



Volume 78 No. 5 *“And Ye Shall Know The Truth...”* May 24, 2023



The Deltas Hold Annual Breakfast For M'Lady

Sydney Gregory, Jordan Rosales, Erin LaFaso

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The Legacy and Retirement of Bishop Robert A. Culp

By Fletcher Word

The Truth Editor

In 1961, Robert Culp, a native of Sharon, Pennsylvania, was called to be senior pastor of the First Church of God. On Saturday, May, 20, 2023, hundreds of congregants, family members and friends from far and near and a veritable who's who of Toledo clergy, elected officials and citizens gathered at the Hiltons at Downtown Toledo to honor a man whose service to his church and community has been as impressive as it has been long lasting.

Saturday night's event was opened by master of ceremony Eric Ellis, president and CEO of Integrity Development Corp. Ellis is regarded as one of the nation's leading consultants and strategists on matters relating to diversity and inclusion.

The entrance of Bishop Culp and First Lady Maggie Culp was accompanied by music by Krishna Davis Fowler, a classical soprano who has performed on major opera stages around the world, and was followed by an invocation by Rev. Eric Von Butler, Bishop Culp's successor as senior pastor at First Church of God. Then Rev. Kerwin Manning, born and raised in Toledo and now pastor of Pasadena Church (California), presented "The Legacy of the Man."

First Church of God C. Allen McConnell, who has been a member of the church since the mid-60s, offered remarks about the impact the bishop has had on the church.

One of the highlights of Saturday's gala was a trio of selections by gospel vocalist Vanessa Bell Armstrong, the seven-time Grammy Award nominee, Stellar Award winner and a Soul Train Award winner.

The legacy of the man who served as senior pastor of First Church of God for 62 years is extensive.

Bishop Culp served as a youth pastor in his hometown before heading to Anderson, Indiana to attend college. He served as pastor of the Williams Street Church of God in Danville, Illinois before coming to Toledo.

During his years in Toledo, he has established the Christian School, the FACTS and FORWARD programs for substance abuse and the Four Corners Project to serve youth and children. Nationally his influence has been far-reaching as several "spiritual sons" pastor churches from Pasadena, CA, to Brooklyn, NY. He was consecrated a bishop in 2014.

In the Toledo greater community, Bishop Culp has held numerous offices

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The Culp Family



Bishop Culp and First Lady with the legendary Vanessa Bell Armstrong



Bishop and First Lady Culp with Juanita Greene



Kishna Davis Fowler



Bishop Culp and 1st Lady Dr Maggie L. with First Church of God Pastor Elect, Pastor Eric Butler and 1st Lady Pastor Lady T, Twyla Butler



Vanessa Bell Armstrong



Bishop Chester Trail, John Williams, Rev. Cedric Brock, Dr Otis Gordon

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A Time To E.A.A.T.

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

The Truth Contributor

If a person resides in a food desert or does not have enough money to afford food, telling them that if they eat healthy, they will be healthy does nothing to address the source of their ill health.

– Keisha Ray, PhD



Last week, City Council approved funding a food systems, education, and incubation hub project and a second initiative incentivizing corner stores to carry healthy prepared foods and fresh produce. In addition, next week, the council is expected to entertain a proposal to incentivize the development of a 10,000-square-foot full-service grocery near the site of the old Ed's Market, an iconic black-owned neighborhood food store formerly located at Nebraska and Division.

Residents of The Brand Whitlock Homes, the McClinton Nunn Homes, or those who knew the late John Landry, who led Lucas Metropolitan Housing Authority back in the day, still have fond memories of the shopping experience. Ed's, also known as Division Market, had a vibrant meat counter, sold fresh produce, and always hired butchers and other help from the community. The bonus was that Ed and his wife Mary allowed some residents who struggled financially to buy groceries on credit, had all kinds of goodies for kids, and knew all the residents by name.

The \$12 million project approved by City Council was primarily informed by the work of the Equitable Access Alliance of Toledo (E.A.A.T.). The United Pastors for Social Empowerment convened the Junction Coalition, Englewood, Center of Hope, Dorr Street Coalition, nonprofits, and state, county, and city representatives to reverse long-term disinvestment in communities of color. Last year the group asked the City to invest in the foundation and sustainability of making fresh food available to its residents by allocating resources from the American Rescue Plan and other federal dollars for an initial investment in a Grocery Fund.

Increasing healthy food access requires collective action that drives community re-investment. United Pastors for Social Empowerment (U.P.S.E.), The Equitable Access Alliance of Toledo (E.A.A.T. Coalition), and the Center of Hope have initiated policy work and community initiatives to address healthy food access in the Dorr, Englewood, and Junction neighborhoods since 2015.

Our initial focus addressed food deserts, understanding that lack of access to healthy food adversely impacts neighborhoods and residents in many interconnected ways, including public health, education, housing, and safety. Residents living in Lucas County's food deserts have higher incidents of cardiovascular, obesity, diabetes, and other adverse health outcomes and die sooner than others.

E.A.A.T. and United Pastors have also advocated for creating a healthy food overlay district to incentivize grocery stores and restrict predatory discount retail chains, such as Dollar stores, that contribute to these disparities.

Research indicates that dollar stores funnel profits out of neighborhoods, contributing less to local economic development. The systemic causes of community divestment, unstable housing, and low wages also contribute to environments where dollar stores can thrive.

In addition, once a dollar store enters an under-resourced community, that area is more likely to remain without access to supermarkets than higher-resourced communities.

Building awareness of the issue is an integral part of creating change. That's why we were honored to have the national media spotlight our efforts when the N.B.C. Nightly News' Zinhle Essamuah came to Toledo to report on our work demonstrating how local communities across the United States are fighting back.

E.A.A.T.'s work has also been covered nationally by the Institute for Lo-

cal Self-Reliance, a research and advocacy group, the Capital B, a Black-led local and national nonprofit news organization focused on centering Black communities, and the Ohio News Connection.

A webinar panel Fixing the Food Gap: Antitrust Action and Grassroots Solutions to Check Dollar Stores and Rebuild Local Grocery Stores, also featured our work. Alvara Bedoya, a member of the Federal Trade Commission, headlined the program discussion.

Yet, the issue is clear. The causes of food deserts in communities across the United States stem from one root: economic disinvestment in communities of color. The dollar stores are a prime example of the principle of disinvestment – the money they “invest” takes away more than it contributes.

Research shows that dollar stores pull sales away from local grocery stores in predominantly rural, low-income Black and Latino neighborhoods, leading some areas to food deserts.

In addition, Toledo Police Department crime statistics indicate that Dollar Stores in Toledo's central City elevate crime in those neighborhoods. As a result, they experience staffing issues, often close early or open late, and have long lines at the register.

There have also been complaints of inaccurate registers that ring up different product pricing than that listed on the shelves.

Toledoans deserve access to the food and other products they need at affordable prices and to be treated with humanity and the dignity they deserve.

Our residents also deserve an opportunity to thrive by living in safe, affordable neighborhoods with choices and opportunities.

The question then becomes: Why isn't this vital issue and work of more interest to people in our local community?

