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"And Ye Shall Know The Truth..."

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Roderick King, DJ, Entrepreneur, Business Mogul, Community Activist

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Shifting the Paradigm: Kate Sommerfeld's Diverse Future in Philanthropy

By Fletcher Word The Truth Editor

Women belong in all places where decisions are being made.

- Ruth Bader Ginsburg



Philanthropy has traditionally been perceived as a male-dominated field, but this rigid landscape is changing. Historically, major philanthropic organizations like The Greater Toledo Community Foundation (GTCF) were led by men who typically came from male-dominated business, financial or industrial sectors.

However, GTCF's recent selection of Kate Sommerfeld as their new president and CEO, indicates a significant shift towards greater gender diversity and the increasing influence of women in philanthropy.

Kate brings to the Greater Toledo Community Foundation her deeply rooted spiritual upbringing, exceptional skills and talents, and a profound dedication to equity and social determinants of health within a framework of community empowerment.

To provide readers with a closer look at her vision and plans to shift the paradigm in philanthropy, we conducted an exclusive interview.

Here's what Sommerfeld shared about her new role:

Perryman: Congratulations on your new position as president & CEO of the Greater Toledo Community Foundation! Please share your background and how it led you to this role. Are you from Toledo?

Sommerfeld:We've been in Toledo for about 15 years, but I'm originally from Kokomo, Indiana. I attended Purdue as an undergrad with dual degrees in political science and psychology. I am a Boilermaker through and through and a Big Tenner for sure.

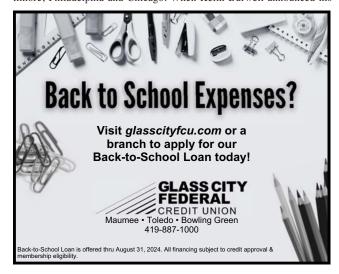
After that, I went to Bowling Green State University, where I worked at their former Center for Child and Family Policy. I received a master's in Public Administration, focusing on education policy and its implications for lawmakers. I worked extensively on public education funding, and right after graduate school, I joined United Way.

Perryman: Please share highlights of your work at United Way.

Sommerfeld: That's where I initially connected with a lot of the work happening with the Schools as Hubs and on Dorr Street. I worked on community impact and various projects, including summer feeding, school-based meals and backpack programs, and mobile vision services. Those are the assignments that provided me with invaluable experiences working in communities.

Perryman: What came next?

Sommerfeld: I worked on various projects at United Way for a few years, then led the United Way in Wood County, focusing on fundraising, management and operations. After that, I joined ProMedica, where I spent nearly 10 years working both locally and nationally. I collaborated with major community foundations, including those in Cleveland, Baltimore, Philadelphia and Chicago. When Keith Burwell announced his





Kate Sommerfeld

retirement after 20 years at the GTCF, I applied and am truly honored and humbled to have been selected to follow his great legacy.

Perryman: What was it like growing up in Kokomo?

Sommerfeld:Kokomo, Indiana, is about an hour north of Indianapolis and is a manufacturing town. My family worked at Chrysler, and I spent summers working on the line, which gave me a love and a heart for people. I also did volunteer work at shelters and was a court-appointed special advocate (CASA) for abused kids. Community service was very important to my family and was instilled at a very young age.

Perryman: Did you have a faith background?

Sommerfeld: Yes, my dad was a Gideon and involved in prison ministry. I grew up in the church, and with the principle of "to whom much is given, much is required." My parents were also foster parents, and I was adopted as an infant, although I was the only child they adopted. Growing up, I saw both the system's successes and failures, which shaped my passion for ensuring that we're taking care of the most vulnerable.

Perryman: Please elaborate on your work at ProMedica.

Sommerfeld: I held a couple of different roles at ProMedica. I started in community relations and government, focusing on healthcare policy work. Then, I joined the team working on the Ebeid Neighborhood Promise, funded by the Russell J. Ebeid family, which involved community-based services and programs. This work included not just clinical and health access, but also housing, transportation, food, and education—factors that directly impact health.

Over time, I took on additional responsibilities, including overseeing community benefits and managing ProMedica's investments in the community, including place-based initiatives like the downtown master plan and healthcare investments, totaling about \$298 million annually. These investments supported individuals who couldn't pay for medical care and funded various community projects in the Toledo area and beyond. As ProMedica expanded nationally, I had the opportunity to work in a broader setting, impacting more communities across the country.

Perryman: Let's shift the conversation to the present and future. The GTCF has significantly impacted the Toledo community over the years. How do you envision building on this legacy?

Sommerfeld: I would say a couple of things. The search committee intentionally sought feedback from community leaders. There's still more work to be done in terms of engagement, but the committee paused to evaluate where the organization and Toledo are today, where we need to head in the future and the type of leader the organization needs.

Hark I Hear the Baying Hounds!

By Lafe Tolliver, Esq

Guest Column

Well, it is on! If we were in a time-warped world and could time travel from Trump & Company inback to the wished-for MAGA golden days of human chattel and human bondage, we would see the remnants of the GOP...nka: The Trump Party, hustling to the kennels of the now baying coon hounds because the scent of Kamala Harris is tracking!

With Joe Biden renouncing a run for a second term for the White House and anointing Kamala Harris as his first and only pick, the Trumpsters are in a snit because their game plan was to destroy a seemingly tottering ol' Joe Biden with his speech gaffes and the classic old man shuffle walk.

