

Volume 87 No. 7 *“And Ye Shall Know The Truth...”* **January 8, 2025**

Transforming Neighborhoods Through Vision and Trust



Shantae Brownlee: Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer of the Lucas County Land Bank

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Kristian Brown's Path Forward Amid Change at 13abc

By Rev. Donald L. Perryman, Ph.D.
The Truth Contributor



- James Baldwin

Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced.

When 13abc announced that Sashem Brey would succeed Diane Larson as co-anchor of the prestigious 5 and 6 p.m. newscasts, Kristian Brown posted a message on her Facebook page almost simultaneously:

"2024 was a year to remember. From career milestones to personal growth, graduations, unforgettable moments, and new beginnings. The best is yet to come! Cheers to 2025!"

However, those who know Kristian and have followed her career could sense a suppressed disappointment simmering beneath her words, even though she tried hard to be celebratory and optimistic.

Without question, Sashem Brey (also an ethnic minority) is a highly skilled journalist who has earned her place at the desk. Brey's professionalism, service and connection with the Toledo viewing audience are well-documented, and her transition from mornings to evenings isn't without merit. She has held down the number one morning show for over 20 years and, as a mother of young children, understandably has had enough of getting up at 2:00 a.m. each morning for work.

On the other hand, Kristian Brown has been more than just an anchor. For years, she's been a hometown face of trust and professionalism in media.

Her anchoring of the 5:30, 7:00 and 11:00 p.m. and Helping Hands community service segments sponsored by the Yark Automotive Group are a testament to her versatility and ability to command multiple key time slots. The 7:00 p.m. broadcast, in particular, showcases her talent in a space she's built from the ground up and made her own. It's also a time slot that continues to grow in ratings, directly tied to Kristian's leadership and presence.

Yet, despite her contributions, tenure, and deep community roots, Kristian was not chosen for the 5 p.m. and 6 p.m. slots—arguably the most coveted in local news broadcasting. In an industry where visibility in these time slots often represents the peak of an anchor's career, the decision—following Brown's decades of pursuing local career advancement and backed by dedication, performance, and an undeniable connection with Toledo's viewers—raises uncomfortable but necessary questions.

More specifically, 13abc's decision presents a stark reminder of the persistent barriers faced by talented Black women in media leadership.

Indeed, 13abc has made substantial strides to ensure its newsroom reflects the diversity of its audience. However, diversity is not just about filling slots—it's about making intentional choices that recognize and reward talent, dedication, performance, and leadership.

To be clear, though, I highly doubt that Kristian Brown would ask anyone for sympathy. I'm sure she doesn't want viewers or community members to feel sorry for her, nor do I see evidence of her dwelling in the shadows of what could have been. So, I am not portraying her as a victim. But her supporters—and the larger community—are not wrong to feel disappointed or to expect more from 13abc.

My point here isn't just about one anchor seat or one promotion. I am not privy to all the considerations that went into 13abc's decision. Nevertheless, I'm concerned about what this decision says to the next generation of journalists watching this real-life drama unfold—young women, young Black professionals, and aspiring anchors wondering how far talent and dedication can truly take them.

Therefore, let's not mistake Kristian Brown's optimism for passive acceptance. Nor should our community remain passive while watching this story play out. Viewers should pay attention—not merely to the broadcasts but to the decisions being made behind the scenes.

If you support Brown, then show up. Watch the 5:30, the 7:00 and the 11:00 p.m. broadcasts. Celebrate or amplify her work and hold those in power accountable for recognizing and rewarding it appropriately.

Because it's not just about anticipating what's next for Kristian Brown—it's also about what's next from those in positions to make these decisions in the first place—especially a television station that prides itself on being number one in Toledo's local news rankings and a leader in community representation.

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



Kristian Brown

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Coming to a Theatre Near You

By Lafe Tolliver, Esq

Guest Column

Well, the election is over. The angst as to what happened and why will continue for years to come. The blame game is now in full overdrive with the media talking heads, podcasters, armchair strategists and the daily variety of certified nut cases all pontificating as to what should have happened.

Donald Trump will be sentenced next week by Judge Merchan regarding the hush money cases and in which, he is always playing the victim, will not receive any jail time or substantial penalty for his 34 felony convictions.

The time-honored concept of no man is above the law is now relegated to the dust bins of judicial history since any other person with 34 felony convictions would face harsh penalties if no more than ankle bracelet monitoring.