Contact Rev. Donald Perryman, PhD, at drdlperryman@enterofhopebaptist.org

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Hicks-Hudson Condemns Passage of Senate Bill 83

Last week, state Senator Paula Hicks-Hudson (D-Toledo) issued the following statement after the Ohio Senate voted to pass Senate Bill 83, the highly controversial "Ohio Higher Education Enhancement Act."

"We must call this legislation out for what it is - a blatant assault on Ohio's institutions of higher education, born out of Republican fear of the painful but true history of this country," said Hicks-Hudson. "S.B. 83 undermines our students' and faculty's ability to promote intellectual curiosity and diminishes opportunities for inclusive and innovative business partnerships in the state. This bill hurts all of us."

Among a litany of changes to Ohio's higher education laws, S.B. 83 would prohibit all higher education employees from striking and ban institutions from having mandated diversity, equity and inclusion programs. It also would bar colleges and universities from endorsing or opposing as an institution any controversial beliefs, policies, specified concepts or specified ideologies.

More than 300 Ohioans and organizations, including the American Association of University Professors Ohio Conference and Ohio Education Association, submitted testimony in opposition to S.B. 83 while it was receiving hearings in the Senate Workforce and Higher Education Committee.

Critics have argued the legislation is an unnecessary infringement upon the principles of free speech and academic freedom that will discourage prospective students from attending colleges and universities in Ohio and professors from seeking employment at these institutions.

S.B. 83 (<https://legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/135/sb83>) now goes to the House for consideration, where its companion legislation, House Bill



State Sen. Paula Hicks-Hudson

151 (<https://legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/135/hb151>), received its second hearing today.

Black Leaders Across Ohio Mobilize Black Voters To PROTECT ONE PERSON ONE VOTE

When the 135th General Assembly passed amended Senate Joint Resolution 2, they destroyed the principle of one person, one vote. The amendment changes the threshold to 60% to pass an amendment, giving greater power to a NO vote than a YES vote on citizen-led amendments to the Ohio Constitution.

The Ohio Unity Coalition in partnership with Black led institutions and leaders will mobilize black voters in Ohio urban cities to turn out to vote and defeat this measure in August when it is on the ballot. The effort will be aligned with the overall "Protect One Person One Vote Campaign".

"Ohioans have shown they want action on critical issues and when legislators fail to act, the citizen-led ballot initiative has been a critical tool for voters to have direct say in our government" said Petee Talley, CEO and Convener of the Ohio Coalition on Black Civic Participation/Ohio Unity Coalition.

Coalition members and partners believe that passage of SJR2 is a deliberate act to silence black voices and takes our state back to a time when blacks were counted as only 3/5 of a person.

"This legislative maneuver is the ultimate power grab. It changes the rules for amending the Ohio Constitution and robs us of our democratic right to "one person, one vote!" This change means that a simple majority of us will no longer be able to express our will on the most important issues facing the electorate!" said retired Cleveland Municipal Court Judge Ronald Adrine.

The process to amend the Ohio constitution by a simple majority has been in place for more than 110 years. According to information provided on the Ohio Secretary of State's website, Ohio has had 76 citizen initiative petitions on the ballot, with only 20 that have passed. This process is not easy, nor should it be, but DEMOCRACY should be fair and allow majority rule of ONE PERSON, ONE VOTE and not allow the loser to take home the trophy.

The Ohio Coalition on Black Civic Participation/Ohio Unity Coalition has partners across the state representing Civil Rights organizations, Faith, Community, Labor, The Divine Nine sororities and fraternities, Voting Rights Organizations, Community Organizers and more and works to educate, engage and empower black voters continuously to remind them of their power and to demonstrate it to policymakers at the local, state and federal levels.

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Greater Toledo Community Foundation Hosts Panel Discussion

By Angie Hayes

The Truth Reporter

Greater Toledo Community Foundation hosted a panel discussion on Thursday, May 18, at the Main Branch Library to discuss the importance of literacy, to support the non-profit organizations in the community that focus on improving literacy and to acknowledge and celebrate the 50 years that the organization has been active in the community.

The four panelists were: Diana Bush, Read For Literacy; Shawna Woody, Hope Toledo; Tracy Perryman, PhD, Center of Hope Family Services; Tiffany Adamski, TutorSmart Toledo. Patrick Johnston, GTCF vice president, moderated the discussion.

"The mission of the Greater Toledo Community Foundation is building a better community and helps to identify the needs of the community. We've been building for 50 years; best way is collaboration! You may lead now, or you may lead in the future. A history book has been created, 1929-2008 history facts and we are providing a book to each one of you and hope you enjoy reading and sharing the book and facts." said Keith Burwell, GTCF president, in his opening remarks.

"The Greater Toledo Event is to see how all of you fit with the foundation and celebrate the success! Let's talk about and think about what is happening and ways to help the community. We are meeting today with great non-profit organizations who are doing great things in the community. Looking forward to the next 50 years that we will do. Let's uplift the non-profits to the point of everything," said Patrick Johnston.

"How have you interfaced with children whose learning was impacted by the pandemic?" Patrick Johnston asked Adamski.

"I think the answer to that is pivot. And pivot again," replied Adamski. "Our organization was like most after school tutoring programs, we were very school based and in person right after school. As the pandemic shut everything down, our entire world stopped! And it did for our kids so we had to get creative, just like everybody up here! In order to continue to serve our kids, we had to get super creative and what we were able to do was pivot to an online program. We actually worked with our partners at the Toledo Public Schools to create google classrooms on their side of the servers so that when the kids opened the classroom we can come together. There's an icon for Tutor Smart, so the kids could still get tutoring even when we had to stay 6 feet apart even when the schools were closed. It was hard, I can't tell you that a ton of academic progress happened right away. But we were there for our kids and I think that really was the most important part of that time. We had some great churches that came forward and you know were good partners with us so that we could run programming for kids in person. Because some of them just needed a friendly face so we were able to do that. But that really sparked some innovation within Tutor Smart and I think all of our programs have grown in new and interesting ways that have allowed us to connect with the community on a broader level. And Tutor Smart was able to partner with the libraries now so that we can serve students, across the city in their neighborhoods."

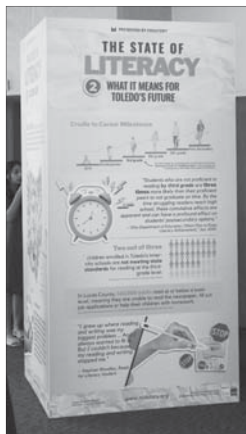
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Shawna Woody, Tiffany Adamski, Diana Bush, Tracee Perryman, PhD



GTCF staff



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Bishop Culp...continued from page 2

and leadership positions, including: president of the Toledo Chapter of the NAACP, president of Covenant Development Corporation, founder and board chairman of Toledo Academy Charter School, founder and board member of Family House homeless shelter, founder of Sparrow's Nest operated by the Cherry Street Mission Ministries and a founding member of the Toledo Urban Federal Credit Union.

