persons, aka THUGS identified as Police Officers, have now quickly eroded their lives, their families, their community, and this nation. Once again, at the hands of the Police, we will heretofore, witness them and others as being living examples of **From COPS to CONS** and in this case, **From MEMPHIS to MISERY!**

Humbly submitted,
Marjorie Holt, Ph. D.
Bishop at Bethesda Christian Center
5967 Telegraph Rd.
Toledo, Oh. 43612
drmholt@att.net



Tyre Nichols

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Erin Baker: A “Woman on the Rise” 2023 YWCA Milestones Honoree

By Asia Nail

The Truth Reporter

The YWCA of Northwest Ohio has announced the 2023 Honorees for the YWCA Milestones: A Tribute to Women annual award.

Women on the Rise is the new category added this year by the YWCA recognizing three outstanding young women who are making an impact early in their careers, while developing their potential to become transformative leaders in our community.

If you've been to Toledo's Main Library downtown, chances are you've taken part in some dynamic public programming developed by this year's Women on the Rise honoree, Erin Baker.

Currently serving on the Leadership Team as the Director of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion for the Toledo Lucas County Public Library (TL-CPL), Baker has brought a surge of local awareness that our public libraries have a lot to offer.

At the library you can curl up with your favorite Toni Morrison book one day, bring the kids for story time, or attend a workshop on entrepreneurship the next day, and wrap up the week with an art gallery opening infused with jazz music and spoken word poetry.

"I'm so grateful our management here at the library felt it was a necessity to have a new and separate Diversity, Equity and Inclusion role as a part of the Executive Leadership Team," shares Baker.

The Library's mission is to engage **all** of our communities, inspire lifelong learning and provide universal access to a broad range of information, ideas, and entertainment.

"We started with three committees that planned Black History Month, Women's History Month and Hispanic Heritage Month," explains Baker.

"I'm super excited that within the first year of my role as director, those work groups have expanded from three to seven groups with people that all strongly align themselves with their specific identities, cultures, genders, experiences or affinities. We now have strong allies that celebrate diversity not only during holidays, but all year round."

The Toledo Public Library has been the central hub of activity in each neighborhood for 184 years. With free books, movies, music, and programs for all, it supports children's literacy, student success, adult learning and business growth, too.

Previously serving as TLCPL's Coordinator for Organizational Learning, Baker led a system-wide model of servant leadership producing real impact for everyday people in the community. In this role, she created "The BIG IDEA," a program for library staff to build, improve, and grow in areas of inclusion, diversity, equity, and access.

"Think: raising awareness through courageous conversations," explains Baker. "Together we are creating a more inclusive culture for both the library and the community."

A crucial aspect of The BIG IDEA is furnishing the community with resources that educate, challenge and motivate individuals to expand their understanding of our common human experience.

In 2020, Baker received a **20 Under 40** Leadership Recognition Award for her impactful work in this role.

Before her director and coordinator roles at TLCPL, Baker served as the manager of Kent Branch Library, where she led a cultural shift reflected in Kent C.A.R.E.S. – offering community access, resources, and enrichment in a safe space.

As a result, there was greater library engagement overall with over 20 newly developed community partnerships along with an average 30% increase in program attendance, meeting room usage, door counts, and collection check outs.

"It's our top priority to enhance kids quality of life by focusing on early childhood literacy from birth to third grade," shares Baker.

Numerous studies confirm that strong early reading skills are crucial for a fulfilling life, rich with promise and choices. So it's nice to know you always have a safe space at local libraries.

Every person deserves a chance to nurture their dreams and possibilities, but lack of early reading support can limit one's options, explains Baker.

"We measure our impact on children from birth to third grade through TLCPL's tutoring, reading programs, and teacher outreach initiatives."

This work increases the kindergarten readiness assessment rate and the passing rate of the third-grade reading guarantee, building on the library's commitment to early reading.

Baker also implements diversity and inclusion training programs for staff and the public to raise awareness and drive change. This can be in the form of workshops, webinars, or e-learning modules that cover topics such as unconscious bias, microaggressions and allyship.

"We have hundreds of years of Toledo's black history housed right here in our public libraries," suggests Baker. "In a time where many are confused about what history is real, we have a proud heritage archived here in Toledo celebrating all cultures and walks of life."

As many communities continue struggling in a post-industrial economy, the public library plays a crucial role in connecting people to the organizations and resources they need most.

The library vows to aid adults in broadening their perspectives within their personal areas of expertise. This is particularly refreshing in a time over saturated in youth culture, often leaving older people feeling left out

... continued on page 6



Erin Baker



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UTMC Completes Record 200 Kidney Transplants in 2022

Special to The Truth

The University of Toledo Medical Center completed a record 200 successful kidney transplants in 2022 while maintaining its status as one of the fastest kidney transplant programs in the country.

"These are life-changing procedures," said Dr. Obi Ekwenna, transplant surgeon at UTMC and associate professor. "We're proud of these milestones, but what this is really about is getting more people off dialysis and significantly improving their quality of life."

The 200 transplants completed in 2022 represent a 15% increase from the 174 done in 2021 and are more than double the number of procedures the hospital performed in 2019.

UTMC, which completed its first kidney transplant in 1972, has grown its transplant program in each of the last five years.

The hospital also completed the region's first robotic-assisted kidney transplant surgery in April of last year, putting UTMC among a select group of hospitals nationwide offering the innovative, less invasive surgery.

The number of kidney transplants nationally has been trending upward for several years, with 2022 marking the first time the total has exceeded 25,000, according to the United Network for Organ Sharing. However, many patients still spend years waiting on a suitable kidney.

Nationally, the median time patients spend between getting on a waitlist and receiving a transplant is nearly three years.

At UTMC, the average time is a little more than four months.

UTMC also received improved marks for patient outcomes in 2022. In July, the Scientific Registry of Transplant Recipients awarded the hospital a four out of five rating for one-year kidney survival following a transplant.

