

The Sojourner's Truth

www.thetruthtoledo.com

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Jodie Summers - Poet, Artist, Community Activist

WHAT'S YOUR VACATION FLAVOR?

EUGENE F. KRANZ
TOLEDO EXPRESS AIRPORT
allegiant.com

NAACP Issues Statement Demanding an Investigation into the Unwarranted Attack by a TPD K-9

Special to The Truth

The NAACP Toledo Chapter held a press conference Friday, April 19, 2024, at their headquarters where they issued a statement demanding an investigation into the unwarranted attack by a Toledo police K-9 during a traffic stop on Thursday, April 11, 2024 on Albion St. where a Black man Brandon Upchurch suffered severe injuries to his arm.

Attending the press conference and addressing area media were Rev. Willie Perryman, president NAACP Toledo; Reggie Williams, executive director of the Frederick Douglass Community Association; Albert Earl, board resident of the Frederick Douglass Community Association; Darlene Sweeney, Executive Committee member NAACP Toledo, and Pastor Lee Williams.

Upchurch, and his cousin, Frederick Wilson III, also Black, were stopped for allegedly having stolen plates on Upchurch's pick-up truck. An allegation that was later determined to be false information. In video obtained by media, the Toledo Police K-9 handler approached Mr. Upchurch and then released the dog who attacked Upchurch. Upchurch was handcuffed while under attack and arrested.

In response, the Toledo Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) #3204, said it was disgusted by the turn of events at the traffic stop involving police officers including a canine unit. Rev. Perryman issued this statement:

"Nearly 60 years ago, almost to the day, an image of a young Black man being attacked by a police dog, a tactic frequently used by police against African Americans, is still etched in the memories of many community members and those of us who were fortunate enough to learn our history. Now 60 years later we are still faced with the injustices of this inhumane practice. Our police are here to serve, not to occupy, our neighborhoods

even when they believe a violation of the law has been committed. We count on our police to be fair and just when dealing with community members because, as in this case, officers can be misinformed.

Incidents of this type not only setback any progress of positive community and police relations but demonstrates a glaring need for training. We will not stand by and allow officers to conduct themselves in the abusive way they displayed during this incident. We demand there be a thorough investigation which includes a detailed report of its outcome and subsequent consequences. We will not go back to the 1960s!"

Reggie Williams echoed Rev. Perryman's statement and added that history is repeating itself. He cited another more recent incident where Toledo Police conduct towards female member of the Black community had been called into question.

"We will not tolerate inhumane circumstances that happen to our community citizens. We stand in unity with our brothers, and we demand that justice be done," Williams said. "We need to look at ways to resolve police and community relations. We do not want to go into summer having more escalation of things that will not allow us to trust Toledo police officers."

Williams also acknowledged that Toledo police officers have a job to do, and that job depends greatly on the bridge between technology and the officers. He says part of the investigation needs to focus on making sure misinformation between technology and the officers is corrected.



Willie Perryman, Reggie Williams, Albert Earl, Lee Williams



Willie Perryman, Darlene Sweeney Newbern, Reggie Williams



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Tony Porter has served as an advisor to the National Football League, National Basketball Association, National Hockey League, Major League Soccer, and Major League Baseball and has worked with the United States Military Academy and the United States Naval Academy.

The Crucible of Leadership

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

The Truth Contributor

Sometimes, it appears that we should worry more about how we split among ourselves and less about how [others] keep us divided.

- Alvin Poussaint



At her first major meeting as chair last week, the vibrant and youthful Schuyler Beckwith received a fast-tracked education on the challenges she faces as the new leader of the Lucas County Democratic Party.

Party reorganization meetings can be tense and chaotic and, despite the potential for tension, the meeting began with an atmosphere of constructive discourse and forward-looking enthusiasm.

However, the atmosphere at this "new era conclave" shifted when controversy erupted over Shaun Enright's appointment to the Party's executive committee, a decision that reignited historical tensions within the Party. Evidently, Enright's organization, Northwest Ohio Building & Construction Trades Council, had previously endorsed Ohio Representative Josh Williams, a Republican, which rekindled hard feelings.

For those who don't know, factionalism here runs deep, going back to the Democratic Party's implosion during the 2001 Toledo mayoral race. Key figures then pitted progressives such as the late Jack Ford, Jim Ruvulo, Peter Ujvagi, and Michael Beazley against a B-Team of "disaffected" Democrats that included Ray Kest, and team members John Irish, Domenic Montalto, Carty Finkbeiner and Sandy Isenberg.

Perhaps the rise of Beckwith's Sky Nation and the leadership transition stirred the deeper undercurrents of a particularly divisive moment in 2001. During that time, the Party was sharply divided as long-time Democrats Jack Ford and Ray Kest both vied for the Toledo mayoralty, with the Party unable to present a united front.

Or perhaps, this recent change of the guard has reawakened the seismic shift that rocked the Party's political landscape in 2005. That year marked the ousting of the A-Team, a dominant force for nearly three decades, during a crucial Party election that saw Sandy Isenberg triumph over Paula Ross, signaling a major transformation in leadership and Party dynamics.

Nevertheless, I have heard through the grapevine that the UAW labor union representing the modern A-Team is looking to secure more influence within the Party. Moreover, there does appear to have been some lingering bad blood between UAW leader Tony Totty and the Building Trade's Shaun Enright.

However, if true, Enright may have merely decided to monitor the situation personally from the executive council's perspective rather than through reports from his deputies.

Regardless, Beckwith has clearly amassed significant backing from allies who are committed to shielding her from the repercussions of the longstanding divisions she inherited.

A spokesperson authoritatively stated: "Shaun Enright is a good Democrat. He's voted Democratic principles, he's voted in the primaries, he's supported people in this room and I think you're not giving the whole story. Yes, he has a right to be on this executive committee."

And with that, Beckwith's coronation moved on flawlessly, enabling Sky

Nation to fly without further controversy.

Yet, a larger question for Beckwith remains: Given the deep polarization affecting our nation, is crossing political boundaries acceptable? If so, how can crossing political boundaries enhance our collective situation?

"Sometimes you just have to be bold and know what's right," said one wise old former A-Teamer still jousting in local political trenches. "Nobody asked this body last night to endorse Josh Williams. We certainly need to get things done. That takes priority. I don't think that it means that you're disloyal because you endorse somebody from a certain party when you're working together in the best interest of your constituents as well as your Party."