He is currently a member of the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance, Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) and Civilian Review Board, the Lucas County Fatherhood Committee, the Hope for Toledo Board and he is co-chairperson of the Toledo Community Coalition.

Culp, in his brief remarks after dinner, expressed his gratitude to those who

organized and those who attended the event. His opening comments, however, were reserved for the First Lady Maggie, whom he wed 65 years ago. Together they have raised four children.

"Life has been such a rich journey," he said as he continued. "I have a great mate and a great family. I appreciate all the work and effort to make this night such a memory.

"When I was young, I learned a lot from my parents and my teachers about what it means to serve."

Bishop Culp recalled an experience during his college days when he felt doubts about the impact he was having on those he encountered and he sought advice from a mentor.

"He told me 'you shall reap what you sow,'" Culp recalled. "That has been my motto ever since."

Greater Toledo... continued from page 5

"Diana, you are next...question for you. In Lucas County, tens of thousands of adults read at or below a basic level. Meaning they are unable to read the newspaper, fill out job applications or help their children. Can you talk a little bit more about adult literacy and the impacts this has on a person's family, job prospects and their social mobility?" Patrick Johnston.

"Really if you cannot read in our society today, your ability to get a good paying job is severely limited," said Bush. "And when we think about the economics, it impacts where you live. It impacts what kind of car you can afford; it impacts where your children go to school. Because where you live is going to be where your children are going to go to school. It impacts the chances that they are going to, in some cases, get a great education. Because they may be stuck in schools that don't have the same resources as other schools; don't have the same community engagement as other schools.

"The chances that adults who don't read are gonna go to a family engagement are pretty limited. Because they are not comfortable going to a place where someone might ask them to read something or where someone might ask them to fill out a form. So important to know for adults with literacy issues, is the amount of things they have to fill out or the things they will have to read; and the types of engagements they can do with their children without being able to read because those are all important aspects."

"So, I wouldn't be a Read For Literacy volunteer coordinator if I didn't say 'Check out our facebook page, we got a ton of volunteer opportunities and are a lot of fun. We do a lot of great work and as it was mentioned earlier, Tiffany just told me one the things we do is recognize students that the most approved readers in their classrooms; so not the students

who constantly get accolades but the kids who struggle. The kids who have had interventions. One of the students that both Tiff and I work with, was actually awarded a 'care award'.

"For most of our existence, we work on an adult literacy program, and you saw one of our special stars, Stefan on the screen earlier. We have since expanded into a program called 'Creating Young Readers' where we work with preschoolers, kindergartners, first graders in both Toledo and Maumee schools. And about seven years ago now, Toledo Community Foundation graciously funded a strategic partnership alliance grant. So, we do two book festivals, one happened a little over a week ago, right here in this room! We also presented 650 awards to students in Toledo Public Schools. We are going to turn around and do it again at the Maumee Branch Library."

"A chance for happiness and success later in life. In other words, how does the career model work, Shawna?" asked Johnston.

"That is everything and it is important and it is about exposure," replied Woody. "So, we heard a little bit about reading and literacy. It's not just, and I have to give a nod to our Early Childhood director, Alyssa. When I asked her about it a little bit, she said it's reading the words on the page. It's understanding the sound, it's understanding the language, it's having conversations with your little ones. It's getting the kids into preschool so they can work. This is important! They grow; they thrive; being in preschool and family engagement.

Hope Toledo has a family engagement specialist and a Professional Development Support Specialist, who do the work! That helps people learn what to do! It's important that the community "shows up" to teach the right ways to support their children! Early literacy is important, because that is when most of the development happens: behavioral, social, emotional and cognitive. All of that happens early on, that's why it's so important that we do early literacy! We know that from age two to six, our children's vocabulary increases from 200 words to 10,000 words! So, it's important that we work with that and celebrate that; and we know how important that is! When/if they enter kindergarten and lack the skills necessary to learn, they lag behind! But...if they have been exposed to the preschool education, they are able to enter into kindergarten and ready to learn! More than likely to graduate from high school on time and then more likely to enter into post-secondary or trade school, and/or the work force! We talk about the work force and what happens: from the Cradle...to Career!! You have to add community to that! Because it takes community from the beginning to work to make sure we are supporting early literacy from the cradle. And post-secondary and work force development. All tied together, all important and all starts early. Give the kids the strong start they deserve. Celebrate from Cradle to Career!

"The mission of Hope Toledo is to support and ensure higher quality and education...that is preschool, post-secondary, or training school. And that is to make sure we create generational economic change for the betterment of our community and families. And so, a lot of ways we do that, we'll talk about that a little bit later on the preschool side and the post-secondary side. But what we believe is that every person should have access to high quality affordable education... And so, we support preschool providers, started with ten now we have twenty. And we also have three cohorts of post-secondary school scholars: parents, and the youngsters who just recently graduated from high school in 2020, 2021 and 2022. "

"Tracee, I'd like you to tell us about what other factors are at play when we look at literacy rates. For example, things like food and security, income levels, poverty, access to transportation. Can you dig into that a little bit for us?" asked Johnston of Perryman.

"I was really happy I was assigned this question because, one of the secrets to success and improving literacy outcomes and academic outcomes

... continued on page 11

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Deltas Host Annual "Breakfast for M'Lady"

By Tricia Hall

The Truth Reporter

The ladies of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. held their fabulous event called Breakfast for M'Lady at the Pinnacle in Maumee on Saturday, May 13.

The 45th annual breakfast focused this year on honoring our past and reclaiming our future. Guests were greeted at the doors, had access to vendors and plenty of music. A warm welcome and formal introduction of those seated at the head table was completed by Andrea Jones, the program chair and chapter second vice president.

Chapter president, Tonia Pace delivered a warm welcome to all of the individuals in attendance. Followed by Donna Hill and Roxanne Allen who shared a prayer and led the Negro National Anthem.

"Our gift today is the opportunity to provide scholarships to these young people, that is the ultimate reason why we continue each year. I'm also honored to hear the wisdom from our speakers, honored to receive the support from our community and opportunity to fellowship," shared Pace.

The program included a moment to honor women known as the Violets Class, two speakers, Delta DEAR presentation, acknowledgement of 25 and 50 years of sorority membership, presentation of Mother of the Year, and Delta of the year presentation.

The Violets Class of 2023 were: Vivian Bush, Joyce Henderson, Billie Lothery and Sandra Strong. Aleyah Oliver, BGSU graduate and Midwest Regional Representative of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc was the first featured speaker and Collette Smith, the first black female NFL coach, founder of Believe In You Inc and honorary member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Incorporated was the second featured speaker.

"I plan to talk about self-love, empowerment and inspiration to honor the little girl that had self-love. We want to build her up so she can reclaim the future today. It's a joy to be here. I am surrounded by self-love and excellence today," shared Smith.

Alpha Bishop Patricia McKinstry was selected as Mother of the Year. Bishop McKinstry serves on the board of Joint College of Bishops, advisor of the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance, Founder of the McKinstry Midwest College of Theology and Founder of Rise and Shine Academy.

The main purpose of the breakfast is to raise and award scholarships to deserving young ladies. The sorority has awarded more than \$250,000 in scholarships to local high school seniors.