One-year kidney survival is an important metric that speaks to the long-term success of the transplant.

The hospital maintained that four out of five rating in the most recent SRTR report, which was released earlier this month and covers a period from July 1, 2019, to Dec. 31, 2021.



Dr. Obi Ekwenna

UTMC is currently the only transplant center in Ohio rated a four and none in the state received a five rating.

"We have built a really solid, world-class program here with an amazing team," Ekwenna said. "Patient safety remains at the forefront of everything that we're doing as we continue to grow and innovate."

Erin Baker... continued from page 5

of the mix.

"My work emphasizes diverse pathways to success for everyone. We have after-school programs, strategic partnerships, and even mentorship opportunities for students and adults," explains Baker.

"Our hard work feels so rewarding when people uncover more opportunities and potential in their lives as a result of the work we do here at the library."

Serving as chair of the City of Toledo Human Relations Commission and as Co-Director of Northwestern University's Alumni Admission Council for Northwest Ohio, Baker has a passion for empowering the community at large.

She has more than a decade of experience in curriculum development and facilitation, program design, leadership, public speaking, and community building. A graduate of Northwestern University, Baker earned her graduate degree at the University of Notre Dame.

Baker is also a recipient of the University of Toledo's Dr. Robert J. Schlemback Award for Loyalty, Dedication, and Outstanding Service when she served as an assistant director for Residential Marketing, associate director for Upward Bound, and assistant director of Sales and Marketing.

Erin Baker is the president of the Toledo Ohio Chapter of The Links, Incorporated and co-chair for the Northwest Ohio Northwestern University Alumni Admission Council. She also serves on the Habitat for Humanity Women Build Committee and is a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated.

—"Skee Wee!"

Ms. Baker brings fresh perspectives and ideas to the table, leading to new solutions to old problems. She challenges the status quo and drives change, creating a culture of continuous improvement within her many leadership roles.

Her other current and past community board involvement includes the Arts Commission Public Arts Review Board, Boys & Girls Club Board, Girl Scouts of Western Ohio Women of Distinction Committee, Penta Career Center Advisory Board and Scott High School & Pickett Elementary School Community Hub Boards.

"I've been keeping busy," she says light-heartedly.

"Working with innovative people inspires me to think beyond the limits, I think. Combining our collective strengths is always the best way to create game-changing solutions."

Baker is ahead of the curve when it comes to her library programming, events and inclusive advancements. With a personal emphasis on diversity and giving, she leverages her skills, resources, and platforms to effect measurable change people want to be a part of.

Congratulations on being honored with the YWCA Milestones award for Women on the Rise in our community.


Your consistent service to others is remarkable and the progress you've brought to our city is invaluable. Thank you for your unwavering commitment to education and equality —you're a source of inspiration for us all.

When asked what being honored by the YWCA means to her Erin says, "I'm so honored to be a part of this multi-generational group of talented women in our community. Representation means everything. Having an award like this that champions and uplifts both established and emerging talent, is showing the next generation they can lead too, and at any stage of their journey."

The YWCA Milestones: A Tribute to Women Awards Luncheon will be held on March 30 at 11:30 a.m. at the Glass City Center.



Erin Baker







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University of Toledo Excel's Annual Youth Conference

By Tricia Hall

The Truth Reporter

The 2023 Conference for Aspiring Minority Youth was held on Saturday, January 28, in the Student Auditorium on the campus of the University of Toledo. The conference featured two keynote speakers, various presentations and youth participation.

Alexis Means, Toledo 13abc anchor, opened the conference. Youth participants Anna Ohashi, Justis Heil and Langston Baker delivered introductions throughout the conference of every speaker and presenter. Sammy Spann, the University of Toledo vice president for Student Affairs and dean of students, Toledo Mayor Wade Kapszukiewicz and Jose Luis Mendez-Andino of Owens Corning all delivered greetings to the audience.

"Wonderful to be with you this morning," shared Mayor Kapszukiewicz

The conference announced a renewed partnership with between UT Excel, Owens Corning and Toledo Public School Foundation.

"Owens Corning has been a blessing to our program and this conference. Now we can accept more students into the Excel program because of the partnership between Owens Corning and Toledo Public School Foundation. These students up here will have no bills when they attend college and we will be supporting them through their high school to college journey," shared David Young, director of Toledo EXCEL & Special Projects.

The conference welcomed renown speaker and advocate Diana Patton, founder of the Rise Advocates Academy, who encouraged the youth during a 20-minute discussion.

Immediately following the first plenary presented by Patton, and musical performance by Thaddeus Washington, the audience heard from the acclaimed costume designer of *Coming 2 America*, *Amistad*, the Black Panther films, Spike Lee *Joints* and other films, Ruth Carter. This second plenary session was



Diana Patton and Toledo Excel youth



Write the Future recipients and Ashley Yoakam, TPS Foundation Executive Director



Calvin Burney and Alpha Phi Alpha Esquires (youth program)



Ruth Carter and Rhonda Sewell



Ruth Carter and David Young

moderated by Rhonda Sewell, the inaugural Toledo Museum of Art director of Belonging & Community Engagement.

...continued on page 12

THE MERRY WIDOW

BY FRANZ LEHÁR · FEBRUARY 10 & 12, 2023

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Top Ladies of Distinction Hold Annual Prayer Breakfast

The Truth Staff

The Top Ladies of Distinction had cancelled their annual prayer breakfast during the past several years in an abundance of caution during the height of the COVID pandemic but, finally, the TLOD Toledo Chapter held its yearly event on Saturday, January 28, at the Brandywine Country Club with the theme of "Inspiring Others Through Praise."

The banquet room at the Brandywine was awash in pink – pink attire for the Top Ladies, pink décor, pink ornaments and the program was reflective of and emphasized the mission and programs of the club: ExCEL Program – Excellence through Culture, Education and Leadership; transforming lives to assist senior citizens; transforming lives to strengthen families and promote women; community beautification and community partnerships.