This will not happen due to the Democratic Party rallying around Vice President Kamala Harris, big time, to be their official party standard bearer. Trump and his sycophants have released the hounds to harass and pummel VP Harris because in their heart of hearts, they sense the smell of defeat because their old man candidate Trump (78 years old) does not have the mental acumen or the stamina to go toe to toe with a seasoned and agile prosecutor.

If you had the occasions to watch former Senator Harris in full death mode when she was terrorizing corporate fat cats during Senate hearings, you would fully understand that VP Harris throws down with impunity and with the eyes of an assassin who just caught her human prey eating lemon swirl cupcakes on a park bench.

The coon hounds have been given her scent and they are off to the races to intimidate and kneecap VP Harris but have no inkling of the tempest that awaits them.

The last thing MAGA world wants is a nationally televised debate with their convicted felon candidate trying to intimidate and stalk the VP who, in her prosecutorial career, battled and won against bullies and con artists like

A now desperate Trump is calling on House Speaker Mike Johnson to initiate some type of delaying legal actions so that the momentum of Kamala Harris can be derailed by a false reliance on time wasting legal motions to keep the VP off the ballot in certain states.

Dear Leader is not used to adroit and brilliant women (especially so with Black women) attacking him and putting him a vise headlock. Trump prefers the quiet mannered Melania and Ivanka types; not Black women cut from the intellectual cloth of giants like an Ida B. Wells, a Rosa Parks, an Angela Davis or a pistol toting no nonsense, Harriet Tubman.

What America is about to experience on their daily TV sets are duels between "the prosecutor and the felon." The scuttlebutt is that Trump did not and does not want to debate a skilled orator and debater as Kamala Harris because he knows such debates do not end well for his fragile ego and the MAGA cult viewers. But, for him to hem and haw and dodge this challenge will set him up to be called a coward and worse yet a loser! And to a Black woman at that! This upcoming election is more than important. It is monumental to the system of checks and balances and to how democracy, fragile as it is, will be safeguarded in these United States.

If White America has misgivings about electing a Black woman to the highest office in the land, then those concerns are born in stereotypes and racial tropes that have shaped racial relations for hundreds of years in this

The irony of the Black man and woman in America is that some of them are so patriotic to a country that, in the past, would rather lynch them than offer them a bowl of pottage, simply due to their skin color.

When you check the admirable record of Kamala Harris, you will find a woman that has sworn allegiance to the flag of this country and to uphold the laws of this nation, in spite of the hard and shameful recorded history that this country did not return the favor or any respect to Black Americans.

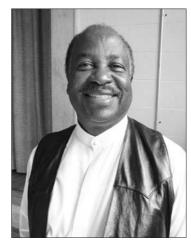
What to expect before the November 5 election? A lot of lies and half-truths

cluding the usual dog whistles of racial animus directed towards Kamala Harris.

Don't be alarmed. Those are simply the death rattles of a campaign built upon the Big Lie! that is deconstructing before your very eyes.

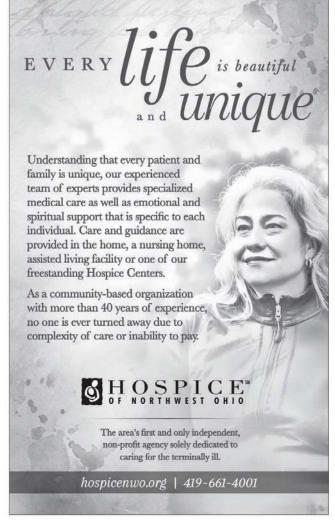
America is going to turn the corner and vote Kamala Harris into the White House and show the world and the doubters (both Black and White) that her competence and wit and political savvy will win the day. One of the best out-

comes of Kamala Harris winning the White House?



Simple: Donald Trump will be freed up to face the consequences of his other three court cases and hopefully he will one day, not far from now, be in an orange prison jumpsuit cursing the day that he came down that fateful golden elevator at Trump Towers to announce his run for the White House.

Contact Lafe Tolliver at tolliver@juno.com



Rent Relief: A Winning Policy Issue for the Harris Campaign

By Edolphus Towns Jr. Guest Column

Renters account for approximately 34 percent of the U.S. population, with 44 million housing units in the U.S. currently being rented. Talking directly to this constituency is a winning formula. The Department of Labor recently released new Consumer Price Index data. It showed that while inflation has cooled down in many areas of the economy, rent prices continue their upward ascent across the country, with the annual increase now exceeding five percent.



Home prices have risen 47 percent since the pandemic, and according to a report released this year from Harvard University, over half of renters are now spending more than a third of their income on housing. Since 2020, the average rental price has risen 17 percent to \$1,713 monthly, and in cities like New York and San Francisco, average rents now top over \$3,000 a month.

As the former Chairman of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, I know all too well the need for balanced and properly enforced legislation and regulations to remedy this problem. But the keyword here is balance.

The fact that rent prices are now falling in the U.S. markets where business owners have developed new rental units has proven that when the economy and building conditions approve, so does America's rental affordability.

For this reason, it is important that our nation's regulators let small business owners who risk their capital to continue purchasing and refurbishing derelict properties, which improves our communities and creates affordable rental units. That is why it is concerning that some regulators are targeting property management software these business owners use to do so.

Using predictive data analytics, these software companies help business owners ensure they are pricing their homes and units accurately, preventing shortages (which ultimately inflate rental prices) and excessive va-

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cancies (which decreases profit margins and incentivizes future building) from developing. However, some regulators believe this software - by maximizing revenue potential - is to blame for the high rental costs many Americans are paying today. This is the equivalent of blaming Kelley Blue Book for "raising" car prices, and if they outlaw this technology, it will backfire by incentivizing housing development, which will ultimately reduce supply and increase prices.

