

The *Sojourner's* Truth

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“And Ye Shall Know The Truth...”

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Making Black History Month Truly Meaningful

By: John E. Warren, Publisher

San Diego Voice & Viewpoint Newspaper

It's not enough that Black History Month is the shortest month in the year; or that many capitalize on it with lip service and faint recognition. By this we mean the commercialization of "Black History Month" by some while others are attempting to erase us by banning books that speak to our history and struggle.

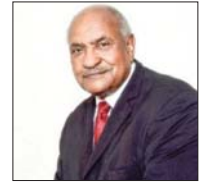
When we personally stop and reflect or read the accounts of what people like James Weldon Johnson and his brother did in writing the "Negro National Anthem" over 123 years ago; when we consider that this was done in the midst of a segregated society with much open race hatred, it's a testimony to the personal and family commitment to a people that you not only identify with, but are proud of.

To make Black History meaningful to us individually and to our people, we must first get reacquainted with our history. For example, it is embarrassing to be in a Black History program calling for the singing of "Lift Every Voice & Sing" (the Negro National Anthem) and watch people struggle to sing one verse or fumble while looking for the words in a

program. The act of meaningful engagement with our history must be year round and based on a commitment to who we are collectively and how much we care for our own heritage.

Let's start by learning the words to the song and studying the meaning for what it tells us about those who came before us. Let's be able to sing the song from our hearts just as the people of South Africa do with their national anthem. Because the South African people care and identify with their song, we can feel the depth of their emotions.

When we re-enter that space for ourselves, we will no longer have to be concerned about what others do or say about us. The words to the song will rekindle our desire to revisit what our ancestors have done both for us and this nation. Let's make Black History every day, as some of us, like this paper, already work at.



John Warren

PASTORAL INSTALLATION

We are looking forward to your presence at the Installation Service for Rev. Odell Brown Jr. as Pastor of Third Baptist Church, Toledo, Ohio on Sunday February 26, 2023 at 3 pm. Dinner will be immediately served following the service in the lower level for those who have RSVP'd.

A Black History Moment

"Bars Fight," written by poet and activist Lucy Terry in 1746, was the first known poem written by a Black American. Terry was enslaved in Rhode Island as a toddler but became free at age 26 after marrying a free Black man.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH FEBRUARY 1 - MARCH 1



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Dual, and Separate, Efforts to Curb Gun Violence in Toledo

By Fletcher Word

Sojourner's Truth Editor

Everyone seems to agree that all must pull together in order to end the current wave of gun violence in Toledo. But can everyone pull together?

Emphasizing the need for the community, the citizens and leaders of Toledo to coordinate activities to solve the issue of gun violence, Toledo Wade Kapszukiewicz said at a meeting this past Saturday in addressing the issue:

"We have to do everything we can to make things better here in Toledo ... [this] is an attempt to link together all the good people in this town who are trying to make things better."

Similarly emphasizing the need to work together on Saturday, former Mayor Mike Bell said: "This is a team thing, politics is not an issue."

The issue facing Toledo, however, is that all those good people, the team, were not at the same meeting and haven't been at the same meetings over the past few weeks trying to address the issue of gun violence that claimed 64 lives in Toledo in 2022, 71 in 2021, 61 in 2020, after years of totals less than 40 and as low as 15 back in the 2000s.



Anthony Smith, Executive Director, Cities United



Safety Director Brian Byrd and Tony Totty, president UAW Local 14



Mayor Wade Kapszukiewicz and Interim Chief of Police Mike Troendle

The current Kapszukiewicz administration has brought in a consulting group, Cities United, and has held a number of meetings with business leaders, social services groups, judges and prosecutors, pastors and school children and parents in order to explain a data-driven approach to pinpoint the problems of violence and to form a "collective vision" to connect all the resources in the city that can contribute to the solution.

Saturday's group in the Cities United meeting included elected officials, members of the safety forces, union representatives, the NAACP leaders and agency leaders, among others.

Meanwhile the four former mayors – Donna Owens, Carty Finkbeiner, Mike Bell, Paula Hicks-Hudson – have held a series of community meetings to collect the concerns and the input of citizens and have crafted an ordinance that they will submit to Toledo City Council that will address a dozen of the root causes of that violence.

The Cities United Meeting

The first meeting on Saturday was held at Mott Branch Library and was conducted primarily by Kapszukiewicz, Councilwoman Tiffany Preston Whitman and Cities United Executive Director Anthony Smith.

Smith presented Cities United's "Our Collective Vision," a data-driven examination that breaks down where such violence happens within the city and who the victims and suspects are; what is currently working to curb the violence and where the agency sees opportunities for improvement. Additionally the report maps out what the solution is to decrease violence and how to "leverage ... the milestones to guide, facilitate and track progress towards the development and enhancement of a comprehensive public safety plan."

"Our collective vision is where we should have started some years ago," said Whitman about the plan.

"It's really important to start with the data," said Smith as he began

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Sunday, March 12

Indiana Avenue Missionary Baptist Church

The Pastoral Installation of Rev. Williams Foster, Sr.

10:30 AM Morning Service Guest Speaker: Rev. James Morgan, Jr., New Zion MBC, West Memphis, AR

3:00 PM Afternoon Service Guest Speaker: Rev. Lonnie Anderson, Jr., Mt. Pisgah MBC, Kokomo, IN

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Suzette Cowell Named to Federal Reserve Board Advisory Council

The Truth Staff

Suzette Cowell, CEO and treasurer of the Toledo Urban Federal Credit Union, has been named to a business advisory council of the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland. The announcement, made earlier this month, came as a complete surprise to Cowell who had not actively sought such an appointment.

