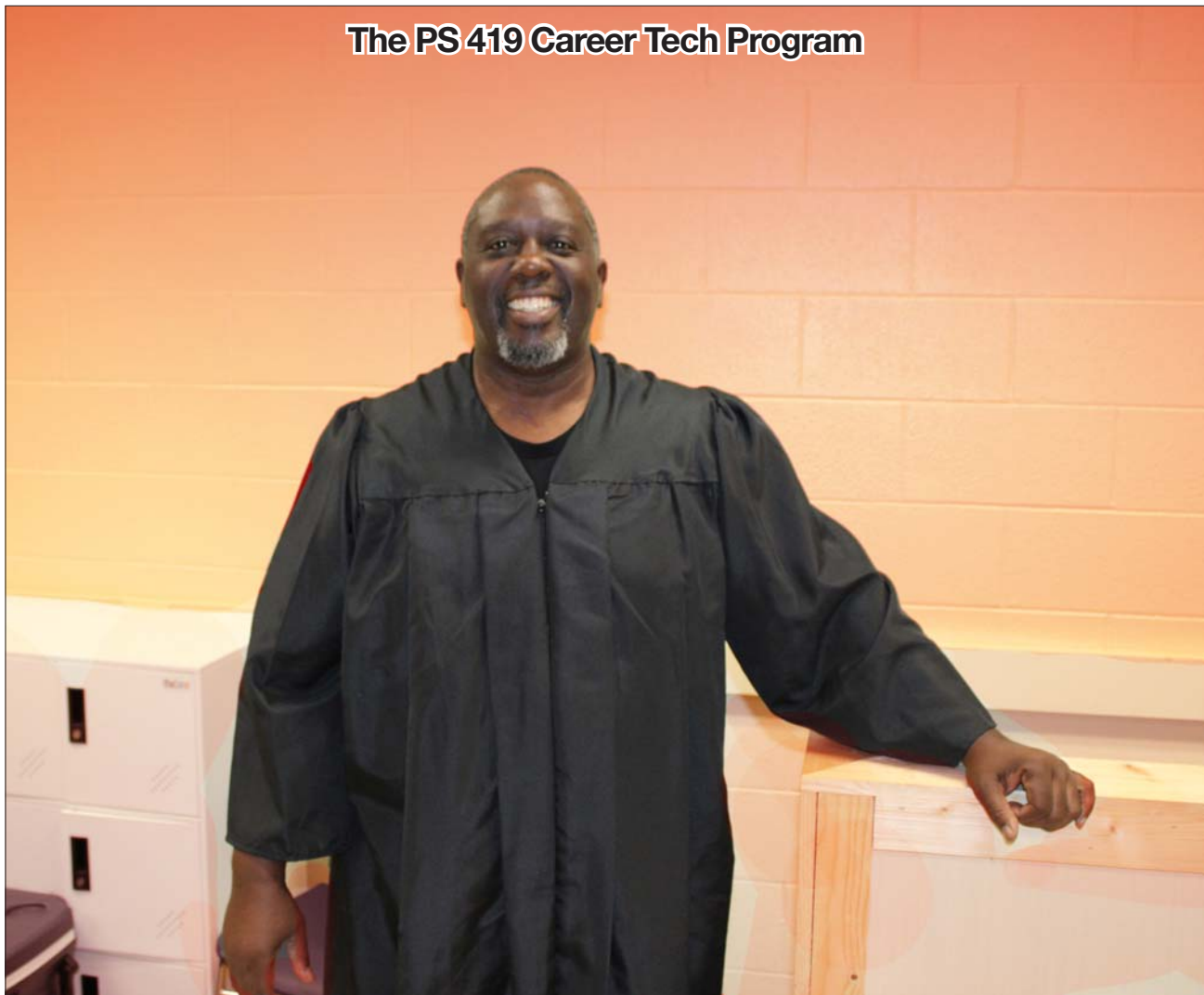


Volume 81 No. 2 *“And Ye Shall Know The Truth...”* November 22, 2023

The PS 419 Career Tech Program



Andre Tiggs, coach, mentor, speaker, teacher

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Illuminating Pathways

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

The Truth Contributor

In order to be it, you must see it.

- Lupita Nyong'o



No one understands the power of representation and visibility in shaping one's goals and ambitions quite like Andre Tiggs, a figure whose life journey embodies the transformative impact of mentorship and the importance of diverse pathways in career development.

From his early days at Mount Vernon Elementary School through his time at McTigue Jr. High and Rogers High School, Tiggs' trajectory was anything but linear. His initial venture into higher education at Bowling Green State University was cut short by infrequent youthful indiscretions. This detour saw him returning to Toledo and eventually finding his footing at the University of Toledo while simultaneously working a third shift at the post office.

Tiggs' career path took a decisive turn when he followed in his father's footsteps, joining him on the Toledo Fire Department in 1989. His journey with the department was marked by a continuous quest for education and self-improvement, leading Tiggs to become a certified fire investigator and eventually earn degrees in fire science and criminal justice alongside his father. His experience highlights the impact of visible role models on career choices for African Americans and other minorities.

There are many reasons for the impediments to the recruitment and career development of minorities in public safety. However, the likelihood of minorities pursuing these careers increases when they see themselves reflected in their mentors and others that they can personally identify with.

Tiggs' career, encompassing roles such as firefighter, dispatcher, fire investigator and police officer, underscores the value of education and mentorship in overcoming barriers in law enforcement and other public safety fields.

In this conversation with Andre Tiggs, we explore how his life and career contribute to reshaping the landscape of minority recruitment and empowerment in public safety.

Perryman: Can you share your experience in Public Safety?

Tiggs: I joined the fire department on September 22, 1989. Over my career, I served as a firefighter, spent four years as a dispatcher, and the last 26 years as a fire investigator.

Perryman: Can you describe your role as an investigator?

Tiggs: As a fire investigator, my main tasks were to identify the origin and cause of fires, determining whether they were accidental, natural or intentional. If a fire was suspected to be deliberate, I investigated potential motives, whether for insurance fraud, revenge, or other reasons. In cases involving specialized areas like electrical, I'd collaborate with experts from the electrical department. If there was a fatality, the Toledo Police Department (TPD) would also get involved. In such cases, I focused on the fire's origin and cause, while TPD detectives handled the homicide investigation. This collaboration was crucial in cases where the fire was a result of criminal activity.

Perryman: Did you lead the arson unit?

Tiggs: Until 2008, my dad Thomas Tiggs led the unit as a battalion chief. After his retirement, I worked under Luis Santiago, the deputy chief who

later became fire chief. My role allowed me to work independently, canvassing neighborhoods and engaging with the community, which I found fulfilling, especially in making a difference in people's lives.