So let's be honest, Donald Trump sprinkled magic fairy dust on the American judicial system and to date, the dust has worked on his behalf. The civil cases against him can proceed and even those cases will drag on and on until the American public's short memory will kick in and Donald will use those time lapses to profess his innocence.

Unless you have been locked in a cave in Outer Mongolia for the past two-plus years, you have failed to notice that Trump, with an axe to grind against anyone who did not genuflect in his presence, both real and imagined, will commence his reign of retribution.

Project 2025 outlines in graphic detail the inner workings of his convoluted thinking as to him still professing to be a populist and which, by his account of said definition, makes him a man of the people!

I contend that once Trump and his clown car of woefully inept stooges gain the levers of power, only then will America start to see the pain and misery he will blanket the US of A.

Trump will appoint a bevy of similar thinking people in critical federal positions who will be more than happy to fulfill his every wish of retribution for being shunned by the voters who in 2020 voted for Biden.

Understand. Trump is not a bright person or a critical thinker by any means. The able people who were around him during this first term in office and who later left or were dismissed, all described him in terms of intellect as being woefully deficient.

Understand. That Trump is able and is only able to execute his draconian policies because his "base" holds similar anti-intellectual views; they also display a cornucopia of hate, rage, racism and a profound ignorance of government and how it is supposed to work...For The People!

So when you watch his upcoming coronation (I will not be watching the farce on TV) and hear his repeated promises to immediately initiate his border policies and tax cuts for fat cat corporations and billionaires, be forewarned that America will be in a political crisis for years to come.

It is no small thing to state over and over again that democracy will be the entree that Trump will carve up and also slice and dice the federal bureaucracy which is the engine of daily governance.

When ICE and other agencies start their immigration removal program and innocents are caught up in it...so what.

When needed federal programs are either eliminated or their needed funding cut that would service the down and out...so what.

When Trump uses the media to castigate and wrongfully characterize those who oppose his draconian plans...so what.

If and when he releases the so-called political prisoners of the January 6th Insurrection who were convicted of crimes against the government...so what.

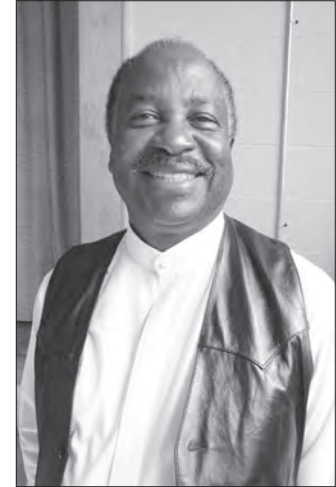
When he is silent on voters' rights being suppressed and continues the fake campaign to rid the government and military of "wokism" and "DEI"...so what. And whatever you may believe about the recent election, Trump did not receive his so-called "mandate" to reign and rule as he so pleases.

That "mandate" will be his cover story to try to convince you that the majority of Americans sought out an authoritarian to govern them because they were frightened of the brown masses coming into the states, and the price of eggs catapulted them to vote for an extremist like Trump.

The columnist Elie Mystal who writes for the magazine, The Nation, put it simply that America, in the final analysis, voted to keep white skin privileges as their guiding star and Trump and Elon Musk (a South African) decided to join themselves at the hip and slow down any progressive political movement.

So, when you see the above examples (many, many more) come to fruition, simply recall who you voted for any why and if you are negatively impacted by Project 2025 and its progeny...oh well, deal with it.

Contact Lafe Tolliver at tolliver@juno.com



Toledo NAACP Youth Council Meeting

This meeting is every third Sunday of the month at Sanger Branch Library 3030 Central Ave at 3 p.m. The next meeting will be held on February 16.

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Hicks-Hudson Sworn Into 136th General Assembly

This week, state Senator Paula Hicks-Hudson (D-Toledo) took the oath of office to continue serving in the Ohio Senate during the 136th General Assembly.

"I am ready to work on legislation that will help District 11 specifically and the state of Ohio broadly," said Hicks-Hudson. "It's time to roll up our sleeves and be about the people's business!"

Senator Hicks-Hudson will represent the 11th Senate District, which encompasses Harbor View, Holland, Jerusalem Township, Maumee, Oregon, Ottawa Hills, Springfield Township, Sylvania Township (part), Toledo (part), and Washington Township (part).