Given the prestige of the Federal Reserve, however, it also came as quite an honor for Cowell and a rare one for anyone from the northwest Ohio area. Cowell is one of three bankers in the Cleveland Fed, the Fourth District, named to the Community Depository Institutions Advisory Council.

That council, says Cowell, will advise the Fed "on the communities we serve." Council member she added, will be providing feedback "about the communities on loans, credit situations so that the Fed can put the information together and see how they can better serve the communities."

The Cleveland Fed, which is one of 12 districts in the Federal Reserve system, engages with a diverse range of business, civic, and community leaders to collect information on current regional economic and business conditions. Advisory councils' near-real time observations complement Bank research, enabling the Cleveland Fed to get a better picture of economic conditions in the Fourth District.

The following councils are welcoming new appointees:

Business Advisory Council

Business Advisory Council members are leaders from a cross-section of industries and community development, consumer, and labor organizations within eight of the Fourth District's metro areas, including Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton, Pittsburgh, Erie, Pennsylvania; Lex-

ington, Kentucky, and Wheeling, West Virginia. New members include:

- Cincinnati:
 - Brendon Cull, President, Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber, Cincinnati, OH
 - Dil Gruffydd, Chief Financial Officer, CVG Airport, Erlanger, KY
 - Lisa Sampson, Senior Vice President, The PNC Financial Services Group, Inc., Cincinnati, OH
 - Barb Smith, President, Journey Steel, Inc., Cincinnati, OH
- Dayton:
 - Daniel Kelly, President, Benjamin Steel Co., Springfield, OH
- Lexington:
 - Robert Edwards, Chief Strategy & Business Development Officer, UK HealthCare, Lexington, KY



Suzette Cowell

Community Advisory Council

The Community Advisory Council consists of experts and leaders who focus on economic development work and help to inform the Cleveland Fed about current and emerging social and economic trends impacting underserved and lower-income individuals and communities. New members include:

- Robert Cherry, Chief Executive Officer, Partner4Work, Pittsburgh, PA
 - Chris Groner, Vice President of Capital Finance and Lending, Erie County Redevelopment Authority, Erie, PA
 - Natoya Walker Minor, Deputy and External Affairs General Manager, Greater Cleveland Transit Authority, Cleveland, OH
 - Ken Oehlert, Executive Director, Habitat for Humanity of Southeast, Athens, OH
 - Amy Riegel, Executive Director, Coalition on Homelessness and Housing, Columbus, OH
 - Lisa Kay Schweyer, Mobility 21 Program Manager, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA
- Community Depository Institutions Advisory Council
- Members of the Community Depository Institutions Advisory Council are leaders from commercial banks, thrifts and savings banks, and credit unions with assets of less than \$10 billion.
- The following individuals have been appointed to a first term on the council:
- Tammy Bobo, President and Chief Executive Officer, Hocking Valley Bank, Athens, OH
 - Suzette Cowell, Chief Executive Officer and Treasurer, Toledo Urban Federal Credit Union, Toledo, OH

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Kendra Smith: 2023 YWCA Milestones Honoree for Women on the Rise

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 a transformative leader in our community. One of this year's honorees in the Women on the Rise category is Kendra N. Smith.

Women are rising to the challenge of creating innovative healthcare programming addressing the unique needs of their communities. They are leading the way in developing new and effective approaches to healthcare that are more responsive to the needs of diverse people. With expertise, vision, and commitment, female administrators are improving access to care and creating more equitable and just care systems.

As we witness the emergence of new healthcare programs and policies, this year's YWCA Women on the Rise honoree, Kendra N. Smith, is playing a central role in shaping the future health and well-being of our Midwestern communities.

Currently serving as Bon Secours Mercy Healthcare's Vice President of Community Health for both Ohio and Kentucky, Smith heads various aspects of the hospital's community health programs and initiatives.

When Smith canvases neighborhoods and talks to people, she smiles and introduces herself. "There's something special about the energy you get when you take the time to speak to people in person," shares Smith. "People can see and feel for themselves when you have a genuine concern for their well-being. There's no better way to know what people need than to go to where they are and simply ask them."

As community members explain their health concerns and financial struggles, Smith listens with empathy and understanding. She explains that her role at the hospital includes collecting health-related data that assists people in identifying not only their specific health concerns, but also the issues that may have contributed to them.

"Talking to people face-to-face allows me to spread awareness of the different social services available in the community while making sure our healthcare programs are actually helping people get the access and help they need," she says.

Walking through the sterile halls of the hospital as the smell of disinfectant fills your nose, causes many to race with anxiety. Many can't help but feel surrounded by medical staff and even other patients, seemingly more important than themselves.

There is a sense of relief that washes over you when you know there are professionals willing to help you navigate the often complicated healthcare system. "Our hospital's innovative programming ensures health educators provide patients with invaluable information about their health conditions and how best to manage them," explains Smith.

"We help people understand the importance of proper nutrition, exercise and medication management. We also make sure our resources help people make positive changes that are lasting and impactful."

With the help of their community partners Smith and her team are tackling new approaches to address contributing health factors such as financial stability in our neighborhoods. For instance, the Bon Secours Mercy Health – Franklin Avenue Medical Center – has an on-site Financial Opportunity Center (FOC), which is a joint venture between LISC and NeighborWorks Toledo. Through one-on-one coaching, the FOC helps clients build credit scores, set up budgets, and seek career opportunities.