While this policy prescription is not a winning one, there are fortunately no shortage of balanced solutions to make rent more competitive and affordable to working families.

Vice President Kamala Harris, the likely Democrat nominee, has a history of proposing sound affordable housing plans that resonate with voters. Given how much attention voters are paying to this issue, she should quickly make them a central part of her campaign platform.

For example, while serving in the U.S. Senate, Harris proposed the Rent Relief Act, which would have issued tax credits to all Americans who spend more than 30% of their incomes on rent. If passed, this proposal would have helped millions of Americans afford shelter. Today, over half a decade later, half of renters still shell out more than 30% of their incomes on rent and utilities, so this idea is without question one that still has legislative merit.

Vice President Harris should also continue pledging to expand the Housing Choice Voucher program.

This program, also known as Section 8, provides rental assistance to low-income families, enabling them to afford housing in the private market. The Biden-Harris administration has proposed increasing funding for HCVs by \$5 billion, which could help as many as 200,000 additional households that spend over 30 percent of their income on rent afford their monthly payments.

The Housing Choice Voucher plan also includes measures to incentivize local governments to relax zoning laws that are restricting affordable housing while removing other counterproductive regulations that have discouraged developers from building new units. By making it easier to construct new properties, these policy prescriptions will prove crucial to quickly getting more affordable units on the marketplace.

All of Vice President Harris diverse solutions to improving Americans' rental conditions will provide mammoth leaps forward to fixing the status quo. With voters nationwide pressing their political leaders to address the housing crisis, she should share them on the campaign trail without delay.

The Honorable Edolphus "Ed" Towns Jr. is an American educator, military veteran, and former member of Congress who served in the United States House of Representatives. A Democrat from New York, Towns was Chairman of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee. Towns was an administrator at Beth Israel Medical Center, a professor at New York's Medgar Evers College and Fordham University, and a public school teacher teaching orientation and mobility to blind students.



Roderick King: Toledo's Own DJ Lyte-N-Rod

By Asia Nail The Truth Reporter

When you think of a true Renaissance man, **Roderick King**, better known as *DJ Lyte-N-Rod*, is a name that should come to mind. Born and raised in Toledo, Ohio, King has transformed his passion for music and community into a thriving array of businesses that serve the city in multiple ways. From his early days as a DJ to becoming a multifaceted business owner, King's journey is an inspiring testament to creativity, resilience and community spirit.

The DJing Journey Begins

King's love for music ignited at the tender age of 14 when he saw Grandmaster Flash on MTV in the early '80s. Watching the legendary DJ work his magic with two turntables and a mixer, King was instantly hooked. "Flashing," as it's called in the DJ world, says King, involves manipulating the same record back and forth, creating a seamless flow of music that keeps the energy alive."

From DJ to Business Mogul

While DJing remains his first love, King's entrepreneurial spirit has naturally led him to explore other avenues. He started *Lyte House Sound, Video & Lighting*, a company that installs sound and video equipment. His innovation didn't stop there; "I became the first in Ohio to pioneer video DJing, while mixing and scratching DVDs, "King recalls. "When the technology came out it was super expensive, so I sold my car rims and my motorcycle to buy the equipment," His commitment to excellence not only paid off, it set a new standard in the industry.

Expanding Horizons: Lyte House Music & More

"On my journey I learned that most bars and clubs were not equipped with the proper sound and lighting. Most music engineers at the time wired themselves to the sound stereo, but I also taught myself how to wire into my clients' video feeds."

With a wealth of self-taught knowledge under his belt, King then launched Lyte House Music & More, offering DJ/VJ services for all types of events,



Lyte House Server Carecia Moore



from clubs and concerts to private parties.

"Now my company also handles event planning and promotion, sound and video installation, and TV and radio ad production," he explains. This holistic approach to entertainment and media has made Lyte House a household name in Toledo.

Revving Up: Lyte House Customs

"In 2016, I bought a *Slingshot* specialty vehicle, only to crash it shortly after," he recalls.

Underinsured and unable to afford professional repairs, he decided to fix it himself. Essentially, he "pimped his ride" and everyone, everywhere took notice. "This DIY project led to the creation of Lyte House Customs, a business specializing in customizing Slingshot "Everyone vehicles. wanted their Slingshot customized. SLANG GANG!"

In 2018, Polaris noticed his work and sponsored him on a campaign road trip to

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Rod King



King's Ride





The Wayman Palmer Y Hosts a Free Health Fair

The Truth Staff

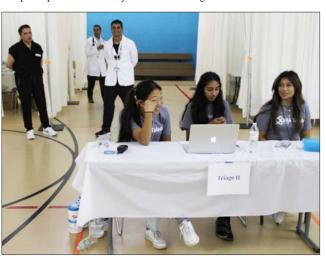
The Wayman Palmer YMCA hosted a free health fair on Saturday, July 27 and hundreds of visitors came during the four-hour event for dental consultations, wellness checks, vision tests, mental health exams and even free haircuts, among the many services offered by Universal Health Aid.

Universal Health Aid is a non-profit organization that helps to improve the health and lifestyles of the underprivileged through annual health screenings. It is actually a student-run organization, consisting of pre-med students from The Ohio State University, the University of Toledo and other schools.



Saturday's event at the Y also enabled visitors to undergo sports physicals, to obtain menstrual products, deterra bags and event bags with health products.

The first 100 attendees received complimentary welcome gifts and nearly 200 participants were seen by the doctors during the health fair.