For certain, Shaun Enright and other politicians have been effective by tempering partisanship with pragmatism. They know where the power is to protect their members.

Moreover, despite the prevalence of right-wing policy-making in Ohio and ongoing cultural conflicts, Ohio remains a non-right-to-work state. It's been 15 years since the defeat of Senate Bill 5, and Ohio has steadfastly avoided adopting right-to-work laws. This enduring stance can largely be attributed to the unions' considerable sway with Ohio Republicans, particularly the influence of the Building Trades. Their strategic alignment with Republican power has effectively safeguarded the interests of the Democratic Party and preserved the organizing rights of Ohio workers.

Therefore, in this crucible of leadership, Schuyler Beckwith "understood the assignment!" Her leadership role transcends mere crisis management, and she has plenty of support in that area.

Instead, her mission is to reshape the identity of the Democratic Party in Lucas County, merging the insights of experienced politicians with the fresh perspectives of the new generation. Her ability to forge a unified and progressive party will determine its success in navigating the complexities of today's political arena.

As the meeting concluded, participants said there was a discernible sense of optimism.

"To me, it looked like a celebration of better things to come, and almost it was a transition," said one of the attendees. "It was a jumping-off point; it was a transition from all the baggage that we've had over the last few years into something fresh and new."

There was enthusiasm, and there was discussion with each other. It was joyous, hopeful, and free. The moment was transient. There was a whole bunch of younger people in the room, a great mix of older and younger people.

Sky brought the next generation.

She's done a really good job of respecting those who have come before her, but she's also made it clear that change is available.

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

Community Calendar

April 20
Toledo Lucas County Health Department Presents Black Motherhood: Tackling Postpartum Depression: In collaboration with Cribs 4 Kids and CareSource. Healthy You/Healthy Kids Saturday; 11:00am to 2:00 pm; Wayman Palmer YMCA

9th Annual "Ode to the Zip Code" Winners Announced: Main Branch Library; 2-4 pm; youth, young adult and adult categories winners announces

April 24
Warren Sherman Area Council Community Meeting: 6 pm; Wayman Palmer YMCA; A reorganization of the council is the main agenda point

April 27
Free Plant Exchange: Wood County Fairgrounds; 10 am; Arrive at 8:30 and drop off plant donations: 419-213-4254

May 4
Free Plant Exchange: Lucas County Fairgrounds; 10 am; Arrive at 8:30 and drop off plant donations: 419-213-4254

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Rev. Freddie Haynes Resigns from New Presidency of Rainbow/PUSH Coalition

Renowned Pastor Just officially assumed the reins from Rev. Jesse Jackson in February

(TriceEdneyWire.com) - Less than a year after the fanfare announcement that he will succeed the Rev. Jesse Jackson as leader of the Rainbow/PUSH Coalition, the Rev. Frederick D. Haynes III, DMin, announced his resignation this week amid what insiders described as a painful financial situation.

Few details were available at Trice Edney News Wire deadline, but according to Dr. Haynes' April 16 statement titled, "Public Resignation Statement," he said the following as he resigned from the organization that announced him as Jackson's successor last July and formally installed him Feb. 1.

"After continued prayer and deliberation, I have decided to step down from the position of Chief Executive Officer and President of Rainbow Push Coalition (RPC), effective immediately. I remain committed to honoring the rich history of RPC and the legacy of its esteemed leader, the incomparable Reverend Jesse L. Jackson Sr., and, most significantly, to the calling and pursuit of social justice. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all who have expressed their support since my appointment in July of last year. Rest assured that my work in the fight for liberation and freedom continues. Yours in the struggle, Frederick D. Haynes III"

Neither Rev. Haynes nor Rev. Jackson, who has been ill with Parkinson's disease, could be reached for comment by deadline. Sources close to RPC said the organization has been stricken with insurmountable financial problems.

Haynes still serves as the Senior Pastor of Friendship-West Baptist Church in Dallas.

On its website, RPC describes itself by saying, "We protect, defend, and gain civil rights by leveling the economic and educational playing fields, and to promote peace and justice around the world."

According to its written history, The Chicago-based organization, founded in 1971, "is the product of a social justice movement that grew out of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference's (SCLC) Operation Breadbasket. Founded by Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Operation Breadbasket sought to combine theology and social justice and to effect progressive economic, educational, and social policy in America. In 1966, Dr. King appointed Jesse L. Jackson, Sr. to serve as the first director of Operation Breadbasket in Chicago."

According to a news release, Haynes' sold-out installation event on Feb. 1 this year, "featured VIP program participants and attendees from all over the country, including Roland Martin, Rev. Al Sharpton (NAN), Shavonne Arline-Bradley (NCNW), Dr. Michael Sorrell, Dr. Amos Brown, and Dr. Ron Daniels."

Rev. Sharpton who was keynote at the event, said in his speech, "Look at the time we are in: everything that was gained in the '60s is now under threat...They talk about affirmative action, women's rights, diversity, inclusion, voting rights, like somebody woke up and gave us that. Nobody donated anything to us. We fought for everything we got and we need to get back to fighting right now. And that's why I've come to celebrate Freddy, because we need fighters in the pulpit... We need a fighter like Freddy Haynes."

Vice President Kamala Harris, at the Rainbow/PUSH convention where Haynes was announced last July, said, "I am so confident in his leadership and his ability to carry on the greatest traditions of this organization and to meet the challenges of this moment."



Rev. Frederick Haynes

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Jodie Summers and the Transformative Power of Poetry and the Spoken Word

By Asia Nail

The Truth Reporter

Have you ever wondered how your story will be remembered after you're gone? Jodie L. Summers, a multi-disciplinary artist and community leader, has a unique perspective on leaving a lasting legacy. As we celebrate National Poetry Month this April, Jodie's words resonate with the power of eternity, not just in print but in the hearts and minds of those who hear them.

If you're already following Summers online, then you're familiar with his brand—Child of the System. Born and raised in Toledo, Ohio, Jodie is nationally recognized for his powerful spoken word performances and poignant poetry, commanding a remarkable presence both on stage and off.

When asked how he stays so productive, Jodie says, "I keep moving and stay active. This is my best advice for other artists: Don't Quit!"

His contributions to literature and the arts are vast and varied. From both his Tears of the Wounded to his Childhood Trauma book series, Summers' words have the power to heal, inspire and provoke change. But his impact doesn't stop there. As an activist, illustrator, motivational speaker, event coordinator, chef, elected official and business owner, he wears many hats, each one adding layers to his dynamic persona.