Saturday's program began with a welcome by Lady Mary McKinley-Reed, chapter president, and by Teen Latrice Parmer, the local Top Teens of America president.

The Ladies brought together a number of individuals who are part of the chapter's Programs, Projects and Partnerships.

LaShardae Scott, CEO/president of the Scott Center for Observation, Treatment and Transition and the Sickle Cell Director for the Neighborhood Health Sickle Cell Project of Northwest Ohio spoke of her program.

Scott is a supporter of those with sickle cell disease because she is, in fact, the mother of two children with the disease. Her goal is to ease the transition from pediatric to adult treatment though educating individuals and families.

Janice Taylor, president National Council Negro Women, Ohio State Coalition, serves as a leader of an organization that advocates for others to lead safe lives and urges trustworthiness while demonstrating loyalty and respect for others.

Sasha Clayborne, an entrepreneur, artist and community activist, has successfully operated a child care and preschool center, is a traveling

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Seated (l. to r.): Teen Latrice Parmer; Lady Denise Black-Poon; Lady Mary McKinley-Reed; Felicia Pettaway; Lady Wanda Terrell Galloway
Standing (l. to r.): Teen Amaya Martin; Teen Mikayla Evans; La'Shardae Scott; Lord Darryl Reed; Lady Clara Petty; Lady Pamela Effinger; Teen Tenaisha Parmer



Rev. Willie Perryman with TLOD Chapter President Mary McKinley-Reed

Alyson Cambridge Returns to Toledo Opera – This Time as The Merry Widow

By Fletcher Word

Sojourner's Truth Editor

Alyson Cambridge, an operatic soprano, who appeared in the 2018 Toledo Opera's production of *Carmen*, will be returning to the Valentine Theatre next week in the starring role of Franz Lehar's *The Merry Widow*.

Cambridge, who has won numerous voice competitions over the years and has appeared on many of the world's elite opera stages, seems to be particularly pleased to be reprising a role of Hanna Glawari, a wealthy widow, that she has sung twice before.

"She's an interesting character," says Cambridge of the Widow, "parts of which I can relate to. She's savvy, she knows about the world, she knows about the ways of men and she has fun with that."

Cambridge arrives at the Valentine during a period in which her career is in full bloom on so many fronts. The accolades she receives reflect the admiration audiences have felt for her performances.

"Radiant, vocally assured, dramatically subtle and compelling, and artistically imaginative," wrote one columnist in the Washington Post after hearing her in *L'elisir d'amore*."

"Cambridge ... possesses a stunning, richly hued voice ..." wrote a New York Theatre Guide reviewer after a performance on Broadway.

The soprano had become, in fact, more than an operatic performer. She sings jazz standards, American songbook pieces, popular songs. She's a model and has become an actor in a few television shows.

Above all, however, she is an opera soprano, a path she set upon, or was set upon, at the age of 12 when she arrived for her first visit with a music coach and expressed her interest in the popular stylings of Madonna and Whitney Houston. When she sang during that first visit, the coach was astonished and advised her to set her sights on classical music. She compared her 12-year-old prodigy to 17 and 18-year-olds with years of such training behind them.

Cambridge took that advice and loved the undertaking, loved classical music, loved what she could do with her voice. While she spent the following years as a normal teenager at her Washington, D.C. school, playing soccer and participating in other extracurricular activities, she had an almost secret, "not cool," life with her vocal studies and winning vocal competitions against much older youngsters.

Cambridge attended Oberlin College pursuing a double major in voice performance and sociology, hedging her bets on whether she would continue to enjoy her musical endeavors and ultimately be successful with them.

She took the plunge after college, giving herself five years to make her mark in music. If that didn't work, it would be off to law school.

She didn't need the five years to make her mark. She barely needed a fraction of that time.

Shortly after graduating Cambridge won the Metropolitan Opera National Council Auditions, the youngest Grand Prize winner ever. A year later she made her debut at the Met in *Carmen*.

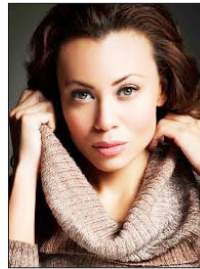
And law school? Who needs law school?

A major career change came about in 2012 when Cambridge, finally ignoring the advice so often proffered by those in the opera world know to "stay in your lane," ventured away from her opera roots and sang the role of Julie – the doomed, mixed-race songstress – in *Showboat* at the Lyric Opera in Chicago. That appearance not only opened up Cambridge's career and brought her opportunities in all kinds of musical genres, it also opened up opera houses across the United States.

Suddenly *Showboat* and musical theatre was acceptable in numerous opera houses and Cambridge was called upon to reprise the role of Julie a number of times on those stages.

The worlds of jazz, pop, and rock n roll opened up for her after the success of that first *Showboat* performance. In 2016 she released her second solo album of jazz standards and popular American songs – *Until Now*. In 2018 she was on Broadway in *Rocktopia*.

Opera is still Cambridge's number one job, one in which she now has two decades of success on the world's leading opera and concert stages and she expresses delight in being able to appear once more in a role which brings



Alyson Cambridge



Alyson Cambridge rehearsing with Keith Phares



her such enjoyment.

"She's sweet; she's funny," says Cambridge of the merry widow, Hanna Glawari. "It's a fun operetta. I love the costumes. It's just fun."

"*The Merry Widow* is a milestone for Toledo Opera because it is the first comedy to be produced by us since before the COVID-19 pandemic," said Toledo Opera's Executive Director Suzanne Rorick. "We can't wait to bring this effervescent and funny story to the Toledo community. In addition to this, *The Merry Widow* is an operetta, something so rarely performed at Toledo Opera. But this piece also brings with it a team of artists whose talent we've utilized time and time again."

Toledo Opera will perform *The Merry Widow* at the Valentine Theatre on Friday, February 10 at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, February 12 at 2 p.m. To learn more about *The Merry Widow* cast and production team and to buy tickets, visit toledoopera.org.