Perryman: How did you make a difference as a member of the public safety team?

Tiggs: I often dealt with cases where good people made bad decisions. In cases leading to the prosecutor, I could recommend alternatives to arson charges, like probation, especially if no insurance claim was made. I focused on positively impacting youth through mentoring, speaking at schools and after-school programs and coaching junior bowling leagues.

Perryman: Can you tell me about the origins of the PS 419 Career Tech program?

Tiggs: PS 419, a public safety program, began in August 2021 at Toledo Public Schools. I was selected to lead it due to my unique background in fire and police academies. The program is based at Bowsler High School and is designed to introduce students to various public safety jobs. It is available to all Toledo Public School students. It's a two-year course from sophomore year, where students explore different trades. The program covers corrections, policing, and firefighting in detail, including field trips and guest speakers from relevant departments. We address the mental impacts of such careers, emphasizing the need for mental resilience in the face of challenging situations. I got involved to make a difference and guide students in choosing their paths, whether in public safety or other vocational areas.

Perryman: What are the key elements of your program?

Tiggs: The program starts with sophomores learning about the correctional system, including juvenile and adult jails and the court system. We organize field trips to jails to provide practical insights. In their junior year, students delve into all aspects of policing, from its history to the use of force and investigation techniques. The senior year is dedicated to firefighting, covering its history, equipment, and operations. Guest speakers from the sheriff, fire and police departments share real-world experiences, discussing the positives and challenges of these careers.

A crucial part of the program is preparing students for the emotional impact of public safety work. I emphasize that they will witness intense, unforgettable scenes, drawing on my experiences and mental health awareness, mainly from my involvement with NAMI. This program is about showing students the realities of public safety helping them decide if it's the right path for them.

Perryman: How do career tech programs benefit urban and minority youth, and why is public safety education important?

Tiggs: Not everyone is suited for college or has the maturity level to go directly to college from high school. Many of these same youth, though, are talented and possess a high level of skills and intellectual assets. For them, the vocational trades offer equally valuable and sometimes higher-paying opportunities. I guide sophomores to areas they're interested in, whether bar-

... continued on page 3



Andre Tiggs

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Community Calendar

December 16

St Marks Baptist Church Christmas Celebration: "The Wiseman;" Featuring the Fellowship Community Choir Toledo; 5 pm; 2340 N. Holland-Sylvania

Buffalo Soldiers Exonerated for 1917 Houston Riot Convictions

By Fletcher Word
The Truth Editor

On the morning of December 11, 1917, 13 Black soldiers, also known as "Buffalo Soldiers" were taken to the gallows in a military camp near Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, Texas and hanged. They had been convicted in a court martial of murder and mutiny. Later an additional six Black soldiers were also hanged in the same case.

The 19 deceased were part of a group of 110 soldiers who were convicted following the 1917 Houston riots. The rest of the group were convicted of lesser charges but most were sentenced to life imprisonment.

Two weeks ago, those convictions were finally set aside by the Army.

Army Secretary Christine Wormuth formally gave the green light to overturn the court-martial convictions of 110 Black soldiers from the 3rd Battalion, 24th Infantry Regiment. The Army said in a news release that officials made the decision based on a suggestion from the Board for Correction of Military Records and to atone for the unfair treatment of soldiers after the 1917 Houston Riots.

"After a thorough review, the Board has found that these Soldiers were wrongly treated because of their race and were not given fair trials," Secretary Wormuth stated. "By setting aside their convictions and granting honorable discharges, the Army is acknowledging past mistakes and setting the record straight."

In the summer of 1917, the 3rd Battalion of the 24th U.S. Infantry had been deployed to Texas to guard construction at Camp Logan, a base that was to be built after the country entered World War I.

The arrival of armed Black soldiers in the Houston area enraged the white populace. The soldiers were forced to hear racial taunts and subjected to vile treatment as were Black folks in much of the country during that time. The summer of 1917, for example, saw white mobs bringing racial violence upon Black citizens in numerous cities such as East St. Louis, Missouri; Chester, Pennsylvania.

In Houston, on August 23, white Houston police officer broke into the home of a Black family, assaulting the mother and dragging her into the street. A Black soldier, Army Pvt. Alonzso Edwards, intervened. He was pistol whipped and arrested.

Cpl. Charles Baltimore, another Black soldier, went to the police station to check on Edwards and he was beaten, shot and arrested. Apparently reports reached the camp that Baltimore had been murdered and 156 Black Soldiers armed themselves and headed into town. In the riot that ensued, 15 whites were killed, among them five police officers. Four Blacks were killed.

Perryman... continued from page 2

being, nursing or something else.

In my public safety program, students get an all-around introduction to the sheriff, police, fire departments and 911 services. My advisory board, consisting of professionals from these sectors, enriches the program. We also provide college credits through Owens Community College, which are all transferable to other institutions.

Additionally, students earn industry-recognized credentials in public safety, like CPR certification, Hazmat, and national incident management, which are valuable in their future careers. Also, one thing I love promoting is the fact that vocational trade skills are free and I tell my kids it's free while you're in high school, so take advantage of it.

Perryman: Do your program graduates sit for and perform well in the exams for public safety careers?

Tiggs: Yes, they're well-prepared not just for exams but also for law enforcement and firefighting careers. I also recruit for police, fire and sheriff departments. For example, students can join the sheriff's corrections at the age of 18. One student is already applying to start in the academy. We guide those under 21 towards roles like security at ProMedica Hospital, which has its own police department. Our program also prepares students for firefighting, including the physical agility test. Since starting the program in 2021, several students have passed these tests and been hired in public safety roles. More students are set to take their tests this year, and I'm confident in their success.

... continued on page 7



Initially 63 Black soldiers were charged with mutiny, murder and aggravated assault. They were defended by one man, Maj. Harry Grier, who had taught law at West Point but was not a lawyer and had no trial experience. Things did not go well for his clients.

Those who were hanged, were done so before they had time to appeal their convictions and sentences.

On Monday, November 8, 2023, 106 years later, the Army announced it had overturned the convictions of the 110 soldiers. The Army will also correct the military records of 95 Buffalo Soldiers who were not restored to duty to show "honorable discharge" and will partner with Veterans Affairs to bring survivor benefits to the soldiers' descendants.

"Even with the backdrop of entrenched state-sanctioned racial segregation, there was an immediate public outcry about the miscarriage of justice," said Army Brig. Gen. Ronald D. Sullivan, chief justice of the Army Court of Criminal Appeals, at the Buffalo Soldiers National Museum in Houston. The trial and mass executions, one of the largest in the history of the U.S. Army, led to a major overhaul in the military justice system, establishing a process for a board of review.