Kendra Smith

In addition, the hospital's innovation team is partnering with PNC Bank as they launch their Getting Your Business Started! Program. This free eight-week training course is for entrepreneurs living in historically disadvantaged areas of the city and expresses both PNC's and Bon Secours Mercy Health's dedication to revitalizing low- to moderate-income communities.

As a Catholic organization, Bon Secours Mercy Health's mission is to extend the compassionate ministry of Jesus by providing good help to those in need, especially the poor and dying.

Throughout her career, Smith has been an advocate for affordable health care and housing. Her extensive experience in community development and urban planning addresses economic infrastructure and equity issues in metropolitan communities.

"Prior to my role with Bon Secours Mercy Health, I worked at ProMedica as the Director of Social Determinants of Health, helping to revitalize Toledo's core neighborhoods," explains Smith. Her work took a deep dive into areas such as housing, financial stability, safety, workforce development, education and transportation – in addition to health and wellness.

Smith's career background also includes work in the nonprofit sector. "I worked as an executive director advocating for affordable and accessible housing opportunities, especially for those underserved groups such as seniors and people living with developmental disabilities," she shares.

At her time working for Chicago's Metropolitan Agency for Planning, Kendra found, by a number of measures, that the Chicago region is one of the most racially divided regions in the nation. This helped her to have a deeper perspective on how to lessen the disparities and to help marginally-divided communities.

"I finally realized how much intersectionality exists between industries," says Smith. "My diverse work background really prepared me for the work I do today."

As a national thought and practice leader in community development, community health, affordable housing, urban planning, and social determinants of health, Smith is making a huge impact in our communities, and it's inspiring to see all that she's accomplished.

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First HBCU Bobblehead Series Unveiled

Last week, the National Bobblehead Hall of Fame and Museum unveiled the first HBCU Bobblehead Series, which features officially licensed bobbleheads of 13 Historically Black Colleges and Universities. The bobbleheads are being produced by the National Bobblehead Hall of Fame and Museum and are being released in celebration of Black History Month.

The schools included in the first series are: Alabama A&M University Bulldogs, Alabama State University Hornets, Delaware State University Hornets, Florida A&M University Rattlers, Fayetteville State University Broncos, Grambling State University Tigers, Howard University Bison, Jackson State University Tigers, Morgan State University Bears, North Carolina A&T State University Aggies, North Carolina Central University Eagles, Norfolk State University Spartans, and Tuskegee University Golden Tigers.

Standing on a base bearing the school's nickname across the front, each mascot bobblehead is proudly wearing the school colors in front of a backing featuring the school logo. Each bobblehead is individually numbered to 2,023, and they are currently only available through the National Bobblehead Hall of Fame and Museum's Online Store https://store.bobbleheadhall.com/search?q=hbcu*&view=ls&type=product.

The bobbleheads are \$35 each plus a flat-rate shipping charge of \$8 per order. The Grambling State, Alabama State, Delaware State, and Howard Bobbleheads are scheduled to arrive in April, while the other schools' bobbleheads are scheduled to ship in June.

Primarily located in the South and founded during the Reconstruction era, there are more than 100 colleges in the United States that are identified by the U.S. Department of Education as Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

HBCUs were originally established in the 19th century to make quality, accredited higher education available to Black Americans. Due to slavery, segregation, and systemic racism, traditionally white institutions denied Black Americans admission.

The Higher Education Act of 1965 defines HBCUs as accredited higher education institutions established before 1964 whose "principal mission was, and is, the education of Black Americans." In the past, these institutions admitted only Black students. Today, HBCUs admit learners of all races. Among the prominent graduates of HBCUs are civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr., United States Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall, and United States Vice President Kamala Harris.

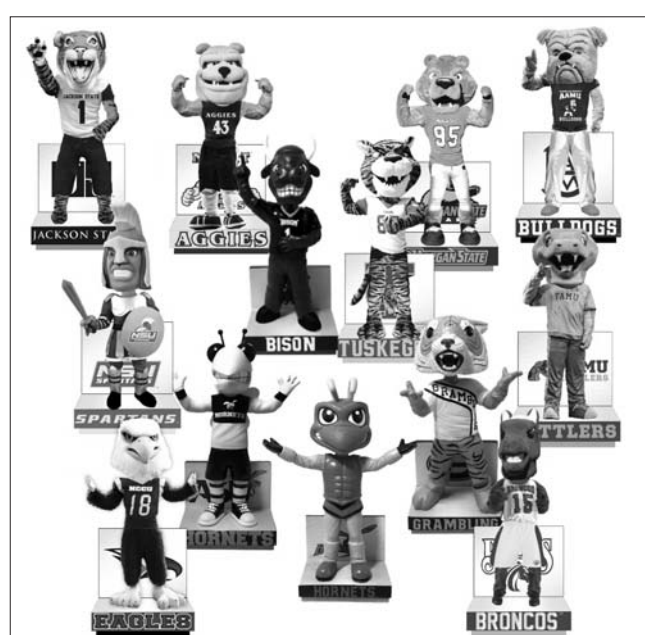
"We're excited to release this long-overdue collection of HBCU bobbleheads," National Bobblehead Hall of Fame and Museum co-founder and CEO Phil Sklar said. "We know these bobbleheads, which celebrate the rich history of these 13 amazing institutions, will be very popular with the alumni, students, faculty, staff, fans, and communities."

About the National Bobblehead Hall of Fame and Museum: The National Bobblehead Hall of Fame and Museum, which is located at 170 S. 1st St. in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, opened to the public on February 1st, 2019. The HOF and Museum also produces high quality, customized bobbleheads for retail sale as well as organizations, individuals, and teams across the country.