National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day

Join The University of Toledo Medical Center Ryan White Program, College of Medicine and Life Sciences Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, The University of Toledo Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and keynote speaker Dr. Stella Safo in observance of National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day.

Health Equity: Giving Everyone the Opportunity for Good Health

As a Black woman practicing medicine, Dr. Stella Safo knows firsthand that systemic inequities are baked into healthcare delivery. Safo is a Ghanaian-American board-certified HIV primary care physician and public health practitioner who has led teams dedicated to healthcare improvement in various settings.



Stella Safo, M.D., M.P.H.

February 9

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
BREAKFAST
8-9 A.M.**

Glass City Center
Jefferson Room 104
401 Jefferson Ave.
Toledo, OH 43604

The community engagement breakfast is free, but registration is required.



Scan the QR code
with your mobile
device to RSVP.

Sponsored by The Ann Wayson Locher Memorial Fund for HIV Care in partnership with The University of Toledo Medical Center Ryan White Program, College of Medicine and Life Sciences Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and The University of Toledo Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.



Top Ladies... continued from page 8

musician and is a DODD agency provider, helping individuals with developmental disabilities receive daily care and gain independence.

Clayborne sang the opening number.

Also part of the Programs, Projects and Partnerships presentation was Rev. Willie Perryman, pastor of Jerusalem Missionary Baptist Church and president of the Toledo Chapter NAACP. Perryman spoke of the history of the civil rights organization and the chapter's goals and objectives for the future.

After breakfast was served, Felicia Pettaway, the keynote speaker addressed the guests. Pettaway, a Toledo native and former law enforcement officer with the Lucas County Sheriff Office, is the First Lady at Walk The Word Church.

The First Lady's message was one of the need for faith in God and the importance of the influence that people have on one another.

Lady Mary McKinley-Reed serves as the chapter's president; Lady Clara Petty at First Vice President and Program Chair; Lady Denise Black-Poon as Second Vice President, Project Chair and Prayer Breakfast Co-Chair; Lady Wanda Terrell-Galloway as Director of Operations and Prayer Breakfast Co-Chair, Teen Latrice Parmer as TTA President.

Lady Ann C. Battles is the Organizer; Lady Barbara Tucker is Financial Secretary; Lady Elizabeth Flournoy is the Treasurer and the other members are Lady Denise Cardwell, Lady Pamela Effinger, Lady Rachel Ridley, Lady Clara Brank (Chaplain), Lady Delores Anderson (Sergeant at Arms), Lady Delores (Dee) Bates (Historian & Membership) and Lady Madelyn Standard.



Lady Denise Black-Poon, Lady Wanda Terrell Galloway, La'Shardae Scott, Felicia Pettaway, Lady Mary McKinley-Reed



Program Chair Clara Petty with students Latrice Parmer, Amaya Martin, Mikayla Evans, Tenaisha Parmer

The chapters Top Teens are Teen Latrice Parmer, Teen Tenaisha Parmer, Teen Amaya Martin and Teen Mikayla Evans.

Top Ladies of Distinction have five National Thrusts: Top Teens of America, status of Women, senior citizens, community beautification, and community partnerships. The five national projects: National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, National Council of Negro Women, United Negro College Fund, literacy, and sickle cell disease awareness.



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United Way of Greater Toledo's 211 Week Celebrates Connection to Help for All

Special to The Truth

United Way of Greater Toledo will celebrate 211 Week beginning February 6 with educational programming, public awareness campaigns, and fundraising events culminating in 211 Day, Saturday, February 11 (2/11).

This is the local and national day of recognition for 211, a free information and referral service available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Throughout 211 Week, United Way encourages area residents to learn more about the service and how it might help themselves, family and friends, neighbors, employees, and coworkers. Visit 211nwo.org to search the database, review 211 Counts data, download free guides, or connect with a Community Resource Advisor.

211 Week is made possible through the generous support of Presenting Sponsor, O-I, Venue Sponsor 5/3 Bank, and with support from Hollywood Casino, Block Communications, and Toledo-Detroit Outdoor.

211 is available nationwide and is funded and managed locally by United Way of Greater Toledo, covering Lucas, Ottawa, and Wood counties. 211 connects residents to vital health and human support services, including disaster relief, as well as eviction prevention, legal services, tax filing, employment opportunities, and access to food, clothing, shelter, and much more. The program's skilled staff, Community Resource Advisers (CRAs), are the key to the service, trained to "ask the second question" to identify root issues. The 211 database offers translation services and includes access to more than 800 organizations and 2,300 programs.

"211 is here and it's for everyone. It is an essential service in our community," said Jill Bunge, Vice President, Impact & Outreach. "No matter where we live or work, we all see neighbors, employees, and customers go through hard times. We can't plan for flooding or house fires, or an unexpected ambulance ride or car breakdown that takes from the grocery budget. No matter the issue, 211 is always there to connect to help and find creative solutions and resources."

211, said Bunge, is the one operating program that United Way manages itself. "Our crowning jewel," she said. "To connect people and resources in society is something we take a lot of pride in."

211 has become an essential piece of public infrastructure to Northwest Ohio residents and has seen a dramatic uptick in contacts since the pandemic. Prior to 2020, annual contacts ranged from 62,000 to 68,000 annually. In 2021, that number increased to more than 104,000 as residents sought access to COVID-19 vaccines and other pandemic relief. In 2022, the program fielded nearly 80,000 contacts; over half of that call volume were housing, food, and utility assistance contacts as housing costs and inflation soared.

United Way employs 17 community resource advisors to help those in the community navigate data bases such as health and human services and social services on a daily basis. The agency also "takes on special projects," noted Bunge, such as duties taken on during the height of the COVID pandemic to get callers with vaccine information.

"We take on new projects if other entities don't have the capacity for," she added.