Family members of the 110 soldiers may be entitled to benefits, and guidelines for applying to the Army Board for Correction of Military Records can be found at <https://arba.army.pentagon.mil/abcmr-app.html>. Online applications can be submitted at <https://arba.army.pentagon.mil/online-application.html> or through mail to Army Review Boards Agency (ARBA), 251 18th Street South, Suite 385, Arlington, VA 22202-3531.

Applications should include documentation proving a relationship to one of the 110 formerly convicted soldiers. Family members and interested parties can request a copy of the corrected records from the National Archives and Records Administration, following the NARA Archival Records Request procedures at <https://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records>.

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Making Connections That Can Help Save the Planet

By Ben Jealous

If we're going to realize the climate benefits of historic federal support for clean energy and jobs approved in the last two years, connections are the key. And I'm not just talking about electrifying homes and buildings.

We need to connect people to the benefits spread throughout the 2022 Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and the 2021 Bipartisan Infrastructure Act. We do that by connecting people to others in the communities where they live and with the individuals, local units of government, and non-profits who can help them take advantage of a lengthy list of tax credits and rebates for everything from electric cars to more energy efficient windows and doors.

The need is clear. Seven in 10 Americans say they know little or nothing about the IRA by name. The same is true for specific parts of the package like tax credits for home solar panels and heat pumps.

Bobby Foley of Elephant Energy, a climate tech start-up in Colorado, sees the information gaps and hears the questions up close. "We are on the ground, scoping out a heat pump with homeowners and installing it."

Foley can help that homeowner use rebates from a local utility and the city of Denver, alongside state and federal tax credits, to cut the cost on a new \$20,000 electric heat pump to heat and cool their homes by more than half. He can install heat pumps in homes without ducts and in places where temperatures drop below zero. The result is far less carbon and 300 percent greater energy efficiency than a furnace and air conditioner at substantially lower monthly cost to the customer, he said.

But the people Foley meets already know enough to at least inquire. There are more than 100 programs scattered through the \$370 billion in the IRA that aim to assist individuals, businesses, and state and local governments. Projections show that if we can use all that money thoughtfully and equitably, we can cut greenhouse gas emissions by 40 percent.



Ben Jealous

There's a good deal of evidence to show that people need help to connect. The National Council on Aging, for example, estimates seniors leave \$30 billion of potential government assistance for food, housing, and health care unclaimed. There's often a lack of awareness or misconceptions about the difficulty of applying. The non-profit Code for America, which works to make government more effective and accessible, found that even the words used to offer programs like tax credits and food assistance to Americans makes a difference in their response rate.

For clean energy incentives, many states also have stepped in with their own support that can significantly improve the attractiveness of acting to switch to a cleaner product. That's means the opportunities can vary a lot from place to place.

To help fill the gap, the Sierra Club is making a national push to recruit, prepare, and offer volunteers across the country – Community Advocates – to help people and their communities get the support that's available to protect the planet.

Bekah Ashley has worked with Utah school districts to apply for funds from the infrastructure package to transition their transportation to electric school buses. Communities can share \$1 billion a year. School buses account for the largest public bus fleet across the country, but school systems "often get overlooked in climate action," Ashley noted.

School board members might have sticker shock – electric buses can cost more than two times new diesel buses, Ashley said. But the federal incentives and the far lower operating costs change that perspective.

Communities recognize the need and favor of government support for a cleaner economy. It's something most of us believe in. But we need to ensure that support doesn't stay written on the pages of legislation. We need to learn more – preferably from using the incentives ourselves – and share that knowledge with others who can benefit from it.

Ben Jealous is executive director of the Sierra Club, professor of practice at the University of Pennsylvania and author of "Never Forget Our People Were Always Free."

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TARTA Announces Expansion; Tells Visitors that "Next Is Now!"

By Fletcher Word

The Truth Editor

"Public transportation is the pulse of progress!"

That was part of the opening statement that the Toledo Area Regional Transit Authority presented during the program on Wednesday, November 15 which offered several hundred attendees a look at the enhanced present and future of public transit in the greater Toledo area.

TARTA Next is the theme of the new expanded and improved services and the TARTA team explained how the system's services have and will reach into more communities, add routes in communities already served and enhance and improve optional services for local residents.

As Mary Morrison, TARTA Board president noted, the public transit authority's path to TARTA Next began in 2021 when region-wide voters approved a new funding system, moving to a sales tax rather than the antiquated property tax.

Since then, said Morrison, "projects have been achieved ahead of time and on budget."

TARTA Next goals, added Kendra Smith, board vice president, which the system is well on the way to achieving, are extended fixed routes (to more communities such as Springfield Township and Oregon); TARTA Flex for on demand service and improved frequency on existing routes.

"We want riding the bus to be the easiest part of your day," said TARTA CEO Laura Koprowski as she made several announcements about new aspects of transit service:

- TARTA has established a Customer Advisory Committee with community members who use the service. The committee, said Koprowski, provides input to help the transit system maintain a "healthy and productive environment."

- The expansion to Springfield Township has already led to increased ridership and that TARTA Flex has become an important additional service enabling riders to book service through an app and pay either through the app or with cash in person.

- TARTA Flex will expand into Oregon in January 2024.

- 2100 requests were made this past summer for the Youth Summer Blast Pass which provides rides for youth at no cost.

In addition to the enhanced routes and increase service options, TARTA is moving into the electric vehicle business, said Koprowski. A e-vehicle is already on board for TARPS with five more to arrive in the next several months. In 2026, a total of eight electric vehicles will become part of the regular bus fleet. The electric vehicles and the charging stations to arrive have been funded through a \$9 million grant from the Federal Transportation Administration.

The key to TARTA's expanded routes, increased frequency and enhanced customer service options, noted Koprowski, was the 2021 ballot initiative that gave Lucas County voters the opportunity to increase the transit system's funding base.

"The Lucas County Commissioners passed the resolution to make TARTA



countywide," she said of the 2021 actions.

The major aspects of the TARTA Next plan are those that will strengthen the customer experience. Five classifications define that experience:

1. Core routes in the high demand corridors, such along Monroe Street, Dorr Street and Cherry Street, justify a higher investment in service. The frequencies typically are 30 minutes on weekdays and between 30 to 60 minutes on weekends. These routes handle the highest ridership in the system.
2. Local routes provide less frequent service – typically around 60 minutes on weekdays and operate on both major corridors and local streets.
3. Express/special event routes operate during certain times and provide direct service to major destinations such as the ball park or music venues.
4. Toledo Area Regional Paratransit Service (TARPS) complements the fixed route network.
5. Microtransit is new and provides same-day, accessible and on-demand service in certain zones. Riders can request a trip when they want to travel and be picked up within a specified wait time.