With every book he publishes, he invites readers to immerse themselves in his world, but he also encourages us all to consider our own story. "Leave a part of yourself written or vocal," Jodie advises, "so that you can live on even after you're gone."

Spoken word, with its roots deeply embedded in African American culture, serves as a powerful medium of expression for people from all walks of life. Its rhythmic cadence, emotive delivery and raw authenticity provide a platform for individuals to share their truths, struggles, and triumphs. Within the Black community and among the underserved, spoken word holds even greater significance, offering a space where voices that have been historically marginalized can be amplified and celebrated.

What if poetry could transcend time and space?

"Speak your truth to power and it will," says Jodie.

With poetry, time becomes fluid, and the barriers between past, present, and future collide. Through the power of words, we can evoke the essence of our ancestors, hear their stories, and learn from their wisdom. Similarly, our poems become time capsules, carrying our hopes, dreams, and experiences forward to inspire and guide future generations.

"I just released book #17. I also make sure all my books are available at the Lucas County Public Library for free to everyone."

Summers is not just a multi-talented artist but also a dedicated community leader. With a seat on over seven boards, including those focused on urban farming, community solidarity and addressing social issues like domestic violence, he's actively working to make a difference in the community.

But perhaps what sets Jodie apart is his unwavering commitment to encouraging others to find their voices and share their stories. Last year alone, he graced the stage of 527 spoken word performance venues, showcasing his powerful poetry and spreading messages of hope and empowerment. Already

this year, he has visited over 100 venues, demonstrating his unwavering commitment to his craft and his community.

Can poetry truly change the world, or is it merely a form of artistic expression?

"Poetry is both a reflection of the world as it is and a catalyst for the world as it could be," says Summers.

While poetry may not single-handedly alter the course of history, it has the power to spark conversations, challenge perceptions and ignite movements for social change. Like seeds planted in fertile soil, words have the potential to grow and flourish, transforming hearts, minds, and societies.

"Last year I performed in both Japan and Canada. I'm humbled to be able to travel around the world by the sound of my voice," shares Jodie.

With seven independent films and four stage plays to his name, Summers continues to leave a lasting mark on both the artistic and social scenes around the world. Featured in documentaries like Black Men Unfiltered and Sons of Toledo, he sheds light on important social issues, further demonstrating his versatility as an artist and storyteller.

"I run 26 pages on Facebook," he says laughing. "I post more on social media than a small country."

For many, poetry and spoken word are not just forms of artistic expression but a means of survival. In a society that often silences the voices of the oppressed, poetry becomes a tool for resistance, resilience and reclaiming one's narrative. Through the art of spoken word, individuals can confront systemic

...continued on page 12



Jodie Summers



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Examining the Racial Gap in Home Ownership

By Tiasia Saunders, Howard University News Service

Special to The Truth

Historically, homeownership allowed people to build wealth and assets. Despite this, Black Americans face systemic obstacles that prevent them from becoming homeowners.

In Roll Call's Equal Time podcast, Courtney Johnson Rose, PhD, the president of the National Association of Real Estate Brokers, discussed the importance of owning a home.

"Homeownership, traditionally, has been a cornerstone for wealth building. When you think about the African American community and the wealth we do have, 60 percent of that comes from home equity," said Rose.

According to the National Association of Realtors, homeownership rates increased by 65.5 percent in 2021; however, Black Americans' homeownership rates have increased by 0.4 percent in the past decade and are 29 percent less than their white counterparts.

Stephanie Ireland, realtor and owner of the Ireland Group with EXP Realty says that setbacks against Black homeownership are present throughout the housing sector.

"The discrimination is not just in lending, it's in appraisals, assistance program formulation, etc.," Ireland said.

"The best defense is a good offense. Know your rights, know your values, know what you're entitled to and then work with people who will help you achieve those goals," she said.

"You would think after almost 60 years since the Fair Housing Act (1968) that we would be further ahead, but we are not. People must be aware of their rights and be willing to report violations when they encounter them," she continued.

A lack of access to federal assistance programs, protection from predatory lenders, and redlining practices are all components of structural racism within the housing system.

Households of color remain less likely to own their own homes than white households, even after controlling for protective factors such as education, income, age, geographical region, state, and marital status, according to an American Progress report.

Homeownership promotes wealth building through home value appreciation, which increases over time. In addition, it provides forced savings through mortgage payments, which leads to more home equity.

"I believe that having homeownership allows one to have control to customize their living situation, it also allows them to create a long-term con-

nection with the community," said Jomalee Smith, a sophomore political science major from Philadelphia, PA.

"I believe that it is important to be 100% transparent to black people when they are trying to get home repayments," Smith added.

Organizations such as Habitat for Humanity work to counter housing discrimination through the development of a racial equity lending strategy, providing funding opportunities and advocacy for policy proposals and legislation for equitable housing.

"To start, I was single with two kids and, at the time, I was pursuing my Bachelor's degree. Habitat for Humanity truly helped me to become a homeowner," Kimberly Brooks, a special needs counselor from Danville, VA, said.

Due to systemic obstacles within the housing system, most Black Americans tend to be renters throughout their lifetimes. To promote change, Johnson recommends that Black Americans become knowledgeable about real estate and how to navigate the housing system.

"Black people could do anything. In my perspective, we buy homes, we buy real estate, and we create generational wealth. We can do it if given the opportunity and the resources," Johnson said.