"What makes United Way's management of 211 unique is the way we are able to put the data to work. We know the needs of the community in real

time and can make adjustments to funding and services to meet those needs," said Wendy Pestrue, CEO, "Just as we did during the pandemic, where we were able to assess the best locations to get residents access to meals and vaccines, we remain prepared to adapt and be responsive during disasters. With record inflation and housing costs this year, 211 was such an important resource for many people who haven't needed this kind of assistance before and were not sure where to go for help. 211 was there for them, to help keep groceries in the kitchen, find help with utility bills, and to keep them in their homes so their families were safe."

211 WEEK EVENTS AND MEDIA OPPORTUNITIES

Call for Facebook Fundraisers & 211 Virtual Scavenger Hunt

Monday, February 6, all day - Social Media/Website - Fundraisers: We're asking our supporters to help support your 211 network by hosting a personal fundraiser on your Facebook page. All proceeds directly support 211. Learn how to create a nonprofit fundraiser on Facebook.

Scavenger Hunt: Learn more about 211 and available resources, and how to use the database.

Virtual Year-end Recap

Wednesday, February 8, 12:00pm-1:00pm - Facebook - The 211 team will provide an overview of 211 service and function — how to search the 211 database and review data on the 211 Counts dashboard — in addition to a look back at 2022 stats and accomplishments.

Toledo City Council 211 Day Proclamation

Tuesday, February 7, 4:00 p.m., One Government Center, Council Chambers, Toledo, OH - Toledo City Council Members Cerssandra McPherson, Vanice Williams, and Nick Komives recognize 211 Day with a proclamation in the City of Toledo.

211 For All Philanthropic Summit and Reception

Thursday, February 9, 5:30-7:30 p.m., One Seagate, Fifth-Third Headquarters Gallery and Auditorium, Toledo, OH - This by-invitation event is designed for corporate donors and community leaders and features a robust presentation on current work and future aspirations of the program.

211 For All is made possible by Presenting Sponsor, O-I, and with generous support from Venue Sponsor, 5/3 Bank

Happy Hour Fundraisers

Saturday, February 11, Various Locations and Times (see below) - On 211 Day, United Way is coming to YOU! Join us for casual fundraising events to learn about 211 and network with donors and volunteers. These events are great opportunities for community advocates, volunteers, young professionals, and those who appreciate a good time and a great cause.

* Lucas County - 4:00 - 9:00 p.m.

The Attic on Adams, 1701 Adams St., Toledo

* Ottawa County - 4:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Twin Oast, 3630 NE Catawba Rd., Port Clinton

* Wood County - 4:00 - 9:00 p.m.

Arlyn's Good Beer, 520 Hankey Ave., Bowling Green

Elysian Avenue... continued from page 15

team is 10-4 so far this year in conference play and 16-6 overall.

"Of all the places Coach Hopson could have lived, he came back to Toledo," said Hobbs of the athletic hero whose playing days took him to New Jersey, Chicago, Sacramento and overseas to Spain, France, the Philippines, Turkey, Israel and Venezuela. Hopson's coaching years were spent in West Palm Beach, Florida, Bowling Green State University, Bedford High School in Temperance, Michigan before he returned home to Toledo.

Before uncovering the new street sign, Hopson thanked those in the audience profusely for helping him every step of the way.

"I thank each and every one of you," he said. "It's really not about me, it's about what we can do for each other ... if I was able to do it, it can be done because of the people I had around me."

"It can be done," Hopson continued. "It's all what you put into it. I think doing the right thing and putting the energy and the time and the dedication and commitment into your craft, then anything can happen."



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Tolliver... continued from page 3

When the news first broke, I was conditioned to expect to see five White police officers as the assailants and later killers of this Black man; and yet to see that it was five Black officers was a shame and a slap to Black people everywhere that Black cops could degenerate and de-evolve into a killing machine of Black people.

When you saw the pictures of the five Black killers, they were "youngish" and you would have thought that they were even remotely attuned to the history of White cops brutalizing Black people for no reasons at all.

Yet, these five depraved cops engaged in police brutality that gives you pause to think:

What happened in their life experiences that they could engage in a pack mentality and severely injure (who later died from the injuries) a fellow Black male?

Was it a case that they were exorcising their own personal demons against Black people?

Was it that they were trying to gain street cred and get a reputation that you did not mess with them?

Was it that they simply had no respect for human life and were willing to spit on their oath of office which is to protect and serve?

No matter their inner demons who provoked them to kill an innocent driver, these five killers will be sued (as will the city of Memphis) and hopefully prosecuted by the city for murder charges. This was not a crime

of passion but a crime that they could have held their murderous impulses in check, but collectively chose not to.

It is a sad admission to realize that some Black cops have no sense of history to understand that their conduct is akin to five White cops wearing white sheets and terrorizing Black people, just because they can.

I wonder if the driver was White and if he ran from the five Black cops, that the White driver would have eventually been in a morgue? I say no!

Those Black cops would have instinctively defaulted to the position that White is right and a White driver, even under the same circumstances as the Black driver, would have been ticketed for fleeing or resisting and given a court date.

For those five Black cops to "gang kill" Tyre Nichols was despicable to say the least and especially so when there was no reason for a killing. None.

To see five Black "youngish" looking cops engage in such thuggery shows that Memphis hired five Black men who were woefully deficient in human relation skills and were bitter and already broken men who wore a badge and a gun to ventilate their inner turmoil.

The City of Memphis needs to reevaluate its hiring processes with more thorough mental and psychological screenings to make sure that, under the guise of diversion and equality, they are not hiring monsters who are harboring hateful attitudes towards people of color.

If not, we may wind up with the situation that Massa' has Black men gladly using his police whip on other Black people.

Perryman... continued from page 3

Every group of people attended to by white missionaries had as their goal, it seems, to make us "white" in our thinking. We were never to expect that we would have the same privileges as white people in this country. Still, to even be a candidate for survival, we had to learn and internalize the lessons taught to us by whites who wanted and needed, above all else, to preserve and grow their power.