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Local Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Chapters Celebrates Founders' Day

By Tricia Hall

The Truth Reporter

The local chapters of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated celebrated the 115th Founders' Day of their sisterhood on Saturday, February 18, 2023. The local chapters of Zeta Alpha Omega, Alpha Lambda, and Iota Iota welcomed family, friends, and guests to celebrate at the Pinnacle in Maumee. The theme for the 115th Founders' Day Celebration was "Black Girls Rock in Exemplary Service."

Festivities opened with a processional of the event dignitaries as Kristian Brown of 13ABC News served as the mistress of ceremony. The dais was introduced by Sonya Randall and Debra Brock of Mt. Nebo Church sang "Lift Ev'ry Voice and Sing."

Greetings and warm salutations were delivered by Treva Jeffries-Martin, EdD, Zeta Alpha Omega chapter president, Jasmine Fox, Alpha Lambda chapter president and Northern Ohio/Western Pennsylvania Undergraduate Cluster Coordinator, and Avery Ellis, Iota Iota chapter president.

"We are so pleased to receive the support from the community. This celebration of Black Girls In Exemplary Service allows us to uplift and celebrate our founders because their courage and tenacity created a space for educated black women to have a voice. It also allows us to uplift and empower women in the community who reflect that same courage and tenacity. The support that we receive from our community supports our community service and scholarships, so we can continue our community driven endeavors for many years to come," shared Jeffries-Martin.

Felicia Roberts-Dunston, program chair, delivered the sorority history and acknowledgements as Cheryl Slack, the chapter's chaplain, delivered the innovation before lunch was served. The celebration continued with program acknowledgements. Lisa McDuffie, vice president and program chair delivered a presentation about the program targets and Kayleen Powell presented a poem.

Awards were presented to eight deserving women. Each honoree was welcomed by a presenter.

- Diana Patton, former Civil Rights Attorney and Founder of the Rise Advocates Academy, was awarded the Legacy of Excellence Award. Presented by Richelle Watkins.
- Stayce Fowler, owner/operator of Customer Advocacy Partners, LLC., was awarded the Shot Caller Award. Presented by Donnetta Carter.
- Carla Pattin, PhD, assistant professor of Humanities at The Jesup Scott Honors College at The University of Toledo, was awarded the Black Girl Magic Award. Presented by Felicia Roberts-Dunston.
- Celia Williamson, PhD, 29-year anti-trafficking advocate, was awarded the Social Humanitarian Award. Presented by Katrina Barry.
- Lydia Myrick, has worked alongside several black artists to co-curate work featured at the Toledo Museum of Art the African American Legacy Project, was awarded the Young, Gifted & Black Award. Presented by Kaylee Powell.

...continued on page 8



Golden Sorors.
Top row: Margaret Huntley, Frances Collins, EdD, Rosie Payne, Mary Dawson. Bottom row: Elinor Allen, Theo Simmons-Hammond, Chapter President Treva Jeffries-Martin, EdD, Julia Holt, Theo Tucker.



AKA Officers and Committee Chairs

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Alpha Kappa Alpha... continued from page 7

- Tina Butts, CEO and Founder of The Movement Team, was awarded the Community Change Agent Award. Presented by Clara Petty, Co-chairman.
- Billie Johnson, President/CEO of the Area Office on Aging of Northwest Ohio, Inc. was awarded the Icon Award. Presented by Rhonda Sewell.
- Elinor Allen, AKA member for over 69 years who has served in various leadership and civic-focused roles, was awarded the Sisterhood Award. Presented by Clara Petty.

It is a privilege to recognize wonderful women in our community who have contributed significantly in the areas that align with our sorority's program initiatives. As they demonstrate selfless efforts toward empowering our families, building our economic wealth, enhancing our environment, advocating for social justice, and strengthening our sisterhood," shared Felicia Roberts-Dunston, 2023 Founders' Day Chairman.

Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Incorporated was founded on January 15, 1908 at Howard University which is located in Washington, D.C. Locally, Alpha Lambda Chapter was established at the University of Toledo in 1928. Iota Iota Chapter was chartered at Bowling Green State University in 1972.

Zeta Alpha Omega Chapter was chartered in Toledo in 1952. Current chapter leadership: president, Treva Jeffries-Martin, PhD; assistant president, Lisa McDuffie; recording secretary, Cassandra Adams; corresponding secretary, Leigh Utley; treasurer, Paula Martin; assistant treasurer, Jacalyn Brown; financial secretary, Andrea Price; assistant financial secretary, Katrina Berry; Ivy Leaf © Reporter/ public relations, Pam Green-Jones; graduate advisor of Alpha Lambda chapter, Katina Johnson; graduate advisor of Iota Iota, Richelle Watkins; parliamentarian, Cynthia Battles; historian, Genovia Odoms; sergeant-at-arms; Demecia Wilson.

Founders' Day Committee: Felicia Roberts-Dunston, Chairman; Clara Petty, Co-Chairman; and members: Treva Jeffries, PhD, Katrina Barry, Debra Brock, Shaunda Brown-Perez, Donnetta Carter, Lisa Dubose, PhD, Ashleigh Foster, Pam Green-Jones, Katrina Johnson, Patrice McClellan, PhD, Brittany McDuffie, Lisa McDuffie, Kayleen Powell, Andrea Price, Cheryl Slack, Nazerene Tubman, Richelle Watkins and Leigh Utley.