Howard University News Service

Break Silence... continued from page 15

Musical Selections

Toledo School for the Arts (ISA) Chamber Orchestra Ensemble

"We Shall Always March Ahead" - Arranged by Jay Welenc

Scott High Vocal Ensemble

"Aya Ngena" - Arranged by Ruth Morris Gray

"Nothing is Gonna Stop Me" - Arranged by Pink Zebra

Spoken Word

"Time is Ticking" - By Anonymous

"Eenam Hashem" - Perrysburg Schools

"Leen Heyari" - Dublin City Schools

Poem

"If I Must Die" - By Razaat Alareer

"Rhaya Heyari" - Dublin City Schools

Short Orations for MLK Observance

Toledo Public Schools Students:

Taylor Windsor

Caleb Short

Andrew McQueen

Musical Selection

The Doug 419 Community Youth Chorus with children of the Ann Jenkins-Harris Academy of Excellence

"Breaking the Silence" written by Dianne Stubblefield-Moore

"Quote from Frederick Douglass" written by Dianne Stubblefield-Moore

Processional

"Lift Every Voice and Sing" by James Weldon Johnson ~ Clarence Smith, Founder and Director of Clarence Smith Community Chorus

Introduction

Oscar Shaheer, MILK 2024 Organizing Committee

Bell Toll

Patricia McCauley, MLK 2024 Organizing Committee

Beyond Vietnam: A Time to Break Silence

Representatives of Toledo and Northwest Ohio Organizations

Breaking Silence in Fellowship

Vietnam Veterans historic display, offered by Joyce Stubblefield;

Palestinian-American storytelling; information tables; punch, cookies, and conversation

Audience Participation

Vernita Lewis Taylor, Toledo Public Schools, Reader Leader

The MLK 2024 Breaking Silence Organizing Committee included:

Fatima Adajani, Amer ah Archer, Patty Baughman, Marilyn DuFou, Leon Fitzpatrick, Tom Galloway, Diane Gordon, Pat Groves, Lynne Hamer, Bill Hoover, Vernita Lewis Taylor, Pat McCauley, Oscar Shaheer, Ruth Solo, Joyce Stubblefield and Joan Walldorf

If you would like to participate in next year's event, contact the committee via call or text to 419-283-8288.



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Sunday 4/7 at 2 PM

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Empowering Women in Real Estate: Insights from the Greater Toledo Realtist Association (GTRA) Luncheon

By De'Lisa Moore
Special to The Truth

On Friday, April 12, 2024, the Greater Toledo Realtist Association (GTRA) hosted an empowering luncheon at the Glass City Enrichment Center, dedicated to celebrating and supporting women in real estate. The event featured a dynamic panel discussion centered around themes of overcoming obstacles, asserting oneself in male-dominated spaces, and recognizing the value women bring to the industry.

Panelists:

The esteemed panel comprised influential women leaders in the real estate community, including:

De'Lisa Moore, president-elect of GTRA (Danberry Realtors): With extensive entrepreneurial experience under her belt, Moore is passionate about empowering women and advocating for diversity and inclusion in real estate.

Shalonda Thurmond, associate broker at Keller Williams Citywide: Thurmond is known for her expertise in real estate and her commitment to mentorship and professional development.

Loreen Banks, broker/owner of Jewel Realty: As a successful entrepreneur and leader, Banks is dedicated to promoting equity and excellence in real estate.

Maya Rucker, mortgage broker at Equity Capital: Rucker brings extensive knowledge of mortgage lending and a passion for helping clients achieve their homeownership and investment dreams.

Julia Lee, mortgage officer at Huntington Bank: With a focus on providing financial solutions and guidance, Lee is committed to empowering individuals and families through homeownership.

Throughout the discussion, panelists shared personal anecdotes, insights,

... continued on page 12



Maya Rucker, Shalonda Thurmond, De'Lisa Moore, Loreen Banks, Julia Lee



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The Greater Toledo Realist Association Building Black Wealth Community Day

By De'Lisa Moore

Special to The Truth

On Saturday, April 13, 2024, the Greater Toledo Realist Association (GTRA) hosted a transformative event at the historic Frederick Douglass Community Association, dedicated to Building Black Wealth. The event not only focused on real estate education but also emphasized holistic well-being, with vendors selling various products and healthcare workers offering health checkups to attendees.

The event brought together community members, real estate professionals and esteemed guests, including Matt Edwards, treasurer of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, and Tonia Pace, president of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated-Toledo Alumni Chapter. Their presence underscored the importance of collaboration and collective action in advancing economic empowerment within Black communities.

The event commenced with a stirring rendition of the Black National Anthem by local artist Anitra Cherry, setting a tone of pride and unity for the day ahead. Guiding the program with expertise and passion was Local Realist Board President-Elect, DeLisa Moore, from Danberry Realtors.

The event featured a series of insightful sessions led by seasoned realtists, each tackling crucial subjects surrounding homeownership, equity accumulation, and real estate investment.

The ABC's of Home Buying: Kim Dixon, representing Howard Hanna, provided attendees with a comprehensive overview of the essential steps involved in the home buying process. From securing financing to navigating negotiations, Dixon equipped participants with the knowledge and confidence needed to embark on their homeownership journey.

I Have Equity, Now What?: Clyde Montgomery, hailing from CPG Mortgage, delved into the nuances of equity management. Montgomery guided

attendees through strategic decision-making processes, ensuring they make ..continued on page 12



GTRA President-Elect De'Lisa Moore and Tonia Pace, President of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Incorporated-Toledo Alumni Chapter



NAREB Building Black wealth tour



NAREB Building Black wealth tour



Jacqui Wilson, Julia Lee and Faye Smith

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A Ribbon Cutting for Quality Time 3

The Truth Staff

On Monday, April 15, staff, supporters and funders joined CEO Alethea Easterly to cut the ribbon and officially welcome Quality Time 3 into the Quality Time Day Care family of child-care providers. QT3 will serve school-aged pre-teens in before and after-school programs in addition to summer session programs.

Easterly opened Quality Time Day Care in 1999 to serve pre-school children – ages three and a half years and up. Nine years later she opened Quality Time 2 for kids in the early Head Start age range.

The funding for the new building in the Quality Time complex on Dorr Street was provided by three local institutions – Toledo Urban Federal Credit Union, Toledo Lucas County Port Authority and Signature Bank.

For TUFUCU and TLCPA, the construction of QT3 was a groundbreaking experience in a number of ways.

“I think I’m more excited than Alethea,” said Suzette Cowell, CEO of TUFUCU, during the groundbreaking event last year. “This is the first time Toledo Urban has been a part of a project like this; this is our pilot project.” Cowell was explaining the fact that the loan TUFUCU extended was the first time the institution has provided construction funds.

“We’re changing our community and so proud that Miss Alethea allowed us to be part of this,” she added.

Craig Teamer, manager of Finance and Special Projects, previously stated: “There is a growing need for child care and day care for low-income and underserved families.” He told those present that the funds provided by the Port Authority were the first time its Revolving Loan Fund had been utilized.

“This is a double blessing that will provide day care and jobs,” Teamer said.

The new addition will not only provide needed educational services for the community but also economic benefits as well. Four staff members have been added to the Quality Time employee ranks when the new facility is up and running in the spring.