When I wrote about this for a newspaper, I was challenged by several white readers who said I was spreading hate. God gave me hush-mouth grace, so much so that I could calmly ask at least one of those who were miffed, "Surely, you know I am telling the truth, right, when I said I would not have been welcome or safe in Mayberry? Surely, you know that?" For some reason, that question quieted him, but he didn't leave me alone until he said, "well, it wasn't just in the South that that kind of thing happened."

Exactly.

I never thought, though, about the things we watched on television being "metaphors" for our oppression. I didn't know that there are three levels of oppression, according to those who study it – interpersonal, institutional, and internalized. So I didn't realize that what I was seeing – and in fact, what we all grew up with – was cementing ideas about who and what mattered. We were internalizing our treatment and being shown what to believe. And we were given the message that "being white" was the standard to which all in this country should aspire.

What we saw on television and in movies and what we were taught in school helped feed our experience of being oppressed – and it's not just Black people who

... continued on page 13

Excel Youth Conference... continued from page 7

"I'm going to give you some education this morning, it's confidence time," began Patton during the first plenary. "You need to watch the movie of your life, from the time you were born until the age of seven. The first seven years are important because it explains how you show up, and how habits are learned." Her 20-minute speech included deep breathing exercises and interaction with the audience. She closed by giving advice on how to get unstuck. "Your power is in you. Learn how to regulate yourself and see your power."

"I've interviewed the most influential fashion people in my career while working with The Blade. This moment is my highlight. I thank the vision of Dr. [Helen] Cooke, because her vision and blessing has multiplied. I thank David Young and his team because I've never seen such a team so dedicated to youth," Rhonda Sewell explained during the introduction of the conversation.

"I came from Southern roots. There were eight of us. I want to say hello and thank you Toledo. Let's start off with what advice I would give to my younger self. I would say to my younger self, I see you. Adults need to tell young people, I see you and you have what it takes. Tell them, you are your dream right now. You have purpose," shared Ruth Carter as she opened her session.

Toledo EXCEL was established in 1988 to help underrepresented students including African, Asian, Hispanic, and Native Americans, for success in college. Through summer institutes, academic retreat weekends, campus visits and guidance through the admission process, students increase their self-esteem, cultural awareness and civic involvement.

The 2023 Conference for Aspiring Minority Youth is the 39th annual conference, an estimated 1,000 youth were in attendance.

Thursday
7pm EST.



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Black History Month Books for Kids

By Terri Schlichenmeyer
The Truth Contributor

Your parents and your teachers try to tell you about the past.

You like the stories they share, the things your grandparents did and the important celebrities that lived long ago. It's history and it's fun to know, so why not reach for these Black History Month books for kids ages five to eight...?

Who doesn't love ice cream? If you do, then you'll love reading ***Ice Cream Man*** by Glenda Armand and Kim Freeman, illustrated by Keith Mallet (Random House Kids, \$18.99). It's the story of Augustus Jackson, who was born a slave in Philadelphia and worked for a time at the White House, but he never forgot his dreams. Jackson wanted to give everyone a chance to have ice cream, which was then only available to rich people. How could he make the treat and get it to new neighborhoods without it melting into a sticky puddle? Kids will find the answer here.

The child who wants to be like his favorite hero will enjoy ***Me and Muhammad Ali*** by Jabari Asim, illustrated by AG Ford (Nancy Paulsen Books, \$17.99). Here, young Langston is a big fan of boxer Muhammad Ali, in part

c.2022, 2023
various publishers
\$17.99-\$18.99
various page counts

because Ali's swagger gives Langston confidence. Like Ali, Langston wants to "float like a butterfly and sting like a bee" but a chance to see his idol might fly away like a bird. Then a hero steps in and saves the day. Be sure to read the author's note at the end, for the full effect of this charming tale.

For the kid who wants a wider story with thrilling patriotism, there are two books to look for: first, ***My Red, White, and Blue*** by Alana Tyson, illustrated by London Ladd (Philomel, \$18.99) is the story of our flag and the time when it didn't seem to represent everyone in America. Once, the flag had a history of scars with the stars and strife with the stripes but all that changed when people began to use their voices. Today, the flag means diversity for all, especially for a brown child who loves the red, white, and blue – and especially for your child, who will love the thoughtful rhyme that makes this book.

Then, ***An American Story*** by Kwame Alexander, art by Dare Coulter (Little, Brown, \$18.99) is a tale of freedom, equality, "yesterday's nightmare" and the courage to make today better. It's a story about a story, and how there are times when things aren't fair but people can work to make it better. This is a beautiful book but beware of one important thing: some of the words might be scary for very young children and the artwork, though gorgeous, can be harsh. Read it through once before reading it aloud.

And if these books aren't enough for your story time, be sure to check with your librarian or bookseller. There are lots more Black History books to bring home and to enjoy with your five-to-eight-year old or for kids of any age, because Black History is American history, too.



Jabari Asim



Alana Tyson

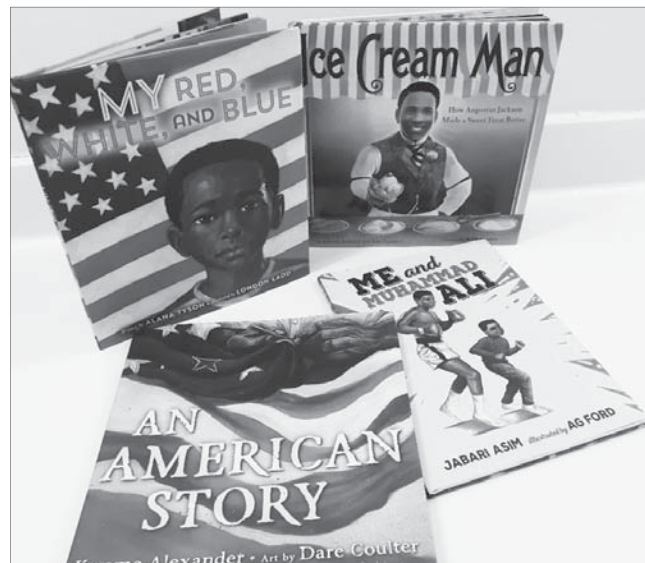
Perryman... continued from page 12

were so affected, but others as well. The standard of what women were supposed to do was set. (Being the dutiful wife who stayed home and did housework while wearing an apron over a dress, the outfit completed by a string of pearls) The image and reminder of who white society believed Black people to be were set. The image of "the strong man," i.e., white men who tackled and destroyed the bad guys, was set. So much of what we believe was set by these metaphors that we were fed daily.