Treva Jeffries, Clara Petty, Katina Johnson, Denise Black-Poon




(l. to r.): Stayce Fowler, Felicia Roberts-Dunston, Lydia Myrick, Diana Patton, Billie Johnson, Elinor Allen, Tina Butts, Carla Pattin, Treva Jeffries-Martin, Celia Williamson



Back Row: Felicia Roberts-Dunston, Founders' Day Chair; Avery Ellis, Iota Iota Chapter president; Treva Jeffries-Martin, EdD, Zeta Alpha Omega Chapter President; Jasmine Fox, Alpha Lambda Chapter President; Clara Petty, Founders Day Co-Chair. Front Row: Honorees Elinor Allen; Lydia Myrick; Carla Pattin, PhD; Stayce Fowler; Diana Patton

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Tanya, UTM primary care patient

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Zetas Host a Skate Away for Heart Disease

The Truth Staff

The Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc, Zeta Xi Zeta Chapter, hosted their second annual Skate Away on Sunday, February 5, at Ohio Skate Maumee. Several dozen Zetas and their families and invited guests skated the evening away, breaking for CPR and life-saving demonstrations.

“We wanted to bring attention to heart disease and also honor the memory of our sorority sister, Victoria Penamon,” said Chapter President Angela Crooks. “She passed away from heart disease in May of 2021. We really want people to understand that heart disease can affect people of all ages.

“In this particular case, our soror had just had her 35th birthday and had just given birth,” Crooks continued. “I just want people to understand that early on they should understand that healthy eating and exercise and immediate attention to someone who has a problem, can save lives.”



Conducting a demonstration on managing heart disease was Thasia Awad, founder and owner of On The Line Training and Education,

In her role as a crisis counselor, Awad has brought information and training “nearly every kind of industry.” However, working with business is not enough.

“My goal is to bring awareness to the community, to individuals,” she says as she demonstrates the various devices she trains individuals on such as the AED machine that people with limited or no health care training can learn.



La'Shardae Scott, Angela Crooks, Trisha Draper



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Thasia Awad with her life-saving equipment



Curb Gun Violence... continued from page 3

his explanation of the initial proposal. "We have to pay attention to those most impacted – this is a public health crisis we need to address."

As the data shows, those most impacted by the current wave of violence in Toledo – both victims and suspects – are young Black males, certainly no surprise to anyone attending that meeting. To get control of the level of violence, particularly the uptick in violence over the past three years, suggested Smith, is to interrupt the cycle by "leveraging political and financial capital to invest in" six primary solutions "led by community members and community-based organizations."

Those six solutions include the use of (1) violence interrupters (a program initiated in Toledo several years ago); (2) street outreach (with other members of the community); (3) hospital-based violence intervention (reaching out to victims and their family and friends as soon as they get to the hospital after a violence episode); (4) diversion and alternative pathways (finding alternatives to incarceration); (5) coordinated crisis response team (finding alternatives to police responses, particularly in mental health issues) and (6) collaborative public safety funding models (such as seeking resources from outside the city given the limitations of municipal budgets).

The next key steps, as laid out by Cities United, are to construct a plan by building partnerships and relationships, constructing a multi-year plan of action, creating a sustainability plan and implementing the plan while also developing a continuous improvement evaluation.

The Coalition for Peaceful Toledo Neighborhoods Meeting

Meanwhile ...

Cities United has laid out a proposal to develop a plan to curb gun violence but former elected officials have already laid out just such a plan.

Saturday's second meeting on the issue of violence and how to cope with it was held at One Government Center as the four former mayors laid out their plan to take action immediately with an ordinance they will present to City Council this week.

The ordinance is a plan and the culmination of more than five months of community town halls and other meetings involving concerned citizens and survivors of violence.

"This 12-point platform, developed by ... approximately 250 residents at our town hall meetings, can make Toledo neighborhoods peaceful and friendly again," said Kim Baker, a coordinator for The Coalition.

State Senator, and former mayor, Paula Hicks-Hudson opened the press conference by emphasizing the input the Coalition has received from a number of community people. "It takes committed folks who are willing to say 'I don't have all the answers but I'm willing to do what I can.'"

"We want to build our neighborhoods up," said Bell as he introduced and read the first four points of the proposed ordinance. "You can't have quality of life without peaceful neighborhoods."



Coalition Press Conference attendees

The first four points are:

1. Youth programming that provides access to mentorship, job training and educational opportunities;
2. Neighborhood support and community building resources that foster positive relationships and build stronger, more cohesive communities;
3. Increased police presence and involvement in neighborhoods, focused on community policing efforts that prioritize communications, trust and respect between law enforcement and residents;
4. Our judicial, probation and parole system, while following the law, must apply stringent penalties to convicted offenders and limit the ability of repeat violent offenders to walk the streets while awaiting trial.

"What we are presenting is what we have heard. It's time to move on and get things done ... people want this program," said Owens introducing the next four points of the proposal:

5. Support for parents and parenting classes, including access to resources on conflict resolution and parenting techniques;
6. Revitalization and cleanup of neighborhoods, including investment in infrastructure and beautification efforts that support community engagement and increase access to public spaces;
7. Mental health resources that provide access to counseling, crisis intervention and other mental health services;
8. Renewal and strengthening of Community Watch programs, including the expansion of programs and resources that facilitate communication and engagement between neighbors and law enforcement.

"All [the points] are important and need to be part of a package," said Finkbeiner as he read off the final four points:

9. Strengthening of gun laws, including the adoption of local policies and ordinances aimed at preventing gun violence and supporting responsible gun ownership;
10. Safe methods of reporting crimes, including the development of anonymous reporting mechanisms and the adoption of policies that protect whistleblowers and other informants;
11. Cameras in the neighborhoods, including the deployment of surveillance technologies that are subject to strict privacy protections and oversight mechanisms;
12. Enforcement of curfews, including the adoption of clear, consistent policies on curfews for minors and the provision of resources and support for parents to ensure compliance.