Craig Teamer of the Toledo Lucas County Port Authority, Easterly, Suzette Cowell of the Toledo Urban Federal Credit Union, Bill McNeal of Signature Bank



TUFUCU CEO Suzette Cowell speaks during ribbon cutting ceremony



Alethea Easterly



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LOVE

DEAI... continued from page 16

engaged in dialogue and exchanged insights throughout the day, we all learned something new.

Marquis Miller, the panel moderator and vice president of Economic Development at the Obama Foundation, offered a lighthearted yet profound introduction, illustrating the variety within the room. Each participant was asked to provide a personal description of themselves for diversity considerations, ensuring accessibility for individuals with visual impairments. Additionally, a sign language interpreter facilitated accessibility by signing the entire event.

Miller's description set the stage for a conversation that delved deep into the human experience.

"I am a Black male with glasses, a blue blazer and gray slacks, a gold- en bow tie and dress socks I hope don't fall down," he shared.

Next, panel guest Stephanie Woodward, executive director of the Disability EmpowHer Network introduced herself:

"Hi I'm Stephanie, I'm wearing a purple dress in a grey blazer, I have curly hair and a hot pink wheelchair strategically used so people don't underestimate me!"

Bob Baxter the president of the Toledo Market for Bon Secours Mercy Health, introduced himself next.

"I'm a white middle aged man who is follicly challenged," he said as the audience laughed.

Next Leah Maguire, vice president of Inclusion and Diversity at Owens Corning shared,

"I'm a light brown skinned Black woman with curly hair. I'm wearing a burgundy dress, twinning with Stephanie."

As the conference progressed, each DEAI leader illuminated his or her organizational journeys and shared invaluable best practices, enriching the collective understanding of this vital work across various sectors and fields.

Executive Director Woodward brought her unique perspective to the forefront. As a disability rights advocate and attorney, Woodward's work embodies the principle of "Nothing About Us Without Us." Her commitment to amplifying the voices of disabled individuals underscores the importance of inclusivity in decision-making processes.

"At the Disability EmpowHer Network, DEAI isn't just a buzzword; it's a fundamental value ingrained in every aspect of our work," shared Woodward.

By engaging with diverse perspectives and centering the experiences of those most impacted, EmpowHer fosters genuine inclusivity with their members and community partners alike. Woodward's emphasis on representation within her organization spoke volumes. With a board, staff, and contractors comprising 100 percent of multiply-marginalized individuals, EmpowHer leads by example, demonstrating the power of diverse leadership and perspectives.

Woodward's call to action resonated deeply with all her listeners. She reminded everyone that being present in DEAI spaces is just the beginning and underscored the ongoing work required to truly foster inclusivity. By actively seeking out those not represented in the room and amplifying their voices, everyone can ensure diversity and inclusion efforts are truly comprehensive and impactful.

As a healthcare leader in Toledo, Bob Baxter oversees strategy and operations for eight hospitals, including a children's hospital and a Level 1 Trauma Center – one college, Life Flight critical care network and more than 100 sites of care across northwest Ohio and southeast Michigan. Mercy Health continually asks the community what culturally competent healthcare means. What does access to care look like for different groups and demographics? They also work hard to expand access to care for the underserved.

"I think as CEOs and organization leaders we must take the words of our mission statements and turn them into specific actions," shared Baxter.

"It's also important to find partners who share your company values."

Leah Maguire of Owens Corning, highlighted the transformative power of courageous conversations and employee resource groups in fostering a culture of belonging and development. Through four strategic pillars focusing on Belonging, Development, Education and Service, Owens Corning is empowering employees to bring their whole selves to work and contribute to their communities.

"Five years ago we were not mature in this space, now we know the most important thing we do is listen to our people. Owens Corning calls them "courageous conversations," said Maguire.

The impact of Owens Corning's courageous conversations increased employment engagement tremendously. They now conduct employee listening in a multitude of ways from workshops and focus groups to polls and surveys. Their 19,000 global employees have been exposed to these courageous conversations from the executive suites to the manufacturing floors ultimately driving positive change throughout their entire organization.

In addition to the insightful discussions from the esteemed panelists, we were privileged to hear from Cam Ogden, founder of Trans Allies of Ohio. She's a passionate 23-year-old trans woman advocating for the rights of trans youth in Ohio. Her words underscored the importance of community care and grassroots activism in navigating challenging legislative landscapes and highlighted the necessity of amplifying marginalized LGBTQIA+ voices to enact meaningful change.

Crystal Harris Darnell, DEAI Alliance board member and the Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion for Lucas County's Board of Commissioners introduced Lucas County Commissioner Lisa Sobecki whose extensive background in public service exemplifies the spirit of leadership and advocacy.

Commissioner Sobecki reminded the attendees of the importance of having uncomfortable conversations and that inclusive decision-making should serve as a guiding principle for Toledo's collective journey towards equity and justice. Before leaving the stage, she took a selfie with the audience behind her, serving as a reminder of our community's ongoing encouragement for her efforts to do what's right for everyone in Toledo.

Following the morning session, attendees enjoyed lunch before diving into two sets of breakout sessions, each offering two options for exploration:

- Empowerment Exchange (EE): The Making of a Great Minority Supplier Program
- Equitable Foundations (EF): Examining the Impact of Access on Employment
- Moving Forward Together (MFT): Advancing DEAI Amid Political Challenges
- Intersectionality at Work (IAW): Building Bridges for Inclusive Cultures

As we look ahead, the DEAI Alliance of Northwest Ohio is poised to reach a significant milestone with their pending 501(c)(3) status, soon offering memberships to those eager to continue this vital work.

Mark your calendars for upcoming events that further the conversation on diversity, equity, access, and inclusion:

- April 27: City of Toledo and Human Relations Commission hosting Human Library at Toledo Public Main Library
- June 5: World Education Services Training for Employers Serving Skilled Immigrant Refugees
- June 8: Welcome Toledo Lucas County hosting the annual Multicultural Twilight Market

These events serve as platforms for learning, engagement and community building, reminding those in attendance of the ongoing importance of DEAI work. The goal was for all to continue this journey together and remain committed to amplifying diverse voices.

This 3rd Annual DEAI Alliance Summit showcased the transformative impact of DEAI initiatives across sectors, inspiring attendees to drive positive change in their organizations and communities.