Toledo Realtists Hold Monthly Meeting at TolHouse

By Dawn Scotland

The Truth Reporter

The Toledo Realtist Association held its monthly general body meeting July 17, 2024 at TolHouse. The meeting featured a panel of esteemed real estate professionals providing their expertise in an ever changing market and was open to the public.

Rob Pasker, along with 12 other founding members, revived the branch in 2019. They are a burgeoning organization of the premier Black real estate professionals and allies within the northwest Ohio region. Their mission is to educate our community, advocate on behalf of our community and also elevate the real estate businesses in the process.

The Greater Toledo REALTIST® Association (GTRA) is a Trade Association whose mission is to build a supportive infrastructure to become a positive and dominant influence in the Ohio real estate market. They aim to represent a unified voice for African Americans and other underserved populations, brokers, agents, affiliates and the clients [they] serve.

The group is a local board of The National Association of Real Estate Brokers, Inc. (NAREB®), that was formed in 1947 by African American real estate professionals out of a need to secure the right to equal housing opportunities, regardless of race, creed or color.

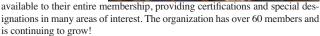
The organization is not just an organization for realtors but anyone who is interested in breaking down barriers in black homeownership. Within the organization there are lawyers, brokers, contractors, event planners and title reps.

The panel discussion was facilitated by Delise Simmons, GTRA Treasurer and featured:

- Emory Whittington (Whittington Group Reality)
- Loreen Banks Kendricks (Jewel Reality; GTRA Director)
- Rob Pasker (Pasker Real Estate; GTRA Founding President)
- Anthony Ross (Ross Realty Group)

The panelist answered questions varying from best business practices, to tips on leveraging technology and even discussions on how to maintain and balance quality of life in the real estate industry to a room full of professionals and as well those interested in the field.

The group ensures training and educational opportunities are available to their entire



NAREB is governed by a board of directors and an executive committee comprised of members and leaders in the industry from across America. Each local chapter continuously accepts new members to join and actively become community real estate leaders. To learn more visit: toledorealtists.org or Facebook Greater Toledo Realtist Association.



(L. to R.) Anthony Ross of Ross Realty Group; Loreen Banks-Kendricks of Jewel Realty and GTRA Director; Rob Pasker, Pasker Real Estate and GTRA Founding President; Emory Whittington, Whittington Group Realty

CareSource Football Camp

The Truth Staff

This summer's Youth Football Camp, hosted by CareSource, was held on Friday, July 26 at Central Catholic High School. The free football camp was held for youth grades one through eight and had 275 kids register in advance.

The CareSource staff also welcomed the help of the Ohio State University football teams and the presence of Buckeyes Jaden Ballard, wide receiver; Lorenzo Styles, wide receiver and Sonny Styles, defensive back.

The youth were able to learn football fundamentals and develop skills in a number of disciplines with hands on coaching and encouragement from the older players and advisers.

"This youth football camp coordinated by ProCamp was very well organized and orchestrated as well over 100 youth attended and had so much fun



CareSource camp staff and athletes



learning and following directions," said Terry Crosby, Taylor Automotive community ambassador and quite the athlete – both football and basketball – in his youth.



Jaden Ballard, Lorenzo Styles, Terry Crosby, Sonny Styles



Perryman... continued from page 2

From that feedback, a few key points emerged. First is the importance of partnership and collaboration, acting as a catalyst to bring together various sectors—those we serve, nonprofit leaders, community partners, stakeholders, and donors. The goal is to build and foster deep, authentic partnerships, which definitely aligns with my background and passion.



Second, as I return to Toledo after working around the country for a few years, I am deeply committed to deep listening with all stakeholders. This means not just hearing their feedback but incorporating it into our daily operations to fulfill our mission of improving the region's quality of life, demonstrating our respect for their perspectives and experiences.

Lastly, authentic engagement with a broader audience is not just a goal, but a commitment. We are dedicated to connecting with people who may have never interacted with the foundation before, doing so in a genuine and meaningful way. So, our focus will be on deep listening, authentic engagement, and being a catalyst for partnership and collaboration, ensuring that everyone feels welcomed and included in our mission.

Perryman:How do you distinguish GTCF from its philanthropic peers?

Sommerfeld: I can tell you that one way we stand out is through the significant impact of our financial contributions. Over the last 50 years, the foundation has distributed nearly \$270 million. In 2023 alone, we gave out approximately \$24-24.5 million. So far in 2024, we've granted over \$11 million. Our endowment assets are just under \$450 million, making our portfolio quite substantial. Additionally, the Greater Toledo Community Foundation not only serves Toledo but also supports the broader region and some smaller community foundations.

Perryman: Your predecessor leaves a prestigious record of investing in innovative programs over "legacy funding" or to only recognizable names. Burwell has always sought out the hidden gems. How do you plan to engage with and support the African American community?



Sommerfeld: There are significant opportunities to support both the African American and Latino communities. Data shows that these populations face the biggest challenges in key areas like early childhood readiness, wealth building and housing.

I want to engage with the right groups and seek your thoughts on where we should listen and find opportunities for the Foundation to play a bigger role. Additionally, it's important to empower and engage our staff and volunteers, who are extensions of the organization. Intentional, authentic listening and strategic engagement are key to our efforts.

Perryman: Related to that, how does your organization plan to promote Diversity, Equity and Inclusion within its operations and programs? Sommerfeld: Following the murder of George Floyd, we launched the Equity and Access Fund to drive targeted investments to nonprofits serving our African American community.