Rep. Grim of Ohio House District 43 Sworn Into 136th General Assembly

State Rep. Michele Grim (D-Toledo) this week was sworn into the 136th Ohio General Assembly. Rep. Grim will be beginning her second term in the legislature, serving the people of Toledo, the Village of Ottawa Hills, Washington Township, and Sylvania Township at the Ohio Statehouse.

"Representing our communities in Columbus is a privilege and a responsibility I take very seriously. I'm committed to continuing to stand up for our fundamental rights while also reaching across the aisle to get things done and deliver for Lucas County," said Rep. Grim, who also serves as the House assistant minority whip.

As a legislator, Rep. Grim's top priorities will continue to be expanding access to healthcare, advocating for survivors of violence, and the expansion of accessible transportation in Ohio.



Rep. Grim alongside Ohio House Minority Leadership - Minority Leader C. Allison Russo; Assistant Minority Leader Dontavius Jarrells; Minority Whip Dani Isaacsohn

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Ohio NAACP Mourns the Passing of Former State Senate Minority Leader Ben Espy

Special to The Truth

The Ohio State Conference of the NAACP joins the state of Ohio and the nation in mourning the passing of former State Senate Minority Leader, Columbus City Council member, and Ohio State University alumnus, Ben Espy, at the age of 81. Espy leaves a legacy of unwavering service, visionary advocacy, and transformative leadership, inspiring future generations.



Ben Espy

"Ben Espy was a trailblazer, a courageous advocate, and a relentless fighter for justice," said Tom Roberts, President of the Ohio NAACP. "He exemplified the highest ideals of public service with dignity, integrity, and unwavering dedication. He was a class act in every sense, dedicating his life to civil rights and creating opportunities for all Ohioans."

Espy's remarkable career included roles as a corporate lawyer, deputy chief of the Civil Rights Division for the Ohio Attorney General's Office and a decade of service on the Columbus City Council. Despite a life-

...continued on page 13

Building Stronger Communities: Transforming Neighborhoods Through Vision and Trust

By Asia Nail

The Truth Reporter

When **Shantae Brownlee** talks about her work, you can almost hear the hum of construction, the whispers of dreams and the echoes of hope. As the senior vice president for operations and chief financial officer of the **Lucas County Land Bank**, she's not just crunching numbers or overseeing demolition crews—she's shaping the heart of Toledo, one neighborhood at a time.

Brownlee is a bit like a gardener. She nurtures seeds of potential, prunes away decay and watches as communities bloom into healthier, stronger versions of themselves. With over \$30 million in grants under her care—the largest budget in the Land Bank's history—she's leading projects that range from home renovations to tearing down structures that have outlived their time.

"It's not just about buildings," Brownlee explains. "It's about the lives inside them. Homes are where memories are made, and neighborhoods are the stage where life's shared stories unfold."

But how does someone become the kind of leader who sees both the forest and the trees? For Brownlee, it started at home.

Roots Run Deep

Brownlee's mother, **Susan Jester**, was a trailblazer in her own right. As a community lender for over 30 years, Miss Susan fought against redlining—the practice of denying loans to people based on their race or neighborhood. She ensured low-to-moderate income families got fair treatment in the home-buying process.

"My mom taught me that fairness isn't just a nice idea; it's a responsibility," Brownlee shares. "Watching her fight for equity planted a seed in me to do the same."

That seed grew into a career marked by dedication and drive. In 2008, Shantae graduated cum laude from Franklin University with a degree in Business Administration and Human Resources. She was the first in her family to earn a college degree—a milestone she describes as "breaking generational cycles of poverty."

"I wanted my kids to see what's possible when you don't let your circumstances define you," she says. "Now, they're chasing their own dreams, and that's the best reward I could ask for."

Building Bridges and Breaking Barriers

Before joining the Lucas County Land Bank in 2012, Brownlee spent over a decade in leadership roles with nonprofit organizations like the **Wayman D. Palmer Community YMCA** and the **Frederick Douglass Community Association**. "I'm so grateful I started my professional career with Wayman Palmer Y and the Doug because it gave me a deep insight into our community and a trust with people that I always honor," she reflects.

These roles taught her an important lesson: grassroots efforts and strategic vision go hand-in-hand.

"Our homeowner initiatives are also grassroots. We're connected to families, and we truly understand their needs," Brownlee explains. "It's the trust and connection we have that make a real difference. So many organizations lack real trust with community members, and that's something my



Shantae Brownlee

team and I take very seriously."