According to the TARTA website: "An improved transit system will serve as an economic driver and pave the way to education, jobs, entertainment, and more for our community and its people. These customer-focused changes will greatly expand the number of Lucas County and Rossford residents for whom public transportation is a viable option."

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Artificial Intelligence Could Impact Black Voting During 2024 Elections

Black Leaders Call for Safeguards Against It

By Barrington M. Salmon

TriceEdneyWire

For much of the last century, segregationists and their anti-Black racist allies who were intent on ensuring that African-Americans couldn't exercise the right to vote, erected an assortment of barriers to that end.

Segregationists used the courts, local and state laws, literacy tests, poll taxes, fraud, brute force, violence and intimidation by the Ku Klux Klan to impede and prevent Black people from exercising their constitutional right.

In the 21st century, voter suppression has gone high-tech with the same characters still plotting to control who votes, when and how. They are employing an assortment of methods including Artificial Intelligence (AI). Concerns about misuse of AI in the electoral ecosystem is what brought Melanie Campbell and Damon T. Hewitt to testify before the U. S. Congress.

Campbell, president & CEO of the National Coalition on Black Civic Participation (NCBCP) and Convener of the Black Women's Roundtable (BWR), spoke of the urgency around creating safeguards and federal legislation to protect against the technology's misuse as it relates to elections, democracy, and voter education, while fighting back against the increasing threats surrounding targeted misinformation and disinformation.

"AI has the potential to be a significant threat because of how rapidly it's moving," Campbell said. There was Russian targeting of Black men with misinformation in 2020 to encourage them not to vote. It started in 2016."

Both civil rights leaders warned that misinformation driven by artificial intelligence may worsen considerably for African American voters leading up to the 2024 presidential election.

"What we have seen though our work demonstrates how racial justice,

voting rights, and technology are inextricably linked," said Hewitt, president and executive director of The Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law during his testimony. "Voters of color already face disproportionate barriers to the ballot box that make it more difficult and more costly for them to vote without factoring in the large and growing cost of targeted mis- and disinformation on our communities."

Hewitt said AI technologies could be used to refine and test data to generate targeted lists of voters based on the patterns, interests, and behaviors of specific individuals.

"Forget using zip codes as a proxy for race; the targeted lists of tomorrow will weaponize sophisticated machine learning technologies, using individual identities or behaviors to target Black voters with surgical precision, all in order to mislead and harm them," he warned.

Campbell and Hewitt said that during recent election cycles, African Americans have been specifically targeted by disinformation campaigns.

"AI technology threatens to turn already fragile conditions for our democracy into a perfect storm," Hewitt said. "The spread of misinformation and disinformation online to influence elections and disenfranchise voters, often specifically Black voters, is already commonplace. Communities of color who already sacrifice so much to cast a ballot and make our democracy work are increasingly subjected to new downsides of technological innovation without reaping the rewards."

The pair referred to a lawsuit, NCBCP vs. Wohl, filed by the Lawyers' Committee and involving NCBCP which was a plaintiff two men who targeted Black voters in New York, Pennsylvania and Ohio disinformation via robocalls in an effort to sway the outcome of the 2020 Elections.

"In the weeks before the 2020 Election, the Election Protection hotline received complaints from voters about robocalls using deceptive information to discourage people from voting. After investigating, we found that two individuals, Jack Burkman and Jacob Wohl, had sent 85,000 robocalls largely to Black Americans," Hewitt said.

The goal was to discourage African Americans from voting by mail, lying that their personal information would be added to a public database used by law enforcement to execute warrants; to collect credit card debts; and by public health entities to force people to take mandatory vaccinations.

"These threats played upon systemic inequities likely to resonate with and intimidate Black Americans," Hewitt said. "We filed a lawsuit, National Coalition on Black Civic Participation v. Wohl, in which a federal court issued a restraining order to stop the robocalls and later ruled that this conspiracy to silence Black voters was intimidating, threatening, and coercive in violation of the Voting Rights Act and Ku Klux Klan Act. The methods used for those deceptive robocalls in 2020 look primitive by 2023 standards. But they hold three important lessons for democracy when surveying the AI technology of today and tomorrow."

Campbell concurred. She said AI would allow this type of weaponization to be more significant using texts, video and audio.

"AI increases the ability to do that in larger formats. We are trying to address this. Elections and democracy is really, really important," she said. "So many places that can go. So much you can do online now. You have open source where just about anyone who wants to can use AI for nefarious means. There is a lot of angst with those doing voting rights and elections work."

You don't know how bad it can be until you know how bad it's been."

Campbell and Hewitt agree that the exploding capabilities of AI technology can drastically multiply the amount of harm to American democracy. Campbell adds that Google, Microsoft and Meta are the front line companies who activists hope will step up and put guardrails in place because the 2024 elections is overwhelmed by AI-driven misinformation and disinformation.

"In malicious hands and absent strong regulation, AI can clone voices so that calls sound like trusted public figures, election officials, or even possibly friends and relatives," said Hewitt. "In malicious hands and ab-



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... continued on page 10

Union Leader and Community Advocate Erika White Announces Candidacy for State Representative

Experienced leader for workers, families, and communities

Last week, Erika White of Holland hosted a press conference announcing she is entering the race for Ohio State Representative, District 41, which includes Holland, South Toledo, and parts of Maumee. "I've fought for workers and our community members throughout my career. From union negotiations ensuring workers get fair pay and benefits, to promoting mental health and wellness, I've always shown up to make our community stronger, happier, and healthier. I want to take the energy and successes I've seen right here at home to Columbus. Our district doesn't take anything for granted. We know when it's time to lace up our boots and get to work, and I'm ready to do that for District 41," said Erika White.

White is President of Communications Workers of America (CWA) Local 4319, Vice President of the Greater Northwest Ohio AFL-CIO and a social justice and health advocate. White said, "I believe that when we feel better, we do better. Strong communities are built on foundations of good education, prosperous jobs, and mental and physical health that's accessible for everyone."

White stressed the need for finding creative solutions and looking at long standing problems with fresh perspectives. "As a mother, I want kids to have a quality education and keep them safe at school. As the wife of a firefighter, I know that we can support those who protect and serve us. And as a union mem-

ber, I want to fight for the middle class and ensure workers can build a strong economy with living-wage jobs." Fresh perspectives, White said, means looking at these challenges as they are: interconnected. "We can't prioritize our mental health while we are worrying about putting food on the table. It's difficult to make sure our kids are getting a good education when we're living paycheck to paycheck. That's



Erika White

what I'll fight for in Columbus."