Now the questions going forward are: (1) what will be the reaction of City Council members and the Kapszukiewicz administration to the Coalition ordinance? (2) as the Cities United project progresses, will they utilize the same approach to assembling a plan by involving Toledo residents as the Coalition did? and (3) will the final Cities United Plan differ in any major aspects from the plan already proposed by the Coalition?



Former Mayors Paula Hicks-Hudson, Carty Finkbeiner, Mike Bell, Donna Owens

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Kendra Smith... continued from page 5

Smith's impact highlights include actively engaging over 3,500 regional stakeholders as part of her local comprehensive planning activities. Her health programming has proven positive outcomes in infant mortality disparities and food accessibility. She's also leveraged over \$30 million for affordable housing development in Chicago and Toledo neighborhoods while co-authoring Fair Housing Equity Assessment, Chicagoland's first regional approach to fair housing.

Ms. Smith explains, "The truth is when families don't have access to healthy environments and nutritious food, it leads to health problems for the entire household. Without enough healthy food, moms may not have the nutrients they need to have healthy pregnancies and give birth to strong and healthy babies."

Sadly, infant mortality disparities are a real issue in our communities. Babies born to moms who live in areas with limited food access are more likely to experience health problems and, in some cases, even die during their first year of life. "That's why our local partnerships are so important. The support of our initiatives increase access to healthy food and provide resources giving every child a better chance to thrive," says Smith.

One's home matters to more than half of Black adults and affects their self-perception. Common issues in Black and Brown communities, such as crime, poverty, violence and homelessness, are common deterrents to health. "The Toledo Urban Federal Credit Union is another one of our partners helping to address housing instability here in Toledo," explains Smith. "Needing home repairs or upgrades to fix issues like lead paint can really lead to a families overall health in the long term. Our partnership gives residents the access to the financial resources they need to rehabilitate their homes."

As part of its Direct Community Investment Program, Bon Secours Mercy Health Toledo, has committed \$3 million dollars in an effort to offer flexible capital to those in need of home repairs. Over the next five years, the investment will support a low interest loan program for homeowners in central city Toledo needing vital repairs to their homes.

The fund will give priority to borrowers who are not eligible for federal and state resources but who may still not be eligible for other traditional banking products. "The loan program also provides financial education to help home-

owners develop a loan repayment plan as they improve their financial stability," explains Smith.

Ms. Kendra N. Smith, AICP MPH MSUS, has received several distinguished honors including: Euclid Ohio High School Distinguished Alumni Hall of Fame Inductee (2022), Group Recipient/Author of HUD Opportunity & Empowerment Award-for ProMedica Ebeid Neighborhood Promise (2020), as well as being a recipient of Toledo's 20 Under 40 honor (2017).



She received her Bachelor of Arts from Ohio University in political science and Spanish; a Spanish language and culture certificate from Universidad Pública de Navarra; a graduate certificate in local and urban management from Cleveland State University; a master's degree from Cleveland State University in urban studies neighborhood and community development; a master of public health from Kent State University; as well as a certificate in executive education for leadership, organizing and action from Harvard University's Kennedy School.

Smith is a member of the Community Advisory Council of the Federal Reserve Board and serves on the Board of Trustees of the Toledo Lucas County Public Library, the Maumee Valley Habitat for Humanity, Leadership Ohio, Toledo Rotary and Toledo Area Regional

Transit Authority (TARTA).

Across the country, people are encountering difficulties when it comes to accessing healthcare that is responsive to their needs. We thank Kendra Smith for rising to the challenge and developing new healthcare programming throughout the Midwest region that is more inclusive, equitable and effective. Her dedication and hard work is paving the way for a brighter future, where care is accessible to all and tailored to meet the diverse needs of women and other marginalized groups.

When asked what being honored by the YWCA means to her, Smith says, "A special thanks goes out to all the people and partnerships that have had meaningful exchanges with the work I do. I'm truly humbled and appreciative of this honor."

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.

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Pictured are the Tuskegee Army Airfield group pilots in Italy in 1945.

Black History Books for Adults

By Terri Schlichenmeyer
The Truth Contributor

The month of February has whipped by so fast that you almost missed it.

It's true that the month is short, as compared to the other months, but no worries. There's still a lot remaining, surely enough left to catch one of these great Black History Month books...

c.2023
various publishers
\$27.00-\$30.00
various page counts

It's been more than a century since the Tulsa Race Massacre and it still seems like there's much to learn about it. In *Requiem for the Massacre* by **RJ Young** (Counterpoint, \$27.00), you'll read about how descendants of survivors marked the centennial anniversary of that day in 1921, how officials are reckoning with what happened, and... what happened.

If you examine the decades between Rosa Parks' refusal to give up her bus seat and Black Lives Matter, you can clearly see how activism has changed with the times. Author **Mark Whitaker** writes about one year of it in *Saying It Loud* (Bloomsbury, \$29.99). Set in 1966, this book shows how Black Power changed the way young Black Americans fought for Civil Rights, and what it means today. This reads like a novel, and it should be on your bookshelf.

Readers who love sports will want *The Education of Kendrick Perkins* by **Kendrick Perkins with Seth Rogoff** (St. Martin's Press, \$29.99). Here's Perkins' story, from his childhood in Beaumont, Texas to his budding love of basketball, his NBA career, and playing with the sport's biggest and best-known games. This is a fan's book, perfect for any season.