At the Land Bank, Brownlee applies this philosophy daily. Her projects are as much about listening to residents as they are about budgets and blueprints. Whether she's guiding homeowners through investment programs or collaborating with neighborhood organizations, she's always focused on one goal: creating spaces where families can thrive.

Home Is Where the Heart Is

Brownlee didn't grow up in Toledo, but you wouldn't know it by the way she talks about the city. She and her husband, Michael, made a deliberate choice to live in the Junction Neighborhood—a community she also serves through her work.

"Toledo is home because I chose it," she says. "Living in the community I serve keeps me grounded. It reminds me every day why this work matters."

Her connection to Toledo goes beyond her job. In 2021, she received the **YWCA Milestones Social Services Award**, a recognition of her commitment to equity and community building.

"My greatest accomplishment is working so closely within our communities," she shares. "I hear the voices of mentors like the late Mayor Jack Ford, Paula Hicks Hudson, Michael Ashford and the late Weldon Douthitt every day. I want to honor them in the work that I'm doing."

She's also grateful for the lessons her role at the Land Bank has taught her. "I almost didn't take this job because I thought it would mean always working in the government center and rarely within the community," she admits. "Twelve years later, I realize it was destined for me to be here—bringing the government center to the community."

The Power of Authentic Leadership

...continued on page 14

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In Its Final Days, the Biden Administration Delivers Big Time for America's Coastal Communities

By Ben Jealous

It may be the dead of winter, but when we think about our beaches none of us want to picture them covered in oil. That is true for those of us who live along the water and those who live hundreds of miles from any ocean. Regardless of our generation, we can all picture what it looks like. For some, it is the 1969 oil spill in Santa Barbara, California.

For others, the Deepwater Horizon oil spill by BP in the Gulf of Mexico. No matter what disaster comes to mind, we can all agree on one thing: we must protect our waters and our coastal communities. President Biden not only agrees, he just took decisive action to prevent future disasters from happening.

This week, in the waning days of his administration, President Biden announced he would use his authority under Section 12(a) of the Outer Continental Shelf Lands Act to permanently withdraw 625 million acres from leasing for oil and gas drilling and exploration off our nation's coasts. The protected waters include the entire eastern Atlantic coast, the eastern Gulf of Mexico, the Pacific coast of California, Oregon, and Washington, and portions of the Northern Bering Sea in Alaska.

This move is the latest chapter in Biden's historic climate legacy. It safeguards coastal communities and economies, marine wildlife, and ecosystems from the threats posed by offshore drilling. It will protect the health of those living closest to the pollution and other negative effects of offshore drilling. And it will bolster the already-underway clean energy transition that ends our reliance on fossil fuels, strengthens our economy with family-sustaining jobs, and makes our air and water cleaner and safer.

This latest action marks a major stride in the Biden administration's America the Beautiful initiative to conserve, restore, and protect 30% of America's lands and waters by 2030 (often called "30 by 30"). It is one more feather in the cap of an administration that has shown remarkable dedication to conservation with the creation and expansion of national monuments, protections for millions of acres in the Arctic, and priority shifts at key agencies like the Bureau of Land Management and US Forest Service.

And it is a move that should be popular with Americans of all political stripes. Strong bipartisan majorities oppose offshore drilling. Sixty percent of Americans opposed efforts by the first Trump administration to lift offshore drilling bans. In the 17 states along the coasts that would have been impacted, 64% opposed lifting the ban. Coastal communities, business groups, and governors of both

parties oppose offshore drilling. Presidents of both parties – including every president in the 21st century – have used their Section 12a authority to remove portions of the US coastline from oil and gas drilling. And bills that would ban offshore drilling have enjoyed bipartisan support in Congress.



Despite propaganda from Big Oil and Gas, this is a major win for all Americans and especially those in communities that depend on coastal waters for their livelihoods and local economies. It is a win for every American, as the climate crisis increasingly impacts all of us. Prices at the pump will not go up (the cost of gasoline is determined by global oil prices and consumer demand, not changes to federal leasing policy). There is no evidence that expanded leasing and domestic production in federal waters would lower heating bills. And it is a win for endangered marine mammals, fisheries, and ecosystems along most US coast lines.