It's time that workers and families have a voice in Columbus, according to White. Northwest Ohio has challenges that have to be addressed, and opportunities to solve them with new leadership. Erika White is ready to get to work for District 41.

Perryman... continued from page 3

Perryman: Finally, why are you so passionate about public safety?

Tiggs: I had the best of both worlds and I truly, truly enjoyed the job but the biggest part of why I enjoy the job is because I love helping people. I've always, always been a people person and I learned and inherited that from my dad. Working in public safety lets me make a real difference, especially with students.

Whether in fire or police services, it's about positively impacting lives. I'm always willing to give a hand and help out and it's just something that I'll continue with, no matter what I'm doing. Public safety is a commitment I'll always hold dear.

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



Tiggs and two future firefighters



Tiggs introduces new students to the program

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St. Paul MBC Provides Thanksgiving Baskets to Those in Need

By Dawn Scotland
The Truth Reporter

St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church in partnership with the Toledo Chapter of the Top Ladies of Distinction and the Corvette Club provided over 15 Thanksgiving baskets to those in need this season Saturday, November 18 and offered free health screenings through ABC Healthcare, Inc.

St. Paul's annual Thanksgiving basket give away has been a tradition of the church for years and was recently halted to covid. The congregation is happy to be able to bring the tradition back.

Baskets were full of turkeys, canned goods and baking supplies needed for the season as well as health information provided by ABC Healthcare. The Corvette Club contributed four baskets, ABC Healthcare provided two baskets and the Top Ladies of Distinction provided assistance in support of Seniors, Women and Alzheimer Awareness month.

The five church 'circles', small groups that keep the membership connected (Genesis, Love, Matthew, Job and Ruth circles), provided one or two baskets each.

"We're reaching back out to the community to give back," stated Rev. James H. Willis, Sr., lead pastor of St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church. "During the pandemic many things were put on hold and a lot of families were suffering during that time... What we're planning to do is let them know that there is still hope for those that may be in need."

"As we gave out this morning, we prayed that He would bless it... There are families that are going to be happy for this Thanksgiving. They will remember that their little help came from St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church."



Toledo Chapter of the Top Ladies of Distinction officers and members



Members of St. Paul MBC, Top Ladies of Distinction and the Corvette Club behind Thanksgiving baskets



Rev. James H. Willis, Sr. senior pastor of St. Paul MBC and members of The Corvette Club



Thanksgiving baskets for commentary in need this season



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Community Foundation Lights Up The Anthony Wayne Trail

By Tricia Hall
The Truth Reporter

The Greater Toledo Community Foundation concluded the organization's 50th anniversary celebration by gifting the City of Toledo with tree lights to welcome residents and guests into the downtown area. The Foundation displayed the lights during a November 16 event. In addition to the donation, the Foundation launched a local giving initiative to support Toledo-area nonprofits.

"We're excited to be here today, and to present this gift to our community. Today is our last event. The lights represent and will support Giving Tuesday and this Giving Tree, people can go online and support these nonprofits," said Keith Burwell, Greater Toledo Community Foundation President. "The Greater Toledo Community Foundation is giving the City of Toledo these lights, so as you travel down the trail, you will see these lights each year around this time. These lights are just one way that we want to say thank you to the community."

The community announcement also featured an ensemble from The Valentine Theatre promoting the December 1 and December 3 performances of 'A Christmas Carol,' hot refreshments and sweet treats from Jera's Heavenly Sweets, and remarks from the following local leaders: Rev. John C. Jones, president of HOPE Toledo; Ally Effler, Chief Philanthropic Officer of Metroparks Toledo; Zak Vassar, president of TAPA; Judy Leb, director of

...continued on page 10



Jera Stewart of Jera's Heavenly Sweet

Rev. John Jones, President of HOPE Toledo



The tree lighting

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Artificial Intelligence... continued from page 7

sent strong regulation, AI can clone voices so that calls sound like trusted public figures, election officials, or even possibly friends and relatives. The technology could reach targeted individuals across platforms, following up the AI call with targeted online advertisements, fake bot accounts seeking to follow them on social media, customized emails or WhatsApp messages, and carefully tailored memes."

Hewitt said the technology could send messages reaching targeted individuals across several platforms. Then the messages would be followed up with AI calls, targeted online advertisements, fake bot accounts seeking to follow these people on social media, customized emails or WhatsApp messages, and carefully tailored memes.

During his testimony, Hewitt detailed five principals that should guide AI regulation and legislation to protect US democracy, including regulation of AI to protect Americans' civil rights, by including an anti-discrimination provision directed at online contexts and algorithms; AI should be evaluated and assessed, both before and after deployment, for discrimination and bias; developers and those deploying AI should "have a duty of care" indicating that their products are safe and effective. And if not, they should be held liable.

AI regulation should include transparency and "explainability" requirements so people are made aware of when, how, and why AI is being used; using data protection requirements, to ensure that AI is not used to grab data from those who have not given their consent; and voter information should not be tied to private information to target voters without safeguards.

The effort being led by the Lawyers' Committee and the NCBCP comes against the backdrop of similar alarm from the Biden administration, some lawmakers and AI experts who fear that AI will be weaponized to spread disinformation to heighten the distrust that significant numbers of Americans have towards the government and politicians.

President Joe Biden recently signed what's described as "a sweeping executive order." The order focuses on algorithmic bias, preserving privacy and regulation on the safety of frontier AI models. The executive order also encourages open development of AI technologies, innovations in AI security and building tools to improve security, according to the Snyk Blog.

Vice President Kamala Harris echoed others concerned about this issue who fear that malevolent actors misusing AI could upend democratic institutions and cause American's confidence in democracy to plunge precipitously. In her remarks, Harris cited the need for a more expansive definition of AI safety to encompass the "full spectrum" of threats, embracing the spread of disinformation, discrimination and bias.

"When people around the world cannot discern fact from fiction be-

cause of a flood of AI-enabled disinformation and misinformation. I ask, "is that not existential?" Harris said in speech at a Nov 1 press conference at the 2023 AI Safety Summit in London, England. "For democracies, AI has to be in service of the public interest. We see the ways AI poses a threat to Americans every day, certainly in politics and we are laying the foundation for an international framework to regulate AI.

Harris concluded, "We're going to do everything we can. This is one of the biggest concerns most people have."

Community Foundation... continued from page 9

Lucas County CASA; and City of Toledo Deputy Mayor Karen Poore.