Follow <https://www.deainwo.org/> for more DEAI initiatives

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Empowering Women... continued from page 7

and practical advice on navigating challenges and seizing opportunities in the real estate industry. Key themes included:

- Overcoming Obstacles: Panelists discussed the various challenges they have encountered in their careers and shared strategies for resilience and perseverance in the face of adversity.
- Defending Your Seat at the Table: Addressing the importance of assertiveness and self-advocacy, panelists emphasized the need for women to assert themselves and assert their value in professional settings.
- Knowing the Value You Bring: Recognizing the unique perspective and skills that women bring to the table, panelists encouraged attendees to embrace their strengths and leverage them to achieve success in their careers.
- Leading from the Front: Panelists emphasized the importance of leader-

Black Wealth Community Day... continued from page 8

informed choices to maximize their financial assets.

What to Do with Momma's House?: Loreen Banks, an expert from Jewel Realty, tackled the complexities of inherited properties. With sensitivity and expertise, Banks offered guidance on navigating legal and familial considerations, empowering individuals to make sound decisions regarding their family estates.

Show Me the Money: Down Payment Assistance: Julia Lee, representing Huntington Bank, shed light on the various down payment assistance programs available to prospective homebuyers. Lee's presentation demystified the financial barriers to homeownership, making it more accessible to a broader range of individuals and families.

Investing in Real Estate: Neaira Williams, from Danberry Realtors, inspired attendees to explore the wealth-building potential of real estate investment. With insightful strategies and practical advice, Williams encouraged participants to seize opportunities for financial growth and prosperity.

Throughout the day, participants engaged in lively discussions, exchanged valuable insights, and forged connections with like-minded individuals committed to building wealth and prosperity within the Black community.

ship and mentorship in empowering future generations of women in real estate. They shared their experiences as leaders and highlighted the importance of supporting and uplifting other women in the industry.

The luncheon provided a valuable opportunity for attendees to connect with industry leaders, gain insights into navigating the challenges of the real estate profession, and be inspired by the success stories of women trailblazers in the field.

As the event concluded, attendees left feeling empowered and motivated to overcome obstacles, assert themselves in their careers, and continue making strides towards gender equality and diversity in the real estate industry. The GTRA Women in Real Estate Luncheon served as a powerful reminder of the invaluable contributions of women to the field of real estate and the importance of creating a supportive and inclusive environment for all professionals.

The Building Black Wealth Day at the Frederick Douglass Community Association served as a beacon of hope and empowerment, highlighting the transformative potential of education, collaboration, and action in realizing collective dreams of economic empowerment and generational wealth. As attendees departed, they carried with them a renewed sense of purpose and determination, fueled by the belief that through unity and perseverance, they can create a future where every individual has the opportunity to thrive.

Jodie Summers... continued from page 5

injustices, challenge societal norms, and assert their humanity in a world that too often seeks to diminish it.

As a skilled creator, Jodie also crafts original artwork, clothing, and jewelry reflecting his unique perspective and creativity. As the owner of *Toledo Mud Sauce*, he not only tantalizes taste buds but also fosters a sense of community through food.

"Artists stay open to trying new venues and experiences," he recommends.

"Along the way your passion will find you."

Jodie Summers' accolades speak volumes about his influence and reach within the community. From winning the *Outstanding Author 419 People's Choice Awards* to being the **keynote poet for the Pan-African flag raising in Lucas County**, his presence is felt far and wide. He's a recipient of multiple *Momentum* awards, a winner of various poetry slams across the country, and a featured artist for numerous festivals and events.

Within the Black community, spoken word has long served as a means of cultural preservation and storytelling. From the griots of West Africa to the poets of the Harlem Renaissance, Black artists like Jodie have used spoken word to pass down traditions, document history and celebrate resilience in the face of adversity.

Can poetry heal wounds, mend broken hearts, and bring solace to the soul?

Indeed, poetry has a transformative power that transcends the physical realm and touches the depths of the human spirit. Through its lyrical beauty, evocative imagery, and heartfelt sincerity, poetry has the ability to soothe the sorrows of the soul, offer comfort in times of hardship, and bring light to the darkest of days. In the hands of a skilled poet, words become medicine, offering healing and hope to all who dare to listen.

"Spoken word is like a mirror reflecting both our differences and the human experiences that bind us together," adds Jodie.

As we reflect on Jodie Summers' journey, let us heed his advice to leave a part of ourselves behind. Whether it's through writing, spoken word, art, or activism, each of us has a story to tell. And like Jodie, we have the power to shape our legacies, ensuring that our voices echo forever through time.



Washington Muhammad and Jodie Summers at the podcast

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The Moment: Thoughts on the Race Reckoning That Wasn't and How We All Can Move Forward Now by Bakari Sellers

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

The Truth Contributor

You have one last nerve, and somebody's on it.

Honestly, some folks don't know what you deal with every day, or how tired you are. They're lazy or ignorant or misinformed, they think they know but they don't. Some haven't even tried to open their eyes. You can deal with some of them, but most, well, You. Just. Can't. And in the new book, *The Moment* by Bakari Sellers, you'll see how we can change that.

Every now and then, Bakari Sellers says he pulls out a black-and-white photograph that was taken decades before he was born.

In it are seven young Black men, including a future congressman, two performers, members of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee... and Sellers' father, who was also deeply involved in the Civil Rights Movement. Sellers still calls some of those men "Uncle," and he says he learned about them and activism in general because, when he was a boy, he was his father's "shadow."

His father says that things are worse now than they were 60 years ago, but Sellers disagrees. A lot of action toward equality goes unnoticed but work still needs to be done – lots of it, and it's going to take "perseverance..."

c. 2024
Amistad
\$29.99
192 pages

[and] utilizing the mediums available." As he was his father's "shadow," Sellers hopes, for instance, to teach his own son through example so that the boy will have "freedom to dictate how [he] will change the world..."

In the meantime, the rest of us have much to acknowledge, starting with inequality within our justice system and the police. We must recognize that COVID deaths among Black Americans can be traced to an epidemic of racism, and we must insist that doctors do better for Black patients. Black churches and church leaders need to renew their place in the community and we need to acknowledge facts about "white terror," on and offline.