Only by God's grace and power has the internalized oppression we experienced not wiped us out. We have been damaged, but we have not been destroyed. On the contrary, I suspect that as we increasingly recognize the metaphors that still exist, alongside the new metaphors that are constantly created, we will grow more sure-footed and convicted of the truth that we are all "fearfully and wonderfully made." We don't have to feed the metaphors; recognizing them gives us the freedom and authority to reject them. It is the most powerful moment of awakening that any of us can have and, therefore, worth pursuing. Perhaps we have some reconciling to do – about who we are, whose we are, and what our place is in this world, not according to the oppressors, but according to the God who created us all.

Rev. Dr. Susan K Smith is an ordained minister who is also an author, writer, and speaker, who concentrates on the intersectionality of race, politics, and religion. Currently working on a biography of Rev. C.T. Vivian, she is the author of several books including "Rest for the Justice-Seeking Soul." She is the Director of the Office for Clergy Leadership and Development for the Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference, Inc., serves as a consultant for the African American Leadership Council of People for the American Way, and is a co-chair of the Minority Outreach subcommittee for the Nonpartisan Ohio Voter Outreach Committee (NOVOC). Smith is available for speaking, and can be reached at susan@sdconference.info.

Contact Rev. Donald Perryman, PhD, at drdperryman@centerofhopebaptist.org



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February 1, 2023

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Metroparks Toledo is hiring for seasonal maintenance staff. Must be 18 or older with high school diploma or equivalent and valid driver's license. \$12.00/hr. Up to 40 hours a week. Duties include cleaning and facility and grounds maintenance. Employment varies through December based on need. Go to www.MetroparksToledo.com/careers to view the job description and apply online. EOE

FACILITY OPERATOR

Metroparks Toledo is looking for a Facility Operator for Glass City Metropark. The person in this position will perform a variety of house-keeping, janitorial and basic maintenance. HS diploma or equivalent required as well as a valid driver's license. Some experience in janitorial and minor building maintenance is preferred. Full time position with benefits. Go to www.MetroparkToledo.com to view the entire job description and to apply. EOE

CAMP/PROGRAMMING STAFF

Metroparks is hiring for the following programming seasonal positions: Cultural Programmer (Canal Boat, Providence), Environmental Education (Camp, Wildwood), Camp Inclusion (Camp, Pearson), Outdoor Skills (Activities, Oak Openings). Some college coursework in education, biology, recreational therapy, outdoor recreation, or related program and valid driver's license required. \$12.00/hr. Up to 40 hours a week. Go to www.MetroparksToledo.com/careers to view the job description and apply online. EOE

CUSTODIANS WANTED

We want YOU to join our team! Toledo Lucas County Public Library (TLCPL), a public library that inspires lifelong learning and provides universal access to a broad range of information, ideas, and entertainment, is seeking candidates to fill Custodian positions. Please visit Employment Opportunities I Toledo Lucas County Public Library (toledolibrary.org) to review the full details and to apply.

NATURAL RESOURCES STAFF

Metroparks is hiring for Natural Resources Conservation Assistants. HS diploma. Some training or coursework in environmental sciences or NR management preferred. \$13.00/hr. Lead NR Conservation Assistant \$14.25/hr. Up to 40 hours a week. Go to www.MetroparksToledo.com/careers to view the job description and apply online. EOE

CUSTOMER SERVICE SUPPORT SPECIALIST

Metroparks Toledo is looking for a customer service support specialist at Wildwood Preserve. The person in this position will serve customers by providing administrative support and information on facilities, services, and programs. HS diploma or equivalent. Some experience in customer service and administrative support preferred. Wages for this position is \$18.64 per hour. Full time position with benefits. Go to www.MetroparkToledo.com to view the entire job description and to apply. EOE

GLASS CITY FEDERAL CREDIT UNION OFFERS SCHOLARSHIPS

Glass City Federal Credit Union is pleased to offer five scholarship awards, one in the amount of \$2,500 and four in the amount of \$1,000 to area students who meet the following criteria:

- The student will be attending a 2- or 4-year accredited post-secondary institution during the 2022-23 school year.
- The student is a member of Glass City Federal; or a parent, stepparent, or legal guardian is a member of Glass City.
- The student completes and submits the required application and essay by the deadline of March 31, 2023.

Interested scholarship applicants are encouraged to obtain a scholarship application at any Glass City Federal branch or online at glass-cityfcu.com.

NOTICE TO BIDDERS TARTA CENTRAL CAMPUS BUS WASHING SYSTEM PROJECT

The Toledo Area Regional Transit Authority (TARTA) seeks bids from qualified contractors to provide 2-bay bus washing system for its Central Avenue campus, 1127 W. Central Avenue, in Toledo, Ohio. The scope of work for this project includes but is not limited to demolition and removal of old systems and installation of two (2) brush type bus washing systems. For a complete scope of work, visit tarta.com/news-alerts/tarta-business/open-procurements.