The Equity & Access Fund has distributed \$382,930 across three rounds, emphasizing collaboration, grassroots engagement, and minority-led initiatives. From March 2021 to October 2022, these rounds addressed economic, social and capacity-building challenges in northwest Obio.

I will focus on accelerating and expanding this work, bringing more people to the table, and learning how to enhance further our efforts to promote Diversity, Equity and Inclusion throughout our operations and programs.

Perryman: What are your thoughts on educational initiatives and issues such as the achievement gap and access to quality education?

Sommerfeld: Addressing educational issues is incredibly important. During my time at ProMedica, I was very active in HOPE Toledo, and Keith Burwell currently sits on the HOPE Toledo board as an advisor. Early childhood education is critical and a great equalizer for equity and I have a huge passion and commitment to education. We need to redouble our efforts to create more opportunities for higher-quality education, especially in those early years.

Perryman: How do you plan to address health disparities and improve health outcomes in minority communities?

Sommerfeld: The community foundation must collaborate, identify key tables at which we need to be, and pursue effective solutions together. It's not about the foundation acting alone but about forming strong partnerships and engaging deeply with the community. So, yes, we must ensure we listen, engage deeply, and work collaboratively to strengthen our Black and brown communities.

Perryman: Specifically, how do you plan to work with local organizations, leaders, and other stakeholders to better serve the African American and Latino communities?

Sommerfeld: It's crucial to pause and take time to listen, even when the instinct is to move quickly. I'll engage with our current partners and those we haven't historically partnered with to identify opportunities and areas for improvement. This intentional listening will include both current donors and those who haven't engaged with the foundation before, demonstrating our openness to new ideas and opportunities.

So, my first 100 days will focus on listening. I'll ensure that our staff and board engage directly with the individuals we serve, showing up at homeless shelters and other touchpoints. This personal connection is important to me and something I'll continue in this role. Additionally, I'll listen to nonprofit leaders and direct service providers to understand their perspectives.

Perryman: Finally, GTCF's steadfast mantra for grant recipients has been results-based accountability. However, let's flip that. What documented long-term impact on the community and communities of color do you expect for GTCF itself, and how will you measure your failure or success?

Sommerfeld: I'm focused on results-based accountability and authentic engagement in our planning. There's a national debate on what this looks like and how to measure it. The foundation already does amazing work in partnership with many, but we need to share our impact more deeply and transparently. Our grant-making team does a fantastic job, but there still needs to be more awareness about what the Greater Toledo Community Foundation does. We need to tell our story better and ensure transparency in the results we achieve, both to our donors and the broader community.

Perryman: Thank you, and welcome to your new role! I look forward to having more conversations about exciting developments under your barrier-breaking leadership.

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

Election Issues for Older Americans

By Paul Hubbard

Guest Column

There is a lot of chatter, media hype and conversation about the 2024 November presidential election. Most of it is about getting the younger generations out to vote. I want to remind everyone that the African American Senior Citizen population has a lot to lost or gain in this election also.

The fast-approaching presidential election will be, among other things, a referendum on our na-

tion's sacred obligation to ensure the health and safety of our senior citizens. At the top of the list of older American's issues are 1. Protecting Social Security; 2. Health care that's affordable; 3. Support for family care givers; 4. Food on the tables; 5. Rent/mortgage and utilities; 6. Personal needs.

Social Security is money you earned through a lifetime of hard work. It ensures affording everyday expenses such as groceries, gas, housing and personal expenses. The AARP June 2023 report says 96 percent of Americans identified Social Security as an important government programs.



AARP goes on to say 75 percent of Americans say Social Security is more important after COVID because of high inflation. We need to vote for politicians who will support and increase Social Security.

As the number of African American senior citizens living alone has increased, we need to elect a president, Congress members, Senate members and other elected legislators who will pass laws to support care givers. These laws could be tax credits, cutting red tape to approve care giving, improving coordination across government and health care systems with care givers/giving.

Affordable health care is a must for African Americans seniors. We should not have to choose between paying for housing, food and health care in our budget. Affordable and accessible transportation is also a must in 2024.

Let's vote for a president and legislators who will support this.

Let's have political conversation among ourselves, our families, our churches and our groups just as the rest of American is doing.

Paul L. Hubbard, President of Comfort Care Senior Services.

Strictly R&B Weekend Unveils New Mental Health Initiative: Rhythm & Balance

Special to The Truth

With expectations of a record turnout of 7,000 people, TRL ENT and Marcus G Ent, all Toledo natives, invites everyone to join us in creating a meaningful impact on mental health awareness at this year's Strictly R&B Park Jam Weekend.

Rhythm and Balance represents our commitment to blending the rhythm of music with the balance of mental well-being. This initiative fosters an environment where attendees can enjoy exceptional performances while finding support, resources, and inspiration. Our team has carefully crafted this initiative to promote inclusive and supportive conversations about mental health. Attendees can look forward to performances by Bobby V, Adina Howard, and Case, adding to the event's excitement and energy. Strictly R&B Weekend is an annual celebration of rhythm and blues music and has evolved into a cultural movement embodying unity, diversity, and transformative power of music.

The Event will also feature a variety of mental health workshops let by mental health professionals addressing stress management, self-care, mind-

fulness, and coping strategies. We will create spaces for therapeutic art activities promoting mental wellness, self-discovery and offer mindful movement sessions like yoga, dance therapy, and mediation to promote mental and physical support. These event will all be happen the entire week. Furthermore, we will collaborate with national recording R&B artists to raise awareness about mental health during performances, utilizing on-stage messages, promotional materials, and social media advocacy. Attendees will be invited to visit our information booths which will provide educational materials and opportunities to engage in discussions about mental health. Additionally, there will be food trucks, vendors and fun activities to enhance the overall experience.