The 2023 scholarship recipients were: Sydney Gregory, Erin LaFaso and Jordan Rosales.

Sydney Gregory is graduating from St. Ursula Academy. She has been

a student Ambassador and basketball player for four years, two-term Afro Club president and loves lacrosse. She is a lifelong member of Braden

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Scholarship recipients with scholarship committee - Alisha Durham (committee member); recipients Gregory, LaFaso and Rosales and Shannon Carter (committee member)



Tonia Pace (Chapter President), and speakers Aleyah Oliver and Collette Smith



Breakfast for M'Lady Committee (back row), Aleyah Oliver, Dr. Tonia Pace and Collette Smith (front row)



Mother of the Year Bishop Pat McKinstry with Toledo Urban Federal CU associates, Board VP Rev. Jerry Boose and CEO Suzette Cowell



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Toledo's Lupus Awareness Weekend

The Truth Staff

Joyce Goings has been a lupus sufferer and survivor for decades but until a year ago, she had not realized that there were so many others in the area, particularly Black women, who also suffered from the same fate.

Then she met Rachelle Roy and others during the leadup to the 2022 Lupus Awareness Walk and discovered a new community of women with whom she could share her journey.

Goings, 80 years old, has been suffering from lupus for 42 years – that is she was diagnosed 42 years ago. Goings suffers from discoid lupus as does Roy.

What exactly is lupus? Lupus is different things to different people in the affect on their lives but essentially it is for everyone a chronic health condi-

... continued on page 11



Lupus Luncheon Panel



Luncheon Guests



Lupus survivors Joyce Goings and Rachelle Roy



Felicia Howard and Victoria White



First Strike winner prize (Beverly Goings and Rachelle Roy)



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Living with Lupus Weekend 2023

By Tricia Hall

The Truth Reporter

"Living with Lupus Weekend 2023," organized by Rachele Roy, helped raise awareness and funds for a worthy cause. The weekend activities were dedicated to her lupus sister, Schatzia Depp who passed in March 2023.

The weekend included a Friday night party with a purpose called, 'You Can't Break Her Soul'. Attendees were asked to donate a wig and enjoy an evening of fun and fellowship. Saturday featured a wig giveaway at Mott Branch Library and bowling social at All Strikes Lanes. Sunday closed out the weekend with the Lupus Walk at Ottawa Park.

"We're still raising funds for Lupus because Friday's turnout was low

due to the rain. I ended up purchasing some wigs that were donated on Saturday. We had a great turn out on Saturday, six ladies attended and 30 wigs in total were donated. It's honestly not about the money, but about changing how the people feel about themselves," shared Rachele Roy.

Seaway Market Place of Toledo has partnered with this cause for the past three years. The grocery store is located at 1707 Cherry Street in Toledo.

"Seaway is one of our biggest supporters as a sponsor. I am grateful for the three years that Seaway has agreed to be a sponsor," shared Rachele Roy.



Joyce E Goings with children and grandchildren



Sisters Raise Awareness and Honor Sister with Lupus Luncheon

By Tricia Hall

The Truth Reporter

Throng of people came out for the second annual Lupus Awareness Luncheon on Saturday, May 20. The Scott Park Banquet Hall was filled to capacity with people who are living with lupus, family members of those diagnosed with lupus and community supporters of this cause. The luncheon was organized by two sisters, Felicia Howard and Victoria White, in honor of their sister Reeshemah Adams, who passed in 2018 of the disease.

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Want to become a nurse? There's never been a better time.

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A NURSING EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

The African American Festival: "Celebrating Our History, Health and Education"

The Truth Staff

Now in its 18th year, the annual African American Festival is still going strong ... much stronger in fact after all these years.

Last Thursday, Siuzette Cowell, founder of the Festival and keeper of the flame announced the plans for this 18th version and, as usual, the newest version will dwarf its humble beginnings.

The 2023 version includes a Friday morning breakfast; a Saturday morning parade followed by a Community Day, and the festival and concert on Saturday afternoon and evening at Promendae Park.

During her Thursday announcement, surrounded by staff and local city and county officials, Cowell noted the extraordinary progress the Festival has undergone since the initial 2005 event at the corner of Dorr and Smead and at Nelson Grace Park – an event that drew around 600 attendees for the entire weekend.

The concert will be packed with thousands again this year and the parade," said Cowell, "is the most friendly parade" the city features.

The opening event will be the annual African American Prayer Breakfast at the Toledo Museum of Art Glass Pavilion on Friday July 14 at 8:00 a.m.

On Saturday, the Festival Parade will start at 10 a.m. in front of the Credit Union on Dorr and Detroit. After the parade a Community Day will be held at Nelson Grace Park from noon to 3:00 p.m. The Community Day will present displays and activities for families from a variety of local institutions and organizations such as the Toledo Zoo and the Toledo Museum of Art. Dance teams, horseback riding and other amusements for children will be available.

Later on Saturday, starting at 3:00 p.m. the Festival and Concert at Promenade Park commences with entertainers such as comedienne Kelly Williams and musical performances by Darius Coleman, DJ Lyte N Rod, Freddie Jackson, Stokely, Ginuwine, The Zapp Band.

"Over the years the festival has become a standard for the African American community and the largest African American event held in the City of Toledo," notes the Toledo Urban Federal Credit Union.



Suzette Cowell, TUFUCU CEO, surrounded by staff and local elected officials, announces African American Festival details



The Zapp Band



Ginuwine



Freddie Jackson

MLK Academy Holds Mother/Son Dance

By Sheila Annette Cook, MLK Academy Community/Family Resource & Outreach

This is eighth Annual Mother/Son Dance at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Academy for Boys, titled "Pastels and Pearls." Each year this event goes to another level. We have wonderful things in store for next year.

Thank you to our sponsor RFS Behavioral Health, our caterer, City Barbecue, our DJ- DJ Big Lou, "The Mayor," our MC-Montreece Terry. To our principal- Wilie Ward and, of course, our mothers and sons, thank you!

Our sons were so handsome, and our mothers were gorgeous. It was a wonderful evening filled with fun, and love. Thank you all for such a wonderful evening.



Lupus Awareness Weekend... continued from page 8

tion that lasts a long time and that currently has no cure.

It is a disease that involves the immune system and can damage any part of the body. The immune system is like a bodyguard against invaders, such as viruses, bacteria, and other germs. Normally, a part of the immune system works to fight off these invaders by making antibodies - molecules in the body that, when working correctly, protect the body from foreign invaders such as viruses and bacteria.

However, in the case of lupus, the immune system can't tell the difference between the invaders and the body's own healthy tissue. It creates autoantibodies - antibodies that destroy the body's own healthy cells, which can cause inflammation and organ damage. that attack and destroy the healthy tissue, causing inflammation.