"I'm glad to be here to support the Greater Toledo Community Foundation. It takes vision and leadership to do this work and we're here today because the Greater Toledo Community Foundation supported us and our collaborative partners, the YWCA and Toledo Early Learning Coalition through a shared service grant," said Rev. John Jones. "HOPE Toledo and the Greater Toledo Community Foundation know that a strong start leads to a great future. As we light these lights, I see a brighter day for the city."

A series of trees are now visible as drivers enter the downtown area from the Anthony Wayne Trail before Lafayette Street and are expected to launch a new tradition as the lights were donated by the Foundation.

The 50th anniversary of the Greater Toledo Community Foundation called "Fifty Years of Funding Futures," celebrates five decades of service. The Foundation has distributed more than \$310 million in grants to Toledo nonprofits and beyond. The Foundation now holds 950 funds and approximately \$435 million in assets with the goal of creating a better community for generations to come. The Greater Toledo Community Foundation is the largest philanthropic organization serving the Toledo region, including northwest Ohio and southeast Michigan with a particular emphasis on the greater Toledo area.

Since 1973, the Foundation has worked with individuals, families and businesses, assisting them in making effective choices that match their philanthropic interest and needs while creating a better community. The Foundation is also the home of scholarships for high school students and The Center for Nonprofit Resources for nonprofit support.

The foundation distributed more than \$600,000 to local nonprofits during the year-long celebration, by organizing community oriented events including: TARTA free ride partnership where \$50,000 was donated to provide 2,000 passes for youth during the summer months, Metroparks Toledo sculpture donation, Black Swamp Conservancy volunteer day, nonprofit days at the Toledo Mud Hens and Toledo Walleye where jerseys were raffled to support local youth programs, volunteer day in collaboration with Historic South and Maumee Valley Habitat for Humanity, unveiling of a 50th anniversary book and panel discussion by local nonprofit experts at the Toledo-Lucas County Public Library and supporting several local concerts.

For more information about Greater Toledo Community Foundation, visit www.toledocf.org. For more information about the celebration visit www.50yearsfortoledo.com and for information about the Toledo Giving Tree visit www.ToledoGivingTree.com



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International Student Becomes Stronger Leader on Central State University Campus

Central State University junior Darriell Russell lives by the maxim of, "The best way to predict your future is to create it." Originally from the Bahamas and majoring in Accounting and Management Information Systems (MIS), Russell is an Honors College student working toward eventually becoming a certified public accountant (CPA).

"I always knew that I wanted to go abroad to school," Russell said about her transferring after the peak COVID-19 period from the University of The Bahamas to Central State during the Spring 2022 semester. "At first, I came on a partial scholarship, but now that I'm an RA (resident advisor) and in the Honors College, I'm here on full scholarship."

Russell has been an RA and part of the Honors College since the Fall 2022 semester. She was also a Spring 2023 initiate of the Beta Xi Chapter of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc. and has, over the course of her being a Marauder, acted as audit intern at such high-profile firms as Deloitte and Ernst & Young.

When Russell was in high school, she first seriously studied a series of subjects including biology, accounting, commerce, and Spanish. She quickly realized, "accounting was the one subject that I just got right away. It was so easy to me. Even though it was like a different language, I understood it so quickly."

Job security is another aspect of the accounting field that made the profession so alluring for Russell.

"Especially since I came from a single-parent home and being an international student, it gives me a sense of security," Russell continued. "As for management information systems, it comes down to the fact that I really like to learn new things and had started coding on my own. It was second nature to me. So, that's why I picked that major up, too."

Russell furthermore believes that, after taking part in her internships, "accounting is the first step into the many different things that I can do later on."

As an Honors College student, Russell was accepted into and took part in the Harvard Division of Continuing Education Leadership Workshop offered on campus in September. Typically reserved for elite business professionals, this was the first time Harvard worked with a Historically Black College or University (HBCU) on facilitating such workshops.

"When I first heard about the workshops, I was a little hesitant out of nervousness for applying," Russell admitted. "But then when I thought about it, I do see myself as a leader on campus. And I knew that going into this would help me become a better leader. So, why not?"

Russell was proud of herself for being accepted as one of a handful of ap-

plicants ultimately welcomed into the program. She felt it was a "really good workshop that taught me a lot about thinking before I act and that my actions have a great impact on others."

The most important lesson that Russell garnered from the workshop was the notion that "although we all go through a lot of the same things, every individual perceives what's happening in their own, different way. Not everybody is going to think the same way you do. And, so, being a great leader is about being aware of other people's emotions and learning how to accept that, while not judging people for how they feel during a certain situation."

Despite being relatively new on campus, Russell currently enjoys such leadership roles as the president of the International Student Organization and membership chairman and financial secretary for her sorority.

"Going all the way back to high school, I've always loved being involved in extracurricular activities and being very active in my community," Russell said. "That kind of molded me into the leader I am today. Getting to go to Central State was very important to me, and beyond that, I really knew I wanted to be a student leader."

While Russell first saw being a leader in high school and college as a means of leveraging opportunities for financial aid and scholarships, she said she now feels her drive is more about her seeing her purpose in life as helping others and the communities where she lives.

"For me, now, it's about helping others grow the same way that leaders I've had throughout my life have helped me grow," Russell said.

Through her time at Central State, Russell feels she has been aided on her path by being seen through the eyes of the Institution as a true individual. She does not think Central State "sees me as just another international student or Bahamian. Professors and other faculty here have really worked with me one-on-one to help me gain my internships and take advantage of other opportunities like the Harvard Leadership Workshop."

"I feel that Central State really helps mold you by taking you from where you are to where you can go to make you better. The faculty wants to know who you are, what you want, what your goals are, and the ways to make you as an individual person better. They do whatever they can to help you achieve that next level."



Darriell Russell

How to Host the Holidays Affordably

Special to The Truth

From getting your home ready for guests and finding the perfect gifts to preparing a delicious meal, the holidays can seem overwhelming and expensive – but they don't have to be. Take the following steps to save time and money on seasonal essentials.

Prepping Your Home

To get your home ready for holiday hosting, begin by decluttering sur-

face areas such as tables and kitchen counters. Next, take an inventory and purchase any additional cleaning supplies you'll need for a deep clean. Re-member, air care products like festive candles or sprays can freshen cleaned spaces. Next, decorate by sprinkling different holiday décor pieces in the rooms' focal points. For example, add themed table settings in the dining

...continued on page 12

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Student Watershed Watch Summit inspires and educates students at the Toledo Zoo

Students present projects about water quality data and learn about environmental stewardship

Students from schools across northwest Ohio who collected and tested water samples this fall assembled Friday for the Student Watershed Watch Summit at the Toledo Zoo.