Strictly R&B Park Jam will take place downtown Toledo at Promenade Park located at 400 Water St, Toledo, OH August 17 from 5 p.m. – 11 p.m. Tickets may be purchased at www.eventbrite.com or www.strictlyrnb419. com and range from \$25-\$60.

Lyte-N-Rod...continued from page 5

Chicago, enabling him to expand his reach and overtime, his operations. "In 2020, I renovated my garage to accommodate three machines at once, and turned my passion of customization into another profitable venture."

A Taste of Success: Lyte House Burgers & Billiards

Building on his history in the bar business, King opened *Lyte House Burgers & Billiards*.

"In the summer of 2022, I had made enough profit to purchase my own bar. With the experience I gained setting up sports bars and nightclubs, I thought, 'It's time for my own,' "says King.

This venue not only serves up delicious food but also offers a fun atmosphere for billiards enthusiasts. It's a place where people can gather, relax, and enjoy great music – often spun by DJ Lyte-N-Rod himself.

Giving Back: The Bar Bounce

DJ Lyte-N-Rod's latest initiative, the *1stAnnual Black-Owned Bar Bounce*,

epitomizes his commitment to community. This year's event showcased various Black-owned bars in Toledo, with each night featuring a different venue. "The smaller the room, the bigger the party," King says, highlighting the intimate yet lively atmosphere of each spot. The Bar Bounce not only promotes local **Black owned businesses** but also fosters a sense of unity and pride within the community.

"It was an amazing experience, thank you to all who participated."

Celebrating African American Culture

As part of this year's *Toledo Urban Federal Credit Union's 19th Annual African American Parade and Festival*, King's influence was evident. Held on July 20, the festival featured DJ Lyte-N-Rod's dynamic sounds and musical performances by **Jagged Edge, Raheem Devaughn, Pokey Bear,** and **Shirley Murdock.** Comedian **Kelly Williams**, multimedia creative **Jodie L. Summers**, and saxophonist **Mike Williams** also graced the Huntington Center stage. With over 4,500 people in attendance, the event was a massive

...continued on page 10







The Outsider Advantage: Because You Don't Need to Fit In to Win by Ciera Rogers

By Terri Schlichenmeyer The Truth Contributor

Some say that you march to a different drummer.

You follow the music you hear in your soul, blazing your own path while the rest of the world can watch. You're the best companion you know for yourself. You know

c. 2024 Portfolio \$29.00 272 pages

who you are, and that's all that matters. And in *The Outsider Advantage* by Ciera Rogers, founder and CEO of Babes, you'll see what you can do with your you-niqueness.

There was once a time when Ciera Rogers lived in her mother's Jeep.

She was a teenager then, and though her mother tried to keep a roof over their heads, a handful of low-paying jobs just didn't cut it. They were constantly moving and Rogers switched schools often, which forced her to learn how to fit in quickly, and get by.

That resourcefulness was key to her survival later in life. As the first in her family to attend college, Rogers got a degree but she was unable to take an unpaid intern position, which were all that were available back a decade or so ago. This hurt her job chances, but she knew she'd survive. She was bold and smart.

One afternoon, broke and unemployed, she thought about her mother's

THE SIDER OF SIDER CIERA ROGERS In the last of Beller to the last

small boutique in Houston, launched with few resources and less money. Rogers knew how to thrift. She could make videos. She could sell clothing online, eventually creating one-of-akind outfits, mixing and matching, catching the attention of celebrities and movie-makers with a million-dollar business started literally on scraps.

"Remember," she says, "most big things start with a tiny idea."

You don't have to have piles of cash or big inheritances to start a business. Look for free help or free platforms that can move your enterprise along. Make do with what you have, at

first. Stop procrastinating and don't miss any opportunities. Know what you stand for. Know that you are not alone, either in your uniqueness or your situation.

"There's a box where everyone else is," says Rogers. "Get out of it. Be different."

So you don't have any money. You don't even have bootstraps to pull yourself up. But if you can read, so you have what it takes to be an entrepreneur. Says author Ciera Rogers in *The Outsider Advantage*, you only need to take that first confident step.



Outsider Advantage author

As you start this book, though, you may wonder why anyone would think it's for entrepreneurs. What Rogers has to offer is, indeed, more memoir than advice, though there are nuggets to capture on nearly every page and end-of-chapter takeaways embedded in a lively, fun sort of treasure hunt that feels friendly and approachable. Rogers' entire life on the edge shows readers that being a little bit (or a whole lot) unique isn't a hurdle. Unconventionality is not a deal-breaker; in fact, it can help you break into success.

This book is an inspiration – especially for readers whose dreams are burning with ideas but not a lot of coin. *The Outsider Advantage* is for when the drum beat of entrepreneurship is just too irresistible.

Lyte-N-Rod...continued from page 9

success.

A Philosophy of Service and Opportunity

For King, success is not just about personal achievement but also about serving others and seizing opportunities. "When something comes my way, I can only fail by not attempting it," he says. His initiatives, like the Bar Bounce, are in-



Rod and Erin King

spired by a desire to improve the mindset and opportunities within the black business community. By supporting and collaborating with local talent, King believes in creating an ecosystem that uplifts everyone involved.

A special message

"None of this could have ever happened without God and my beautiful wife," he acknowledges.

Together, Rod and Erin King have built a business empire that not only entertains but also enriches our Glass City communities one person at a time.