Over five million people around the world have some form of lupus. While anyone can suffer from lupus:

- Women ages 15-44 are most likely to develop lupus. In fact, lupus occurs 9 out of 10 times more often in women than in men.
- Women of color, including African American, Asian, Hispanic/Latina, Native American, and Pacific Islander women, are also more likely to develop lupus compared with Caucasian women.
- People who have a family member with lupus or another autoimmune disease are more at risk

Rachelle Roy, organizer of the Toledo area effort to bring awareness to lupus, was diagnosed with discoid lupus in 2005. She suffers from discoid,

or cutaneous, lupus which primarily affects the face and results in frequent outbreaks and inflammation. A Scott High School graduate who attended Bowling Green State University and has been a letter carrier for 25 years, she first experienced a skin rash in her early 30's - a skin rash that was not properly diagnosed in the initial stages. That early stage appeared as an acne breakout and the medicine prescribed was ineffective.

She quietly lived with the discomfort and the loss of self-esteem for years before accepting her fate and deciding that it was time to do something about the public's indifference to the disease.

This year, Joyce Goings was one of the many women who participated in the Lupus Awareness Weekend that Roy organized. Wigs were collected from donors on Friday evening, many courtesy of Calvin Powell of Powell's Beauty & Barber Supplies.

Saturday afternoon, the wigs were distributed to lupus survivors at the Mott Branch Library and Saturday night, Roy held a bowling night at All Strikes Lanes. Sunday, of course, was the traditional walk at Ottawa Park.

Roy was not the only organizer of lupus awareness events this past weekend, however. A luncheon was held on Saturday at Scott Park Banquet Hall that included a panel discussion.

In just a few short years, due to the efforts of a few dedicated activists, lupus, a disease that affects primarily women - 90 percent of those infected are women - and disproportionately African American women, has taken center stage here in Toledo as those activists attempt to inform and connect the community.

Sisters Raise Awareness... continued from page 9

"We're giving this event in honor of our sister. We honor her today. The proceeds will be donated to the Lupus Foundation of America, Greater Ohio Chapter. We want to raise awareness in the community," said Felicia Howard.

"Thank you for joining us for the second annual Lupus Awareness luncheon. It's good to be among so many people who want to learn more about Lupus. I'm happy to see so many supporters, some new supporters and returning supporters as we celebrate my sister," said Victoria White.

Purple and white decorations welcomed guests as they wore purple ribbons, which is worn in promotion of lupus awareness. May is Lupus Awareness Month, according to the sisters and the Lupus Foundation of America. The awareness goal to rally the community to raise funds for the cause, awareness about the symptoms and awareness for those who live or died from Lupus.

Lupus is a chronic, also known as a long-term, disease that causes inflammation and pain in many parts of the body. Lupus is an autoimmune disease that causes the body to attack healthy tissue instead of fighting infections. In order to raise awareness, the luncheon included panelists who spoke about mental and physical health, dietary needs and restrictions, dermatology and a testimony from a Lupus Warrior named Valaje Hester.

Panelists included: Dr. Bashar Kahaleh, MD; Dr. Nezam Altorok, MD; Erika D.White; Nadea Minet; Shay Bankston; Nicole Bergman, PA and Dr. Joanne.

"We believe that healing occurs within the entire family, not just the individual. I look forward to sharing more with you today," said Bankston.

"I was misdiagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis, then eventually was diagnosed with lupus. It was a rollercoaster because I had to call off work and dealt with kidney function issues," shared Hester.

"In simple terms, lupus will impact your body. Whether your misdiagnosed or diagnosed later in your journey, you'll have to learn how to adapt to medication and your lifestyle. I encourage you to engage with these professionals and doctors up here and get involved with trials if you are asked. We need to show up for these trials because research is based off white males," noted White.

Reeshemah Adams, the event honoree, was born in 1978 was misdiagnosed at age of 18, received the correct diagnosis at age 30 and passed

away in 2018. Her sister spoke about how Adams had to deal with many of the symptoms, including her skin and kidney.

"This hits us harder than other groups of people and unfortunately it mimics other diseases like rheumatoid arthritis. The earlier you receive a correct diagnosis the earlier you'll receive help because this is a life changing disease," shared Howard.

The luncheon was also supported by Rosalyn Welch, who provided decorations, catering by Allen and his mom, JuicyFruit Creations LLC. It was also supported by these sponsors: The Movement, State Farm Insurance agent Sara Ross, Studio Three Two Nine, The House of Day Funeral Services, Toledo Urban Federal Credit Union, UChange, Quality Time Child Care Center and many others.

For additional information about Lupus, visit the Lupus Foundation of America Greater Ohio chapter website or the Lupus Foundation of America national website <https://lupusgreaterohio.org/> or <https://www.lupus.org/>

Greater Toledo... continued from page 6

is understanding and remembering, that all of us are shaped by the social conditions at which we're born, we live, and we work," said Perryman. "Our primary focus is closing opportunity gaps. And that is by reducing barriers to access and increasing opportunities to drive. We started tutoring in our fellowship home in the back of our small church, in 1999. And we were doing a Bible Study for the adults. And it was a dream to grow to this level; basically, these were the strengths we knew we had.

"We had all been pretty well educated and we thought that those skills and talents would be a benefit to the neighborhood and community where there was certainly a lack of resources. So here we are! The movement started in 1997. So, 26 years later we are serving after school students in three school districts: Toledo Public, Sylvania and Washington Local, nine schools. We are an innovation and excellence award winner. And we won that award one of the years we went into a school.

"And for our students that come from under resourced areas, one of the problems they must contend with daily is being expected to do more with less! They are expected to score at proficient, whether or not their school provided resources. They struggle to understand and one secret to success is not losing heart! We must aspire...when they have barriers and I tell this to parents too, in our parenting classes."



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In Memoriam

Jim Brown – February 17, 1936 – May 18, 2023

Jim Brown was born in tiny and segregated St. Simons Island, Ga. He moved to Long Island at age 8 and took up football while attending Manhasset High School, where he averaged 39.6 points per game in his lone season of high school basketball. He started at Syracuse University without a football scholarship, and though he soon became a football star, he also was a standout on Syracuse's lacrosse, track and basketball teams.

Brown is a member of the College Football Hall of Fame and the Lacrosse Hall of Fame.

The Browns, then coached and run by Hall of Famer Paul Brown, selected Jim Brown in the first round of the 1957 draft. In the ninth game of his rookie season, Jim Brown set an NFL single-game record that would stand for 40 years when he ran for 237 yards against the Rams.

Brown had a pair of 17-touchdown seasons rushing, in 1958 and again in 1965. During that 1958 season, Los Angeles Rams defensive tackle Glenn Holtzman told Sports Illustrated that tackling Brown was like tackling a locomotive. "Fast as the fastest, hard as the hardest," Holtzman said. "He gets off to the quickest start of any big man I've ever seen."

"To this day, I remember being a little kid and watching Jim Brown carry the football on Sunday afternoons," said native Northeast Ohioan and former University of Missouri head coach Gary Pinkel, a 2022 College Football Hall of Fame inductee. "His dominance was something I never forgot. As I got older and worked in the college game around the country, I always remained a Browns fan because I'll always remember being 9 or 10 years old and just being in awe of the way he'd turn a simple pitch into a big gain. Jim Brown was larger than life on that little TV screen."