This was the 34th year for Student Watershed Watch, which has a long history of educating students about the importance of water quality and encouraging environmental stewardship.

Over several weeks in September and October, more than 20 teachers and 700 students visited area waterways to collect samples and measure dissolved oxygen, acidity, turbidity, aquatic macroinvertebrates, and other parameters that provide insight into water quality. At the summit, classrooms shared and discussed the data they collected, met with professionals working in environmental fields, and participated in fun activities, including a scavenger hunt around the zoo.

Schools participating in this year's summit included Beverly Elementary, Clay High School, Lake High School, Northview High School, Otsego Junior High School, Ottawa Hills Elementary, Ottawa River Elementary, Sylvania Southview High School, and Wildwood Environmental Academy.

Students earned awards for the most creative and informative presentations and displays. This year's winners include:

Grades 5-8

- Best Overall Presentation: Ottawa Hills Elementary

- Most Creative Presentation: Ottawa Hills Elementary
- Most Informative Presentation: Beverly Elementary School
- Best Use of Musical Media: Otsego Junior High School
Grades 9-12
- Best Overall Presentation: Sylvania Northview
- Most Creative Presentation: Lake High School 10th Grade
- Most Informative Presentation: Wildwood Environmental Academy
- Best Overall Display: Sylvania Northview High School
- Most Informative Display: Lake High School 9th Grade
- Most Creative Display: Sylvania Southview High School

Student Watershed Watch has a long record of participation among teachers and environmental professionals, as well as sponsors who provide essential support, including the Lucas County Engineer's Office, General Motors, the City of Toledo, the Toledo Zoo, The Andersons, and the Mannik & Smith Group.

Learn more about Student Watershed Watch at <https://tmacog.org/water/student-watershed-watch>

TMACOG is a non-partisan regional planning partnership made up of voluntary members in northwest Ohio and southeast Michigan. TMACOG members work together on transportation, water quality, and other economic development endeavors that affect quality of life for everyone in our region. For more information, go to www.tmacog.org.

Host The Holidays Affordably... continued from page 11

room and wrap holiday garland around fixtures such as the fireplace mantle or staircase.

Making the Menu

Food is a unifying component of any holiday celebration. To get started, set a menu that consists of a variety of appetizers, light snacks, side dishes, entrees and desserts to accommodate guests' cravings and preferences. Consider using healthier variations of the season's comforting and tasty dishes with DG Better For You recipes, which include Potato Crusted Chicken and Green Bean Casserole. Before heading to the store, write your grocery list in advance and make a plan to purchase private brand products to stretch your budget further.

Gift Guide

Shopping for the perfect gift for everyone on your list can be easy when using DG's holiday gift guide found at dollargeneral.com. Consider placing three self-care products such as soap, a face mask and a bath bomb into a decorative basket with tissue paper to shine on presentation. To have children of all ages jumping for joy, save on national toy brands at your local Dollar General such as Melissa & Doug, LEGO, Fisher-Price, Play Doh, Barbie, Pokémon, L.O.L. Surprise!, ZURU 5 Surprise and more.

For additional savings, use DG's app for digital coupons and weekly ads with new sales and promotions.

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Iconic Home: Interiors, Advice, and Stories from 50 Amazing Black Designers by June Reese, BID, foreword by Amy Astley

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

The Truth Contributor

The sofa will go over there.

Sitting slightly away from the edge of a rug, flanked by two chairs at an angle to the fireplace, it'll be the focal point of the room. Add the right paint and that plushy blanket you bought on vacation last year, and you'll never want to leave. Making your home a welcoming retreat is always a goal and in the new book *Iconic Home* by June Reese, BID, you'll welcome some fresh ideas.

As a young girl growing up in Texas, June Reese wished for a way to make her passion for art into a career. Few opportunities existed, "not many career paths," but she saw design school as a way to her dreams. Still, it was hard and she thought about picking a different career until she met designer Kimberly Ward, founder of the Black Interior Designers Network, and everything fell together. Reese began to meet and collaborate with other Black designers, 50 of whom she profiles in this book.

Designer Leah Alexander says scale and size are of the utmost importance when decorating a room. Alvin Wayne adds: take it easy with throw pillows.

Arienne Bellizaire decides the color of a room after she notes "any historical and geographical parameters that are integral to the design." Elaine Griffin says that "color reigns supreme..." Christopher Charles believes that "paint samples are a homeowner's best friend."

What you hang on a wall is important, and Danielle Colding recommends "dynamic art!" Layer the room, say several designers here. Some advocate having a focal point, while others say it's unimportant. Use painter's tape when you start furniture placement. Mix texture, but remember functionality. Catasha Singleton says that accessories should be the "very best" part of any room.

Justina Blakeney reminds readers to "have an open mind."

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Byron Risdon says, "Don't overthink it."

Amhad Freeman says, "Don't over do it."

Delia Kenza says, "Have fun, don't be afraid to try, and make sure the space tells a story."

To paraphrase designer Linda Hayslett here, for many decades, the assumption has been that Black homeowners didn't have taste, sophistication, or need for interior design. Absolutely, *Iconic Home* proves the opposite.

The feature you'll notice first about this book is the abundance of gorgeous pictures. Author and compiler June Reese includes many elegant examples of her subjects' work in full-color photos that will satisfy anyone looking for ideas, wishing for their own special room, or merely hoping to satisfy home voyeurism.

When you're done with the photos, turn back to the beginning and start reading about design as a career and the legacies these designers hope to leave. It's here where you'll find plenty of hints on deciding what to add or subtract from your space, and tips to make any room in your home a place you'll want to be.

This is the kind of book for dreaming, the kind in which you'll find something different every time you open it. Get *Iconic Home* and take it to the sofa over there.

Weldon Douthitt Way... continued from page 16

working to not only create jobs but also to help homeowners in disadvantaged areas with home repairs.