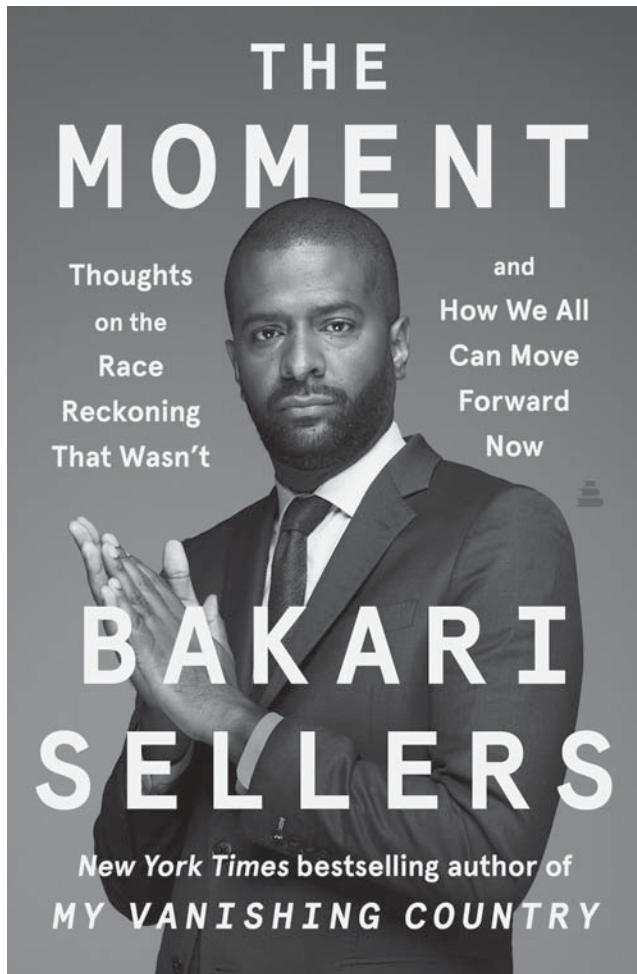
Moment author

And finally, let's re-examine these issues again, together. Says Sellers, we can only deal with them when they are "fully exposed."

Yet another book on fixing racism? Yes, please, because eventually, something's got to give. Maybe *The Moment* will be the catalyst for change.

Author and South Carolina legislator Bakari Sellers takes each point in the national discussion, and he turns it this way and that to better shed light on it. By showing readers how issues of inequality and today's racism are tied somehow to the Civil Rights Movement, we can see where problems endure and why. Politics, of course, figures into this examination, and Sellers makes that plain to follow, all the way back to the mid-1960s, to the White House and in several states. This book is also partly biographical which, as readers will note, makes it more relatable and deepens the need for each "prescription" he advises.

The Moment is a book for anyone who's good and well done with racism and ready to make it stop. It's a thought-provoker, and its clear-cut, no-nonsense sentiment is perfect for white understanding, too, so find this book and get on it.



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CLASSIFIEDS

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April 24, 2024

Public Bid Advertisement (Electronic Bidding) State of Ohio Standard Forms and Documents

1130-23-317
Accessibility/ADA Improvements
The University of Toledo
Lucas County, OH

Bids Due: April 16, 2024, at 2:00 p.m. through the State's electronic bidding system at <https://bidexpress.com>

EDGE Participation Goal: 5.0% of contract of the contract sum with EDGE-certified business(es) AND additional 10% EDGE-certified OR Diverse Supplier vendors including MBE, WBE, VBE, BSVI, SDVOB, and LGBTBE.

Domestic steel use is required per ORC 153.011.

Contract	Estimated Cost
General Trades	\$450,000.00
Total General Trades (Deduct) Alternates	\$-12,000.00

Pre-bid Meeting: April 02, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. – Main Campus, Plant Operations Building - Room 1000, The University of Toledo, 2925 East Rocket Drive, Toledo, OH 43606

Walk-Through: Immediately following Pre-Bid.

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

More Info: Questions submitted at <https://bidexpress.com>

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Lucas Metropolitan Housing (LMH), located in Toledo, OH is seeking experienced applicants for the following position(s): **Property Manager, Landlord Liaison/Housing Navigator**. For complete details, visit <https://www.lucasmha.org> and click on Careers. **Deadline: 04/26/24**. This is a Section 3 covered position. HUD recipients are encouraged to apply and are to indicate on the application if you are a LMHA Public Housing client or Housing Choice Voucher Program participant. Persons with disabilities are encouraged to apply. **NO PHONE CALLS**. Equal employment opportunity shall be afforded to all qualified persons without regard to age, race, color, religion, religious creed, gender, military status, ancestry, disability, handicap, sexual orientation, genetic information or national origin.



NOTICE TO BIDDERS

Electronic proposals will be received by the Board of County Commissioners of Lucas County, Ohio, by the Purchasing Department, One Government Center, Suite 480, Toledo, Ohio 43604-2247 until 4:00 P.M. (local time), May 16, 2024 and opened immediately thereafter for **#2142-TANF Program Services to Youth & Families** for the Lucas County Department of Job & Family Services, according to specifications available for examination, or download the proposal by going to the site, <http://www.co.lucas.oh.us/bids.asp>. Suppliers interested in doing business with Lucas County must register in the Supplier Portal.

To access the Lucas County Oracle Supplier Portal, please visit:

https://eicb.fa.us6.oraclecloud.com/fscm/UI/faces/NegotiationAbstracts?_afrcBuild=300000007278812&_afrcCtrlstate=15ps8sau3_1&_afrcLoop=7126760101772357&_afrcWindowMode=0&_afrcWindowId=avudlxmca&_afrcFS=16&_afrcMT=screen&_afrcMFW=1920&_afrcMEH=932&_afrcMEDW=1920&_afrcMEDH=1080&_afrcMFC=8&_afrcMFCI=0&_afrcMFM=0&_afrcMFR=96&_afrcMFG=0&_afrcMFS=0&_afrcMFO=0

Prior to 4:00 P.M. (local time), May 16, 2024 each proposal shall contain the full name of each person submitting the proposal and the name of every person or company interested in same.

The right is reserved to reject any and all bids.

By order of the Board of County Commissioners, Lucas County, Ohio.

Pete Gerken – President
Lisa A. Sobecki – Commissioner
Anita Lopez – Commissioner

#2142-TANF Program Services to Youth & Families – Lucas County
Publish: April 7, 2024

LAWNCARE SERVICES 2024 FOR PREFERRED PROPERTIES

Preferred Properties is seeking written proposals from qualified, licensed, and bonded entities to provide professional lawn care services for their properties; a total of 69 sites including multi-family housing and single-family homes.