Brown averaged 104.3 rushing yards per game in his career, still the most in NFL history by nearly 5 yards. Brown still has six of the seven most productive rushing seasons in Browns history. The Browns played 12 games a year in Brown's first four years and 14 games in his last five. Despite that, no other Cleveland running back topped 1,300 yards in a season until Jamal Lewis did it in 2007.

In 1966, he created the Negro Industrial Economic Union to help Black-owned businesses. On June 4, 1967, he organized what came to

be known as the Cleveland Summit to support Muhammad Ali after Ali was stripped of his heavyweight titles for refusing to be drafted by the military during the Vietnam War. Ali was facing intense public scrutiny and the possibility of prison when Brown invited a number of prominent Black athletes to his Cleveland headquarters, including Boston Celtics

...continued on page 13



Deltas... continued from page 7

United Methodist Church where she provides messages during youth Sundays, serves as a junior usher and acolyte. She plans to enroll at Morgan State University to major in Political Science, minor in African American Studies to become a corporate or criminal lawyer.

Erin LaFaso is graduating from Anthony Wayne High School and loves soccer. She was on the ECNL Pacesetter team starting her freshman year, which gave her an opportunity to travel outside the country. She plans to enroll at The Ohio State University to major in Biochemistry as a Pre-Med major.

Jordan Rosales is graduating from Toledo Christian as a four-year honor roll student while maintaining a 3.7 GPA. In 2021, she was inducted into the National Honors Society. She is a four-year varsity basketball and track athlete and has received All Academic Ohio. She is a member of Toledo Excel Program, Youth Leadership Toledo and volunteers at Masonic Ministries and St Paul's to mention a few. She plans to enroll at Ashland University to major in business and sports management and marketing.

Delta Sigma Theta Sorority was founded at Howard University by 22 women. Since its founding, more than 300,000 women have joined the organization. The sorority currently has 1,000 collegiate and alumnae chapters located in the United States, Canada, Japan, Germany, the Virgin Islands, Bermuda, the Bahamas, Jamaica, the Republic of Korea, the Arabian Gulf and West Africa. The first Toledo chapter was formed by seven women in 1937. In 1972, the Toledo Alumnae Chapter was established.

Local chapter officers: Tonia Pace, President; Erica Parish, First Vice President; Andrea Jones, Second Vice President; Stacey Jackson-Jones, Recording Secretary; Antoinette Allen, Corresponding Secretary; Tene Jackson, Financial Secretary; Tee Draper, Assistance Financial Secretary; Chantell Cargile, Treasurer; and Roxanne Quinn, Assistant Treasurer. Event Committee: Andrea Jones, Michelle McCaster, Wanda Galloway-Terrell, Jacqueline Hudson, Pascha Jackson, Aleshia Jackson, Aleshia Miller, Ambershaun Miller-Byrd, Roxanne Quinn and ShaCara Sneed. Scholarship Committee: Alisha Durham, Shannon Carter, Stacey Jackson-Jones, Stephanie Teamer and Frankie Young.

Backyard Gardens
Family Food & Fun
Maybe a chicken or 2 too!

June 13, 2023, 6 to 8 p.m.

First Unitarian Church of Toledo, 3205 Glendale Ave.

Yes...gardening is work and brings a reward ... AND can be fun...but make no mistake it's a lifestyle that helps sustain your family especially during climate change and is worth the work.

Come learn more ... kids activities...have a **FREE** walking taco. (as long as they last).

Enter to win one of 10 native plants. Receive a free tree seedling & free native plant seeds from Wild Ones.

Visit with following folks about their efforts to help us all grow our own food and live more sustainably.

- **Homestead Gardens**—Learn about backyard gardening in-ground and in pots to supply food for the family. Chickens do their part with daily eggs. Pollinator plants help to keep the bees and us alive!
- **Solar Power** — Tina Baker will tell her story of installing and benefitting from in her backyard panels.
- **Community Gardens**— Learn about how gardens have been established around the city and how to grow and eat the healthy food produced. You'll also learn of the benefits of the native plants in the garden.
- **Turning Vacant to Green**—Sierra Webb will tell you about how Urban Wholistics is growing gardens on what was vacant, abandoned property in the city.
- **Church Gardens** — Take a tour of the Unitarian rain garden which captures rain runoff from the parking lot and learn about the Monroe St. United Methodist's neighborhood garden.
- **Importance of Trees**— Tom McDonald of Tree Toledo will talk about the importance of trees to our environment and he'll bring seedlings to give away.
- **OSU Extension Office**—Learn about Lucas County 4H Clubs and other aspects of its work.

THANKS to Unitarian David Strickler who will welcome us all with his guitar and singing.
The Unitarian Church is sponsoring this Unitarian Action event because one of the Unitarian's principles is to have
"Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part."

African American Biographies by Various Authors

By Terri Schlichenmeyer
The Truth Contributor

You are never alone in this world.

Reach out, and you can always get help. Look around, and you'll find company. Pick up one of these great books, and you'll read about someone whose life was fascinating, and who you can admire and aspire to be like...

c.2023
various publishers
\$25.00-\$32.00
various page counts

For anyone who likes to watch the ponies, or who thrills to the Triple Crown each year, **Isaac Murphy: The Rise and Fall of a Black Jockey** by Katherine C. Mooney (Yale University Press, \$25) is a book filled with action and history.

Isaac Murphy was born a slave in 1861 and became a horse jockey, as many Black men did then. Horse racing was one of America's most popular sports in the mid-nineteenth-century and Murphy was one of America's most well-known athletes, Black and white – but while his work, the races he won, and the prizes he captured made him famous then, Murphy is often forgotten today. This is an excellent look at a quietly hidden part of Black history, and it can't be missed.

In **Samuel Ringgold Ward: A Life of Struggle** by R.J.M. Blackett (Yale University Press, \$25), you'll read about another person you've likely never heard about. Though he was born early in the 1800s, Ward was not ever enslaved, but he knew the pain of inequality and so he dedicated his life to being an abolitionist.

A contemporary of Frederick Douglass, Ward was also a minister, a highly regarded newspaper editor, a speaker, and he firmly believed that alcohol needed to be banned. Why his name fell into obscurity and why you should know about his life and his work makes an excellent read for anyone of any age.

Fans of MTV back in the day, and fans of music over the last forty years will love reading **Top Billin'** by Bill Bellamy (Amistad, \$29.99). In the 1990s, when MTV was still mostly a music channel on cable television, Bellamy was one of its biggest stars. This book remembers those years, and Bellamy's interviews and friendships with people like Biggie and Tupac, Janet Jackson, the late Kurt Cobain, Snoop Dogg, Eddie Murphy, and many big names.

You'll also read about Bellamy's early life, his family, and his other work in music videos. Oh, and you'll laugh, because Bellamy's a funny

guy. If you remember the 90s, you'll want this book.

And finally, if ancient lives are your thing, find **The West: A New History in Fourteen Lives** by Naoise Mac Sweeney (Dutton, \$32). Read about Phillis Wheatley, scholar Al-Kindi of Arabia, Herodotus (who was of mixed race), and 12 other influential lives that left their mark on Western civilization. History scholars: head's up on this one. This book is meant for readers like you.