If a real-life thriller is more to your liking, then look for *Master Slave Husband Wife* by **Ilyon Woo** (Simon & Schuster, \$29.99). In 1848, Ellen and William Craft left the plantation on which they were enslaved, and they slipped away North. Here's how: Ellen masqueraded as a rich white man during their flight, while her husband acted as the "man's" slave. Needless to say, their audacious run was hailed by Frederick Douglass and other Black luminaries of their day; most astoundingly,

that's not the end of this heart-pounding story.

You gotta read this book.

And speaking of freedom, *I Saw Death Coming* by **Kidada E. Williams** (Bloomsbury, \$30.00) is a book about the years after the Civil War and how Reconstruction affected the newly-free and their families. Through genuine stories of several formerly enslaved people, both men and women, Williams shows how just getting by day-to-day was a struggle: with the rise of the Klan, merely existing was dangerous. And perhaps one of the most frightening things of all might have been the dawning realization that the government was of limited help, *if at all*. This is a fascinating book, perfect for historians and Civil War buffs.

If these books are not enough for your pleasure or learning, be sure to ask your favorite librarian or bookseller for help. They can show you hundreds, if not thousands, of books that will enlighten, teach, entertain, or shock you. These are books you need to read now, or soon – because knowing Black history requires more than just a month.

Suzette Cowell... continued from page 4

- Jacqueline Moore, Chief Executive Officer, Faith Community United Credit Union, Cleveland, OH

Education Advisory Council

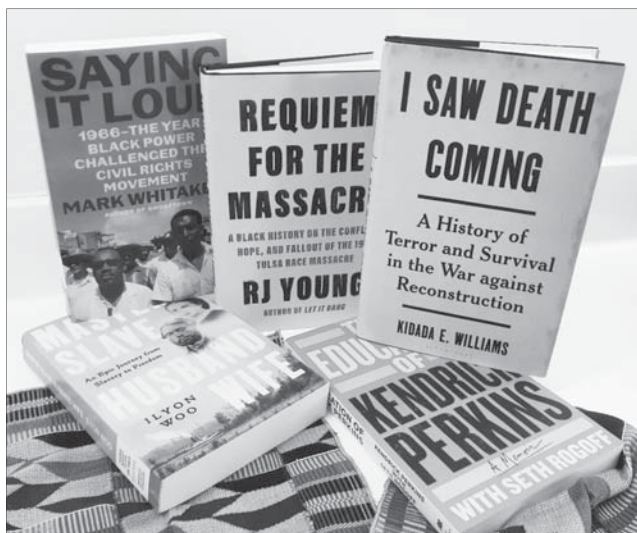
The Education Advisory Council assists the Bank's Education and Museum Outreach department in assessing the effectiveness of its programming and setting strategy. New members include:

- David Mahon, Executive Director, Alpaugh Family Economics Center at the University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, OH

Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland

The Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland is one of 12 regional Reserve Banks that along with the Board of Governors in Washington DC comprise the Federal Reserve System. Part of the US central bank, the Cleveland Fed participates in the formulation of our nation's monetary policy, supervises banking organizations, provides payment and other services to financial institutions and to the US Treasury, and performs many activities that support Federal Reserve operations System-wide. In addition, the Bank supports the well-being of communities across the Fourth Federal Reserve District through a wide array of research, outreach, and educational activities.

The Cleveland Fed, with branches in Cincinnati and Pittsburgh, serves an area that comprises Ohio, western Pennsylvania, eastern Kentucky, and the northern panhandle of West Virginia.



A Black History Moment

Phillis Wheatley was the first African American to publish a book of poetry, *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral*, in 1773. Born in the Gambia and sold to the Wheatley family in Boston when she was seven years old, Wheatley was emancipated shortly after her book was released.

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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

The Mental Health & Recovery Services Board (MHR SB) of Lucas County invites proposals from interested parties with expertise in developing and implementing detailed operational plans focused on organizational infrastructure transformation. The plan's development and implementation will follow the recommendations from the ITP Phase 1 report developed during the Discovery Phase (Phase 1) of the ITP process. Proposals are to be delivered no later than 5:00 p.m. ET on April 10, 2023. Details regarding the project deliverables and submission criteria are located on the MHR SB's website: <http://www.lcmhrsb.oh.gov/publicnotice/>.

PUBLIC BID ADVERTISEMENT (ELECTRONIC BIDDING) STATE OF OHIO STANDARD FORMS AND DOCUMENTS

PROJECT # 1130-23-306

BUILDING ENVELOPE/WEATHERPROOFING PH4
The University of Toledo
Lucas County

Bids Due: 2:00pm EDT/EST Tuesday, March 14, 2023; through the State's electronic bidding system at: <https://bidexpress.com>

EDGE Participation Goal: 15.0% of contract

Domestic steel use is required per ORC 153.011.

Contract	Estimated Cost
General Contract	\$1,575,000.00
Alternate #1	\$15,000.00
Alternate #2	\$15,000.00
Alternate #3	\$100,000.00

Pre-bid Meeting: February 28, 2023, 1:00pm – Plant Operations Building – Room 1000, The University of Toledo, 2925 East Rocket Drive, Toledo, OH 43606

Walkthrough: A walkthrough of the project site is scheduled for February 28, 2023, immediately following Pre-bid.

Walkthrough Location: Plant Operations Building

Bid Documents: Available electronically at: <https://bidexpress.com>

More Info: Project contact: Holly Gramfort, Van Auken Akins Architects LLC, Phone: 216-241-2220, E-mail: hgramfort@vaakins.com

LEGAL NOTICE

Proposals will be received by Pathway, Inc. until 4:00 p.m., April 7, 2023 for the selection of Provider(s) to implement IT Managed Services. Submitted proposals must be completed according to the specifications and provisions outlined in the Request for Proposals (RFP). The contract period will be from approximately May 1, 2023 through May 31, 2024.