As DJ Lyte-N-Rod says at the end of every DJ set, "Thank you, Toledo, I love this city!"

Well, Mr. Rod King, we love you right back!

Your innovative spirit, dedication to service, and genuine love for our community are unmatched. Go DJ, that's our DJ!

Follow the beat: facebook.com/lytenrod

2024 Bar Bounce Black Owned Local Businesses:

"Lyte House Burgers & Billiards" 2114 W. Alexis Rd.

"Center Court" 5929 Heatherdowns Blvd.

"Roberts" 2635 N. Detroit Ave.

"The 406" 406 Westwood Ave.

"Bar Netts" 3335 Lagrange St.

"Classic Lounge" 2224 Nebraska Ave. "The Grenadier" 1343 Avondale Ave.



CLASSIFIEDS

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ANNUAL POPUP FUNDRAISER

Empowered Strengthened and I is hosting their annual popup fundraising event! Come out on August 24, 2024 from 11am-4pm at Lott Industries 3350 Hill Ave. Toledo, Ohio 43607

< https://www.google.com/maps/search/3350+ Hill+ Ave. + Toledo, + Ohio + 43607? entry = gmail & source = g > 1000 + 100

Visit widowsempowered.org for vendor registration or call 419-367-1802 for more info.

TARTA SEEKS FEEDBACK ON UPCOMING FARE SYSTEM UPGRADE

The Toledo Area Regional Transit Authority (TARTA) has scheduled a series of public events to collect community feedback on the planned rollout of an account-based ticketing system. If approved by TARTA's Board of Trustees, this fare-capping system will allow customers to get the value of extended passes without paying the upfront fee. For card-holders, the day cap would be \$3, the 7-day cap will be \$15, and the 31-day cap will be \$45.

These events will include two in-person forums and two virtual feedback sessions. These forums will focus on the Title VI equity analyses surrounding the service changes. A virtual session will be recorded and posted on the TARTA website. Public meetings are scheduled for:

Virtual meeting, **Monday, August 19, 5-6 p.m.**, Register at tarta.com/publicmeetings In-person meeting, **Tuesday, August 20, 6-7 p.m.**, Toledo Lucas County Public Library, Kent Branch, 3101 Collingwood Blvd., Toledo

In-person meeting, Wednesday, August 21, 11 a.m.-1 p.m., TARTA Transit Hub, 612 N. Huron Street, Toledo

Virtual meeting, Friday, August 23, 10-11 a.m. Register at tarta.com/publicmeetings.

All language assistance services for TARTA programs are provided to the public at no charge. Inperson translation services for events should be requested at least 5 business days prior to the event.

Registration and additional details will be available in the coming weeks at tarta.com or by calling 419-243-7433. Customers and others from the public interested in submitting questions may do so by sending them to customer-relations@tarta.com.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER (CEO) POSITION AVAILABLE AT PATHWAY INC.

Pathway Inc., Ohio's number one community action agency, seeks a dynamic and visionary Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to lead our organization. Reporting to the Board of Directors, the CEO will provide strategic direction and organizational leadership and oversee Pathway's administration and programs. This full-time position requires a 40-hour workweek and involves collaborating with management to oversee various departments. Salary is commensurate with experience, and a comprehensive benefits package is included.

- **Key Responsibilities:**
- · Provide supervision and leadership to the organization's staff
- Manage the organization's finances, including budget development and fiscal oversight
- Develop and implement programs in line with Pathway's mission and goals
- Foster positive relationships with the Board of Directors, community leaders, and civic organiza-
- · Represent Pathway in various activities and forums
- $\bullet \ \ \text{Communicate information on programs and policies to the public and government officials}$
- Oversee facilities management
- Lead fundraising initiatives to secure financial support for Pathway's programs and services.
- **Qualifications:**
- College Degree or nonprofit leadership experience
- Proficiency in computer operations and programs
- · Strong public speaking and strategic analysis skills
- · Proven fiscal management skills
- Comprehensive understanding of federal and state standards, auditing requirements, nonprofit structures, community demographics, grant management, and crisis intervention techniques
 Demonstrated success in fundraising and development, with experience in donor engagement and grant writing.
- **Application Process:**To apply, please submit your resume and cover letter to Kristie Clark at kclark@pathwaytoledo.org. We kindly request no phone calls. Pathway Inc. is an equal-opportunity employer.

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ) ARCHITECTURAL/ENGINEERING/DESIGN FIRMS CARLSON LIBRARY RENOVATIONS PROJECT #: 0034-25-351

The University of Toledo is soliciting qualifications for professional design services for Carlson Library Renovations. Interested firms may find the full RFQ instructions at:

https://ofcc.ohio.gov/project-opportunities/bids-rfgs/qualifications-based-rfgs

Submit all questions regarding this RFQ in writing to Nicole Baden at Nicole.Baden@utoledo. edu with the project name included in the subject line (no phone calls please). Questions will be answered and posted to the Project Opportunities page on the OFCC website. Submit the requested Statement of Qualifications directly to Erin Homer at Erin.Homer@utoledo.edu with the project name included in the subject line by 2:00 P.M., Friday, August 16, 2024 to be eligible for consideration.