And if these great life stories aren't enough, go find your favorite librarian or bookseller and ask for help. They know books, they have access to millions of biographies, they'll know exactly what you want to read next.

And with a great book by your side, you're never alone.

Jim Brown... continued from page 12

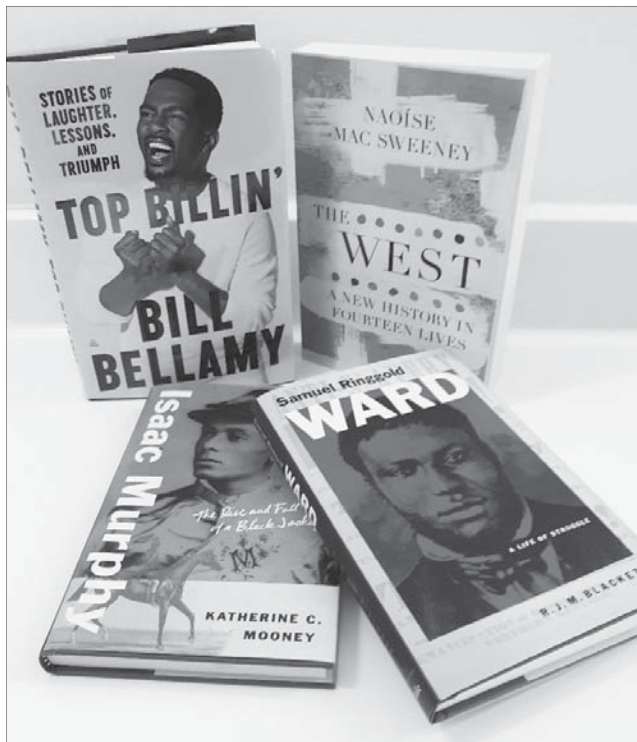
star Bill Russell and UCLA center Lew Alcindor (who later changed his name to Kareem Abdul-Jabbar).

"I felt with Ali taking the position he was taking, and with him losing the crown, and with the government coming at him with everything they had, that we as a body of prominent athletes could get the truth and stand behind Ali and give him the necessary support," Brown told the Cleveland Plain Dealer in 2012.

The best player in Browns history maintained an on-again, off-again relationship with the franchise early in its new era, but in 2013, he officially took on a special advisor's role to Jimmy and Dee Haslam. Though he lived in Los Angeles, Brown was semi-regularly seen in recent years on a golf cart at Browns' practices and other team events. He usually attended the annual Pro Football Hall of Fame induction in Canton, Ohio.

In 1971, Brown became the first of three former Browns running backs to be inducted into the Pro Football Hall of Fame. Bobby Mitchell, a running back who also played wide receiver because his four years in Cleveland coincided with Brown's, was inducted in 1983. Leroy Kelly was inducted in 1994 after making six Pro Bowls and twice leading the NFL in rushing. For perspective on just how dominant Brown was, Kelly had 74 career rushing touchdowns – 32 fewer than Brown had in his nine seasons, eight of which ended with Brown being named a first-team All-Pro.

"When Jim Brown's name was announced in a room, other Hall of Famers stood and applauded him," Hall of Fame President Jim Porter said. "His persona has stood the test of time – a fearless and dominant football player. Jim will always be remembered as one of pro football's greatest individuals. Our thoughts and prayers are with Jim's wife, Monique, and their entire family. The Hall of Fame will honor his legacy for years to come."



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CLASSIFIEDS

May 24, 2023

Page 14

Lucas County Board of Elections Hiring Election Workers.

The Board of Elections is in need of Election Day workers, Precinct Election Officials (PEO) and seasonal workers for the August 8th, 2023, Special Election cycle. Every election cycle, thousands of Ohioans play an important role in our democracy by working for the Board of Elections. These Election Day workers, PEOs and seasonal workers work hard to ensure that their neighbors can vote with ease, while also helping to safeguard the process so that all Ohioans can have confidence in the results.

PEO time commitment includes a mandatory training class, the Monday evening set-up prior to Election Day, and work to be performed on Election Day (typically starting at 5:30 a.m. and concluding at 8:30 p.m.). PEO's will be paid a minimum of \$185 for training and completion of Election Day work.

Election Day worker hours will be dependent upon job specification. Hours worked will be between 2 and 15 hours dependent upon job assignment. Election Day workers are paid between \$13 and \$19 an hour. Positions available are rovers, riders, hospital patient ballot delivery, substitution worker and election night tabulation workers. Some jobs require mandatory training at \$15 to \$25 per class.

Seasonal worker scheduling begins as early as Monday, June 26th, and lasts through Saturday, August 12th. Positions for seasonal employees are available in the absentee-by-mail department, the Early Voting Center, general office and warehouse. Starting pay is \$14.25 an hour.

Qualifications:

- ✓ You must be a U.S. citizen, 18 years of age and a registered voter in Lucas County
- ✓ You must not have been convicted of a felony, and you cannot be a candidate for office in the election for which you would be working as a PEO
- ✓ Must have reliable transportation.

To work as a PEO, please contact:

Robert Royster at (419) 213-2043 RJRoyster@lucascountyoh.gov or
Veronica Hill at (419) 213-2034 Vrhill@lucascountyoh.gov

If you are interested in any Election Day or seasonal position, please contact:

Pamela Wilson at (419) 213-2644 prwilson@lucascountyoh.gov or
Patricia Smith at (419) 213-2045 pasmith@lucascountyoh.gov

For employment applications, go to Lucas County Board of Elections website:
lucascountyohiovotes.gov

DIRECTOR OF MAJOR GIFTS AND PLANNED GIVING

WGTE Public Media is seeking an accomplished Director of Major Gifts and Planned Giving. Candidate will be a front-line fundraising professional responsible for securing funds for the organization by strategically managing a portfolio of prospects and donors with a giving potential of five figures or more. The Director creates and maintains relationships, connecting donor interests to WGTE Public Media's priorities and includes identifying, qualifying, cultivating, soliciting, and stewarding major and planned gift prospects and donors. Retaining and upgrading existing donors through strategic engagement and stewardship is expected. This person is detail and goal-oriented, with demonstrated skills in relationship building, project support, information management, and verbal and written communication. The Director will work to increase annual revenue, identify new sources of support, and drive the major and planned giving strategy. A bachelor's degree, CFRE, a minimum of 5 years of sales or fundraising experience, experience crafting gift proposals resulting in five and six-figure gifts from individuals, strong prospect research skills, and thorough knowledge of estate and charitable gift planning are preferred.

WGTE Public Media provides a competitive salary and excellent benefits and is committed to attracting and retaining a diverse staff that honors your experience, perspective, and unique identity. Together, the team at WGTE strives to create and maintain working and learning environments that are inclusive, equitable, and welcoming.

Send your letter and résumé to: Human Resources, P.O. Box 30, Toledo, OH 43614, or at [_blank:employment@wgte.org] employment@wgte.org, EOE/ADA.