No proposals will be accepted after 4:00 p.m., April 7, 2023; proposals that are submitted via any method other than that described in the RFP will not be accepted.

The Request for Proposals will be available on February 17, 2023. It will be available for potential bidders to download by going to the site: www.pathwaytoledo.org

The right is reserved to reject any and all proposals.

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NOTICE TO BIDDERS TARTA CENTRAL CAMPUS BUS WASHING SYSTEM PROJECT

The Toledo Area Regional Transit Authority (TARTA) seeks bids from qualified contractors to provide a 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.

Mom's House Spreads Love and Joy on Valentine's Day to Local Families

Special to The Truth

Mom's House of Toledo celebrated Valentine's Day with new shoes, thanks to a donation from Joybees Footwear. The organization hosted a gathering for the moms and kids participating in its programs on Tuesday, February 14 at Mom's House on Franklin Avenue.

Joybees gifted Mom's House 250 pairs of new shoes as part of its mission to bring joy to families. "Giving back is a core value for us and we're always looking for opportunities to highlight organizations that are doing important work in their communities," said Elle Kellers, brand marketing manager at Joybees Footwear.

This time, Joybees hosted a contest through their social media channels to give away 5,000 pairs of shoes and engaged its audience to nominate deserving nonprofits in their local areas. Mom's House was one of the most nominated organizations in the contest and was selected as one of the 20 nonprofits across the country to receive shoes and the only one in Ohio to do so.

"We asked our social media community to help us give back by nominating their favorite organization for a chance to win a substantial shoe donation," said McCall Board, digital marketing strategist at Joybees Footwear.

"Our goal was to give back to not only our own community but communities across the country. Our 5,000 Soles Giveaway has allowed us to connect to amazing organizations and people, giving them the recognition that they very much deserve. There was an outpouring of nominations for Mom's House, which truly reflected the impact that they must have on the community in Toledo. We are so grateful at Joybees to be able to support Mom's House and play a small part in their big mission."

Mom's House strives to break generational cycles of poverty and welfare

by creating an environment of learning and growth. "Our families work hard to finish their schooling and give their children a quality early childhood education," said Christina Rodriguez, executive director of Mom's House.

"Something as simple as new shoes helps us meet their basic needs so they can focus on learning and their futures. We're humbled by the outpouring of love shown in the nominations, and we thank Joybees from the bottom of our hearts for this generous donation," added Rodriguez.



Christina Rodriguez and the children celebrate the gift of shoes



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Urban Wholistics Holds Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

The Truth Staff

The Urban Wholistics staff and board had much to celebrate on Wednesday, February 15, above all, the completion of an agreement with the Lucas County Land Bank for the transfer of land to the organization and the permanent placement of the organization's service building.

"The Land Bank expedited the paperwork so we could have a deal," said Sonia Flunder-McNair at the start of the ribbon-cutting ceremony. She noted that had the paperwork not been expedited, the transfer would have taken another five years.

Prior to the ribbon cutting, the staff and board recognized key institutions that have helped the organization reach their goals through grants, in-kind services and volunteerism.

"We are thankful for the support Urban Wholistics has received since we started this journey," said Flunder-McNair. "With all that we have accomplished, it is hard to believe that we are only three and a half years old. From the completion of our wholistic community green space. Tatum Park to our lot expansion down Woodland Avenue that includes what we have now officially named Urban Wholistics' Farm and Junction Fruit Orchard to the market stands, hoop house and service shed whose foundation we are standing on. We would not have been able to build this and provide community programming without the support of the Lucas County Land Bank, City of Toledo, Toledo Community Foundation and ProMedica."

The three and a half years have enabled Urban Wholistics to begin providing programming for youth, to start producing products – fruits and vegetables for entities such as TolHouse and the Toledo Museum of Art, to introduce programming at the Toledo Correctional Facility, to list a few.

Urban Wholistics operates out of a community green space called Tatum Park located at 1209 City Park Ave. Toledo, OH. The park covers multiple lots and is open to the public from sunrise to sunset for visiting, learning and shopping the market.

On the grounds visitors will find a variety of organically grown vegetables, fruits, herbs and plants.

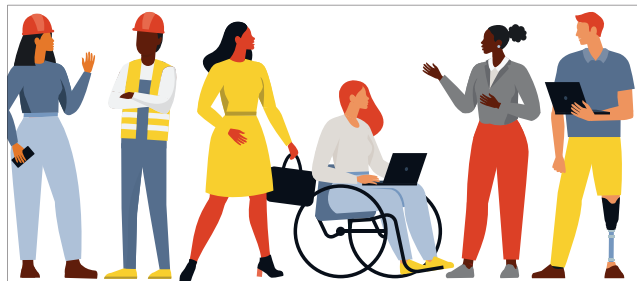
Now Urban Wholistics has taken ownership of 1.13 acres on the City Park location and is developing plans to bring further improvement to the neighborhood. "We are not here to take land, we are here to help neighbors become landowners as well," said Flunder-McNair.

Then the staff and board cut the ribbons for two projects – a fruit orchard and a farm.

"Urban Wholistics is growing and expanding," said Flunder-McNair. "We are working to help pave the way for urban farms in our community. The direction we are moving in will continue to nurture our community by bringing people together in a healing, safe environment and connect with the land."



Sonia Flunder-McNair (center) thanks supporters



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