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Please submit a request for the proposal packet via p2financeportal@preferred-properties.org.

FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT GRANT

The City of Toledo's Facade Improvement Grant and White Box Grant will be accepting applications until April 17. For more information, visit toledo.oh.gov/vibrancy.

LEGAL ADVERTISEMENT REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS FOR AVIATION CONSULTING SERVICES FOR THE TOLEDO-LUCAS COUNTY PORT AUTHORITY

The Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority (TLCPA) is seeking qualified aviation consulting firm(s) to provide professional Architectural, Engineering, and Planning services for the Eugene F. Kranz Toledo Express Airport, Toledo Executive Airport, and Seagate Heliport Heliport.

These services are to be provided in connection with the capital improvement plan (CIP) for both airports, as well as assist in the development of a potential CIP for the heliport. This Request for Qualifications (RFQ) will result in a multi-year agreement with a consultant or consultants for a period of five (5) years. The selected consultant(s) will then negotiate and enter into sub-agreements for services, based on the scope of work, with the Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority on a project/assignment basis during the term of the five (5) year period.

The selection process of consultant(s) is being done in accordance with Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Advisory Circular 150/5100-14E, and applicable Ohio statutes and laws.

The required format for the proposal to be submitted to the Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority is described in detail in the full copy of the Request for Qualifications, and is available by either (1) emailing Tina Perkins at Tperkins@Toledoport.org or (2) visiting the Port Authority's website at <https://www.toledoport.org/public-notice>. Proposals are due no later than 10:00 a.m. (local time), Wednesday, April 24, 2024.

Thomas Winston, President and CEO
Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS ARCHITECTURAL & ENGINEERING SERVICES (A&E) QUALIFICATIONS RFQ24-Q001

Lucas Metropolitan Housing (LMH) will receive qualifications for **Architectural & Engineering (A&E) Services in accordance with RFQ24-Q001**. Received in accordance with law until **May 1, 2024 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.



Our Time to Break Silence at Monroe Street United Methodist

By Dawn Scotland
The Truth Reporter

Monroe Street United Methodist Church, along with Toledo Public Schools, held Our Time to Break Silence, A Toledo Community Reading of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s *Beyond Vietnam: A Time to Break Silence*.

The event observed the anniversary of one of Dr. King's most inspirational speeches, delivered at Riverside Church in New York City on April 4, 1967. The dynamic speech was given exactly one year before his assassination.

The welcome was given by Lynne Hamer, MLK 2024 Organization Committee Chairperson and Member of the Monroe Street United Methodist Church. A number of organizations and individuals presented musical selections, poems and speeches for the annual event.

Dr. King's speech had three key messages that the committee hoped would resonate in the turmoil and injustice in the world today. The Organizing Committee selected key lines that point to these themes:

- * Listening and compromise are necessary to resolve conflicts at any level
- * Violence hurts poor people more than anyone else



Doug 419 Community Youth Chorus with children of the Ann Jerkins-Harris Academy of Excellence lead by Director Dianne Stubblefield-Moore



Guests listen to performers and speakers at Monroe Street United Methodist

- * Those who can, must speak out on behalf of victims of violence who cannot
- * We must listen to and understand our "enemy's" point of view
- * Rich and powerful countries should not support bombing people
- * People across the world are uniting in revolutionary calls for peace and justice
- * Only Love-not bombs-can triumph over hatred and evil
- * We must all make the active choice for love and solidarity-and must do so NOW

The performers for the day included:

... continued on page 6



Children and performers at MLK Our Time to Break Silence 2024



Clarence Smith, leader of the Clarence Smith Community Chorus, introduces the singers


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3rd Annual DEAI Summit: Fostering Excellence Through Diversity

By Asia Nail

The Truth Reporter

The Diversity Equity Access Inclusion (DEAI) Alliance of Northwest Ohio recently convened its 3rd Annual Summit and CEO Panel, hosted at Imagination Station’s Key Bank Discovery Theater. Under the theme The Human Perspective, the summit attracted approximately 250 participants, eager to explore the pivotal role of diversity, equity, access and inclusion in the workplace.

Established just two years ago, the DEAI Alliance emerged from the collaborative efforts of many of Toledo’s most dedicated DEAI Officers and community engagement leaders from anchor institutions throughout northwest Ohio. Grounded in principles of influence, communication, respect and service, the alliance aims to be a trusted advisor in forging connections, unlocking opportunities and crafting solutions that advance diversity, equity, access and inclusion across all sectors of society.

The summit commenced with a morning session featuring esteemed CEOs and representatives from leading national companies and organizations, including the Obama Foundation, SSOE Group, Mercy Health/Bon Secours, Disability EmpowHer Network, Owens Corning, Equal Ohio and the Lucas County Commissioners Office.

Vince DiPofi, CEO of SSOE Group, delivered the opening remarks, drawing on over 40 years of professional experience and highlighting the company’s commitment to a technology-driven strategic plan.

“At SSOE, we’ve learned that most of our employees fall into one of two groups:

1. Those who, at times, feel underrepresented; the classic example of being invited to the dance but not being asked to dance.
2. Those who don’t know how to engage in DEAI discussions because

they are not underrepresented.”

DiPofi’ went on to explain that as a white-male middle-aged CEO, he initially questioned his own relevance in DEAI conversations. However, alongside Candice Harrison, SSOE’s Director of DEI, they’ve seen remarkable results. Since embracing new DEAI initiatives, their diverse employee base has grown from 28 percent to 38 percent, with executive diversity doubling to 20 percent.

“Without setting quotas, we focus on doing what’s right and that alone has led to our significant growth,” he explained.

SSOE’s employee engagement scores have also soared to 86 percent, placing them in the top 10 percent in the U.S. in this category. This remarkable growth in both employee diversity and executive representation underscores the effectiveness of this approach. Moreover, their soaring employee engagement scores attest to the tangible benefits of creating an inclusive environment.

The summit provided many actionable strategies for advancing DEAI principles within organizations of any size, by fostering inclusive cultures, and driving business success through diversity. As participants

... continued on page 11

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Tanya, UTMC primary care patient

utmc.utoledo.edu



Tiffany Preston Whitman, PhD, and Marquis Miller



Toledo Museum of Art group



CEO panel moderated by Marquis Miller featuring panelists Stephanie Woodward, Bob Baxter and Leah Maguire-Schrupp



Rhonda Sewell, John Jones, Megan Casiere