Area Office on Aging
of Northwestern Ohio, Inc.

We are looking to fill a **temporary grant-funded**, full-time position. with a salary range of \$50,000-\$60,000.

The **Temporary Vaccine Project Manager** position aims to lead AOoA's efforts to reach its grant-funded vaccine project goals of providing 3,500 COVID and/or flu vaccines to northwest Ohioans and providing vaccine outreach/education to 500,000 individuals by April 2024. Works within the established project budget and collaborates with the Department Director and VP to develop outreach & marketing materials and updates. This position coordinates all aspects of vaccine clinics, scheduling homebound vaccinations, outreach activities, and interviewing and hiring temporary staff under the grant. The candidate is responsible for maintaining communication with the Aging & Disability Vaccination Collaborative, effective record-keeping, and completing statistical reports.

Qualifications: Bachelor's degree in business, Public Administration, Public Health, Organizational Development, Marketing, Management Information Systems, **Preferred** Master of Public Health (MPH) or Master of Public Administration (MPA)

Minimum one year's experience in Project Management and Demonstrated experience in relationship building. Awareness of community, agencies, resources, and services. Willing to travel locally, to and within all ten counties of the Agency's Service area.

Excellent Benefits: Very welcoming, professional, family-friendly work environment. EOE.

Submit resume to jobs@areaofficeonaging.com

Area Office on Aging
2155 Arlington Ave.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL LUCAS COUNTY CANINE CARE & CONTROL (LC4) – BID PACKAGE 3

Rudolph Libbe will receive proposals for Lucas County Canine Care & Control (LC4) – Bid Package 3. This Bid Package involves procurement of mechanical equipment, electrical equipment, and furnish/install of building structural steel.

Bids are due May 23, 2023, 12:00 p.m.

Bidding documents are available online at BuildingConnected. To receive an invitation to access these documents, contact Andy Wren at (419) 725-3291.

One (1) set of bidding documents will be available to review at no charge, between the hours of 9 a.m. and 3 p.m., at 6494 Latcha Road, Walbridge, OH.

This project has MBE/WBE requirements.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL COLLINGWOOD GREEN PHASE V

Rudolph Libbe will receive proposals for Collingwood Green Phase V, a 75 unit, 4 story, wood framed senior housing project. Located at 400 Nebraska, Toledo, OH.

Bids are due June 1, 2023 at 2:00 pm.

Documents and additional information is available on Builders Exchange.com
This project has MBE/WBE requirements and is covered under Section 3 of the HUD Act of 1968.

HUD Number 042-EE276

For more information on this project, please contact Scott Gross at 419-725-3176.

Toledo Corvette-Club's Annual Parade

The Truth Staff

A sure sign that the seasonal glorious weather has arrived in northwest Ohio is when the members of the Toledo Corvette-Club unwrap those beautiful vehicles that have been in storage during the winter weather and parade down Dorr Street.

On Saturday, April 20, they did just that and, as usual, took up a worthwhile cause to promote. This year the Club teamed with Toledo United for Social Action, Mt. Nebo Baptist Church Youth Ministry and the City of Toledo's Violence Interrupters to urge youngsters not to resort to the terrible gun violence that has become such a part of the Toledo central city.

"This year so many kids are [involved in] shootings, we want to show them they don't have to shoot themselves," said Seldon Hill, president of the Corvette-Club. Noting that members of his club have started and led successful lives such as presidents and managers of businesses, or in trades such as tool-and-die, Hill observed that "these people did the right things, kids can look at us and see there is a right way out there."

Joining the club members were Rev. James Willis and Bishop Marcia Dinkins of TUSA, Rev. Cedric Brock of Mt. Nebo's Youth Ministry's Boys to Men in Christ and Divas groups (for boys and girls respectively) and David Bush, coordinator of the City of Toledo's Violence Interrupters, along with several dozen youngsters from St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church and Mt. Nebo Baptist Church.

"Hands up, minds up, guns down," said Brock, echoing the mantra of his church's groups.

"The purpose of the march is to start focusing on our youth," said Willis. "To show them that gun violence is not tolerated and to let them see what they can do as they go forward in life."

As for the impact of the event on adults, Willis added: "Our children are our future, however, if you don't spend time with them, there won't be a future."



TUSA's Bishop Marcia Dinkins and Rev. James Willis



Funding Opportunity OPEN NOW



Mental Health & Recovery Services Board of Lucas County

Mental Wellness Community Grants



This round of funding includes ten Grants of up to **\$20,000** per awarded project.

We are looking for proposals that aim to reduce the impact of mental illness & addiction on individuals and families in Lucas County and reduce violence and its effects in Toledo.

This is a unique opportunity to bring your innovative ideas to life to make a real community impact.

Visit www.lcmhrsb.oh.gov/minigrant for more info and to apply.

Toledo League of Champions End Season with Championship Game

The Truth Staff

This past weekend, the sixth through eighth grade girls of the Toledo League of Champions ended their inaugural season with playoffs and championship game at Leverette Elementary School. The five-team basketball league, which helps to fill a void during the off season was a huge success considering it's currently the only opportunity for girls of this age to continue their hoops dreams in the spring.

The league is the brainchild of Torri Blanchard, herself a former player – outstanding player at that during her years at Scott High School and, afterwards, at Urbana College – and now the mother of a young player, a fifth grader named Lila.

In April 2022, when Lila's fourth grade season ended, Blanchard decided to look around and find a team, a league where Lila could play during the off-season.

Her search turned out to be a frustrating and ultimately disappointing experience.

"I tried to find a league for her for the summer – it was the exact opposite of what I expected," recalls Blanchard. "I called all over. There was no place for young girls to play so I ended up working her out during that summer."

There was really only one thing to do if Blanchard wanted her daughter and other young girls to be able to play ball during the off season and her godfather, George Rice, pointed her in that direction.

You need to start your own league, Rice told her. But Blanchard, whose busy life revolved around two young children and a full time and a part time job, didn't feel quite up to that undertaking ... not at first. But Rice offered to help and basketball has always been a family tradition with the Blanchards. Torri's sister, Taria, herself a standout player during her school years, and her father Herbert (Coach Pete), along with extended family would be there to assist her.



Torri passed out flyers, sent email blasts and notified those in the Toledo area of her intentions "anywhere I thought girls in those demographics might be."

So a league was formed this April, consisting of five teams of players at the seventh and eighth grade levels – the Toledo League of Champions. The five teams – The Toledo Skyy, Old West End Queens, Lady Bears, Lady Bratz, Home Girls - played a five-week schedule culminating in this past weekend's playoffs and championship game.

The Old West End Queens, led by Most Valuable Player Honey Harper, defeated the Toledo Skyy in their Saturday noon match up.

Now that the spring season is complete, Torri hopes to continue into the summer with a series of three-on-three basketball tournaments – "to give girls a reason and the space to work on their game.

"This does matter," says Blanchard. "These girls will turn into women and we will have created a bond that will last over the years. It's limitless as to what they will become."

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Old West End Queens



MVP Honey Harper



Torri Blanchard



Runners up The Toledo Skyy