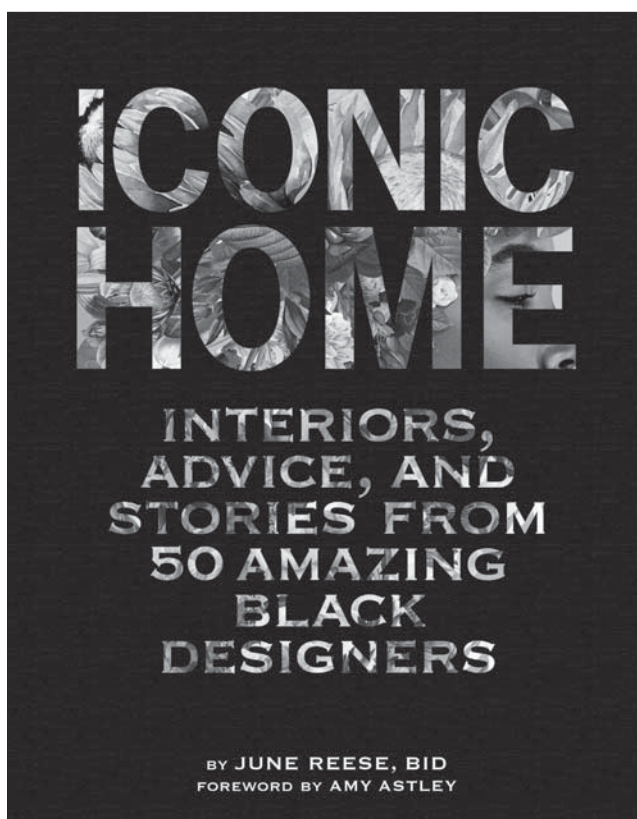
Among those who paid tribute to Douthitt during the ceremony were: Councilman John Hobbs, Toledo Mayor Wade Kapszukiewicz, Lucas County Recorder Michael Ashford, Pathway Board of Directors Chairperson Theresa M. Gabriel and Douthitt's daughter Weldina Douthitt.

"Everyone who knows Weldon, loves him," said Toledo Mayor Wade Kapszukiewicz. "He was the most loving, sweetest man I've ever known. He will exist forever in our hearts."

Douthitt was also a behind the scenes operative for the Democratic Party and an invaluable political mentor for numerous candidates for decades. He was particularly close to former Mayor Jack Ford, among others.

He was also a close friend over the years with Lucas County Recorder Michael Ashford. Douthitt was best friend during Ashford's wedding in fact. Ashford spoke during the ceremony on Friday.

"Weldon was an advocate for all people," said Ashford. "He was a cornerstone of this community for 70 years and his mission was about helping people ... Weldon was a great person and a community servant."



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CLASSIFIEDS

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REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS DEVELOPER PARTNER(S) QUALIFICATIONS RFQ23-Q002

Lucas Metropolitan Housing (LMH) will receive proposals for **Developer Partner(s) Qualifications in accordance with RFQ23-Q002**. Received in accordance with law until **November 15, 2023 at 3:00 PM EST**. For documents: www.lucasmha.org; 424 Jackson Street., Toledo, OH 43604; or 419-259-9438 (TRS: Dial 711). Bidders are required to meet Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity requirements as described in Executive Order #11246. This contract opportunity is a Section 3 Covered Contract, and any Section 3 Business Concerns are encouraged to apply.



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS CHOICE NEIGHBORHOODS INITIATIVE (CNI) – GRANT WRITER SERVICES RFP23-R008

Lucas Metropolitan Housing (LMH) will receive proposals for **CNI Grant Writer Services in accordance with RFP23-R008**. Received in accordance with law until **November 30, 2023 at 3:00 PM EST**. For documents: www.lucasmha.org; 424 Jackson Street., Toledo, OH 43604; or 419-259-9438 (TRS: Dial 711). Bidders are required to meet Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity requirements as described in Executive Order #11246. This contract opportunity is a Section 3 Covered Contract, and any Section 3 Business Concerns are encouraged to apply.



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR PROJECT BASED VOUCHERS RFP23-R001

Lucas Metropolitan Housing Authority (LMH) will receive proposals for **Project Based Vouchers for the HCV program**. Interested parties should be owner/developers, management agent, and/or project sponsors for projects concentrating on Supportive Services. LMH has reserved up to 250 PBV for this rolling RFP. Received in accordance with law until **December 07, 2023, at 3:00 PM ET**. See documents: www.lucasmha.org; 424 Jackson Street, Toledo, OH 43604; or 419-259-9438 (TRS: Dial 711). Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity requirements (Executive Order #11246). This contract opportunity is a Section 3 Covered Contract and any Section 3 Business Concerns are encouraged to apply.



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS LEAD RISK ASSESSMENT SERVICES (LRAD) RFP23-R011

Lucas Metropolitan Housing (LMH) will receive proposals for **Lead Risk Assessment Services (LRAD) in accordance with RFP23-R011**. Received in accordance with law until **November 17, 2023 at 3:00 PM EST**. For documents: www.lucasmha.org; 424 Jackson Street., Toledo, OH 43604; or 419-259-9438 (TRS: Dial 711). Bidders are required to meet Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity requirements as described in Executive Order #11246. This contract opportunity is a Section 3 Covered Contract, and any Section 3 Business Concerns are encouraged to apply.



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Position Summary

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Essential Duties And Responsibilities

Supporting the Payroll Director in the day-to-day operations of the department and administration of department goals.

Minimum Qualifications Bachelor's Degree majoring in Accounting or Certified Payroll Professional or equivalent work experience. Six (6) years of experience working in professional setting, with at least three (3) years in relation to payroll processing or equivalent.

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Weldon Douthitt Way Will Memorialize a Toledo Hero

The Truth Staff

Family members, friends, elected officials and Pathway board members, staff and employees gathered at the corner of Collingwood and Hamilton Streets – in front of the Pathway headquarters building – to pay homage to Weldon Douthitt and witness the designation of Hamilton Street, from Collingwood to Bismarck Street, as Weldon Douthitt Way.

As noted in the City Council resolution honoring Douthitt that was promoted by City Councilwoman Vanice Williams, the late Douthitt was born in March 1933 and arrived in Toledo in 1954 to start his career in the building trades industry and ultimately join the Bricklayers Union when they opted to desegregate.

He also built “a legacy for fighting for the rights of minorities and the disadvantaged,” read the resolution, in addition his work in training young minority men and women, lending support to countless of individuals and helping to create thousands of jobs for young people.

Douthitt worked at the Economic Opportunity Planning Association (EOPA) (which was renamed Pathway, Inc, in 2013) for over 55 years,

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Michael Ashford and Weldon Douthitt - center



Mayor Wade Kapszukiewicz speaks of his feeling about Douthitt



LC Recorder Michael Ashford describes what Weldon Douthitt meant to the community



The unveiling



Weldon Douthitt honored in 2020 - Helen Cooks, PhD; Judge Jack Puffenberger, Douthitt, Ruth Ashford, Michael Ashford, Mike Craig

Where could **lead** be in my home?

Lead can be found in the air, soil, dust and paint inside or outside of some homes and other buildings built before 1978.

ToledoLeadSafe.com