TARTA has established a Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) goal for this project of 11.65%. Sealed bids must be received by TARTA on or before February 15, 2023 at 2 p.m., via sealed envelope or email. Mailed bid packages should be clearly marked with the bidder's full name, address and telephone number and "TARTA BUS WASH PROJECT," and sent to:

Sophie Giviyan-Kermani, Chief Financial Officer
Toledo Area Regional Transit Authority
1127 W. Central Avenue
PO Box 792
Toledo, OH 43697-0792

Email submissions should be marked with the same information and sent to sgiviyan@tarta.com.

TARTA officially distributes bidding documents from the Purchasing Department. Copies from any other source are not considered official copies. Only those vendors who obtain bidding documents from the Purchasing Department are guaranteed to receive addendum information if such information is issued.

Questions about this project should be directed to John E. Jones, Director of Maintenance, jojones@tarta.com or phone 419-245-5234.

Call to place your ad:

419-243-0007

www.TheTruthToledo.com

Elysian Avenue Becomes Dennis Hopson Way in Honor the Basketball Star

The Truth Staff

On a very cold Saturday afternoon, a large crowd of Dennis Hopson supporters gathered at the corner of Elysian Avenue and Dorr Street to witness the unveiling of a new street sign – a street sign designating Elysian as Dennis Hopson Way.

Such honors happen frequently in Toledo but the size of the crowd that gathered on Saturday to honor Hopson was truly unprecedented.

"We've been working on this a long time," said Toledo Councilman John Hobbs, III, a childhood friend of Hopson and the driving force behind the honor for the Lourdes University Men's Basketball Coach of naming the street where Hopson's childhood home was located.

"Today is an example to young men ... and women ... that there is another way," Hobbs continued while addressing the large crowd containing Hopson's family and friends, various teammates from past years, his Lourdes basketball team, Lourdes colleagues and staff and elected officials.

Hopson, a 1982 Bowsher graduate, the all-time leading scorer in Ohio State University history and an NBA champion with the Chicago Bulls, became coach of Lourdes Gray Wolves men's basketball team in 2019 and led the team to a conference tournament championship in the 2021-22 season. The

...continued on page 15



Dennis Hopson addresses his audience



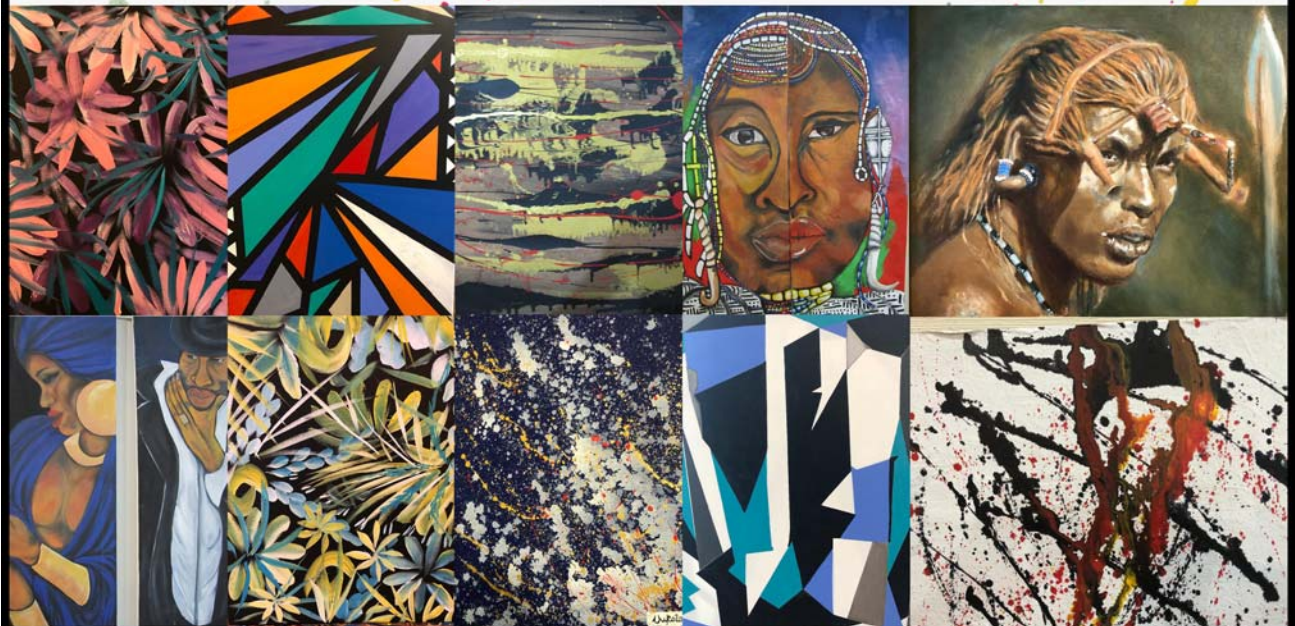
Hopson with Councilmembers John Hobbs, Tiffany Preston Whitman, Cersandra McPherson and Katie Moline



Hopson, left, and family

The Truth Colours Art Gallery

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Ruth Cowell Celebrates Her 100th

The Truth Staff

Surrounded by dozens of family members and friends, Ruth Cowell celebrated her 100th birthday last weekend at the Policemen's Hall on Franklin Street.

Born in Hattiesburg, Mississippi on January 24, 1923, Ruth Cowell is the mother of four: George Cowell, Reginald Cowell, Otis Walton (who is ill and could not attend the celebration) and Mildred Cowell (deceased).

The hall was filled with grandchildren and great grandchildren to honor a woman who has spent so much time with her family, even when she ran her own business – Georgia Grill at 444 Indiana Avenue which closed in 1978.

Gifts abounded, Karen “Lady K” Harris opened the afternoon’s festivities by serenading the birthday girl and her guests, and all enjoyed a buffet dinner to cap off the activities.

Ruth Cowell was also attended by her pastor, Rev. Curley Johnson of St. Mark’s Missionary Baptist Church.



Ruth Cowell



Reginald Cowell, Ruth Cowell, George Cowell

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Rev. Curley Johnson and Grandson Andre Cowell escort Ruth Cowell to her place of honor