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS (RFQ) ARCHITECTURAL/ENGINEERING FIRMS BLDG. ENVELOPE/WEATHERPROOFING FY25-26

PROJECT #: 1130-25-359

The University of Toledo is soliciting qualifications for professional design services for the repair and/or replacement of building envelope / weatherproofing components on multiple buildings on several campuses. Interested firms may find the full RFQ instructions at: https://ofc.ohio.gov/project-opportunities/bids-rfqs/qualifications-based-rfqs

Submit all questions regarding this RFQ in writing to Nicole Baden at Nicole.Baden@utoledo.edu with the project name included in the subject line (no phone calls please). Questions will be answered and posted to the Project Opportunities page on the OFCC website. Submit the requested Statement of Qualifications directly to Erin Homer at Erin.Homer@utoledo.edu with the project name included in the subject line by 2:00 P.M., Friday, August 16, 2024 to be eligible for consideration.

CONSTRUCTION SPECIALIST

Be a part of something incredible!

The Lucas County Land Bank is looking for a hardworking and capable Construction Specialist to join our team! The Construction Specialist works with our Director of Construction to manage our residential construction projects, support homeowners, inspect properties, estimate renovation costs, and oversee contractor relationships.

Annual salary of \$60,000 - \$75,000, depending on experience. Very generous benefits, including high-quality health care coverage, significant paid time off, a retirement plan with competitive employer match, and a company-provided vehicle.

The Lucas County Land Bank is a non-profit organization working to build and strengthen our community's neighborhoods. Since our founding 14 years ago, the Land Bank and its energetic staff have renovated almost 1,000 properties, completed hundreds of construction projects, demolished thousands of blighted buildings, and made countless contributions to the stability of Lucas County neighborhoods and residents.

To learn more and to apply, visit lucascountyland-bank.org

Position open until filled. The Lucas County Land Bank is an equal-opportunity employer.

New Order National Human Rights Organization Holds Protest March

The Truth Staff

The New Order National Human Rights Organization held a protest march on Saturday July 20 to bring the public's attention to a number of Toledo Police Department's incidents that have resulted in complaints from area citizens.

The protesters started at Promenade Park, walked north on Summit Street, west on Jackson until they reached the Toledo Police Department on N. Erie Street.

"I'm very concerned about the recent issues under the chief of police administration," said Gerald Rose, president and founder of New Order. Rose, a former Toledoan, has been based in Atlanta since the mid 1990s but makes his way home to Toledo on any number of occasions to further the work of his organization.

"Minorities are most affected," said Rose as he noted that police profiling of individuals tended to be directed all too often at minorities leading to incidents that have recently rolled the community.

One such example is an incident which occurred on April 11 after a license-plate reader erroneously identified a resident's pickup truck as a stolen vehicle. When the resident, Brandon Upchurch, was stopped, he was approached by Officer Adrian Wilson with gun drawn and declined to get out of his truck initially until he could find out what the problem was.

When he did finally exit the vehicle "to de-escalate the situation," said Upchurch later, a series of mishaps followed. Ordered to lie down, Upchurch searched for a proper place to do so, was not deemed fast enough and Officer Wilson directed his canine partner to attack Upchurch.

Upchurch was treated for the dog bite by the Toledo Fire Department which cleaned and bandaged Mr. Upchurch's wound; he was taken to St. Vincent Hospital to be examined and then transported to Lucas County jail.

He was charged with obstruction and resisting arrest and, after a number of postponements, originally a court date of June 12 for the misdemeanor offenses. They were later dropped but one has since been reinstated. The police officer was deemed by an internal review to have acted properly.

However, the protest march was not directed at just one incident.

"It's for all incidents," said Rose. "We're getting a lot of complaints about issues here in Toledo. This is where I started an I'm not going to forget where I come from. I'm not doing this for fame, I'm doing this for the people."

"We're here to prevent [police violations]," Cedric Watson told his fellow marchers just before they started walking towards the police station. "A lot of times police don't like Black people." Watson said that the way to prevent such violations in the future was to ensure that there were repercussions for such actions now. "Repercussions come when there is a protest."

Among the marchers was a young woman who recently had just such an incident with TPD officers.

On June 26, Natyjae Anderson was a passenger as her mother was driving north on Detroit Avenue when a confrontation began with a man in a black SUV, recalled Anderson.

"The black SUV cut us off and a man started yelling at me that he was a cop," said Anderson of the other driver who only appeared to Anderson and her mother as "a Caucasian male."

The man started following Anderson and her mother for about three or four blocks, and "got the license plate."

Later that day, three squad cars arrived at Anderson's parents' house containing five or six uniformed officers. The driver of the SUV was now



Praying before the march



Antonio Chandler, Christopher Casey, Sr, Cedric Watson, Gerald Rose, Siti Dotson-Chambers and Edward Lee Polk in the background

in uniform, said Anderson, and began yelling that "you used a handgun." Anderson said she does not own or have a gun.

They handcuffed Anderson, and without reading her rights, took her to Lucas County Jail and charged her with aggravated menacing with a weapon. They didn't search the house or vehicles and didn't search Anderson. A weapon, said Anderson, has not been produced. She spent 20 hours in custody and has a trial date now set for August 23.

"I'm going to trial, I didn't do anything wrong," she said in answer to a question about taking a plea deal. "I'm not taking accountability for something I didn't do."

Her mother was ticketed for speeding, reckless operation of a vehicle and not stopping for a red light.

Those types of interactions are just what the marchers said they want to prevent. Referencing the 2020 Minneapolis George Floyd homicide, Wilson said: "If we could prevent and hold them accountable for the knee in the neck before somebody died, that will stop the knee in the neck"

The marchers, as they made their way up Summit and across Jackson to police headquarters used several chants to describe what their mission was. One of the chants:

"If we don't get no justice, they won't get no peace!"





Natyjae Anderson



Gerald Rose leads the marchers to TPD headquarters