No matter what propaganda corporate polluters push, the fact remains there will never be a safe way to desecrate our waters to extract fossil fuels. This is why we must keep pushing to protect the central and western Gulf of Mexico as well, where oil and gas drilling is already deeply established. The communities, species, and ecosystems of this region continue to shoulder the environmental and health hazards brought on by widespread fossil fuel development. Indeed, another spill catastrophe in this region could lead to devastating public health, economic, and extinction-level impacts.

As we continue our transition to a clean energy economy, we can look forward to a day when all of America's waters and coasts are protected from the harms of offshore drilling. When that day comes, we will look back on this move by President Biden as perhaps the biggest step that got us there.

In the meantime, it is not too early to say: Thank you, President Biden. There are still some crucial remaining days to this president. Let's encourage the president to keep taking bold action until the very last day.

Ben Jealous is the Executive Director of the Sierra Club, former president of the NAACP and a Professor of Practice at the University of Pennsylvania.

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The Toledo Club of NANBPWC hosts Cotillion Informational Tea

By Dawn Scotland
The Truth Reporter

The Toledo Club of The National Association of Negro Business Professional Women's Clubs, Inc. presented 57th Annual Debutante Cotillion Tea at The Indiana Avenue Missionary Baptist Church Fellowship Hall on Sunday December 15.

After a hiatus due the COVID pandemic, the Cotillion is back in full swing – celebrating its resurgence last year in 2024. The event is continuing to grow attracting the best of the area's youth.

The informational tea introduced the Debutantes, Debs in Waiting and their parents on what to expect through the process including an overview of Cotillion, the waltz rehearsals and talent night.

The Cotillion is a combination of programs for exceptional young African high school juniors (Debs-In-Waiting) and senior girls (Debutantes) from northwest Ohio. The members of the Toledo Club started their sponsorship in 1965 after the Bronze Raven News Paper discontinued their sponsorship which was used to sell their newspapers. It was changed from winners being selected because of the number of Bronze Raven subscriptions to the girl's grade point average, not being pregnant or having a child and of good moral charter. Not who their parents are or what position they hold in the community or who your friends might be, it is because of the hard work and volunteer service that you have given to your community and your character.

The Cotillion is an 8-month project that starts with:

- Requesting names of young women that meet the criteria that would like

to participate.

- Letters sent to girls and parents inviting them to the Informational Tea in December.
- Screening and interviews in January
- 11 weekly waltz rehearsals
- Biweekly workshops
- Talent Rehearsals and Talent Night
- Etiquette Seminar
- Debutante/Mothers Luncheon at Inverness Country Club
- Debutante Cotillion Ball in May

The Cotillion Scholarships have grown from \$500.00 to over \$6,000.00 From 1965 to 2024 through to Funding of Corporate Sponsors. Judges for the Talent and Debutante Ball are chosen from the community and the club has no input into the choosing of the winners, they only give the judges a point system to use in their selection.

The scholarships are given the night of the Ball. Finale winners are chosen by points from activities, Talent and the Waltz scores. The University of Toledo awards (The Presidents Community Scholarships) to a Number of Debutantes (seniors) that want to attend the University) Mr. Escort receives a cash award and Miss Congeniality receives a prize from Henry's Jewelry. Taylor Automotive will be awarding cash awards to Talent winners.



Karen Jarrett, Co-chair of Cotillion, Denise Cardwell, Co-chair of Cotillion, Treasurer Wilma D. Brown, President Tyra Smith



2025 Cotillion Officers



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2024 Miss Debutante Courtney Jones with President Tyra Smith



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Financial Planning Career Pathways for Students of Color

Special to The Truth

As a college student, you have the opportunity to explore many exciting career options. One avenue you may not have considered is financial planning. This in-demand field offers impressive starting salaries, the potential for growth and career satisfaction. What's more, one-of-a-kind opportunities exist to assist students of color embarking on this journey.

Here's what to know about becoming a CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER® professional:

Getting started: If you do embark on a financial planning career, earning the right credentials is critical to fast-tracking your success. CFP® certification has been the standard for financial planners for the last half-century. Earning this certification prepares you for industry challenges and demonstrates to your clients and employers your expertise and commitment to ethical practice. It also offers valuable networking opportuni-

ties with peers and mentors.

Getting certified: The CFP® certification process is challenging but rewarding. The process involves completing coursework, accumulating experience, meeting the ethics requirement and passing the CFP® exam. The coursework requirement typically takes 12-18 months. Once you have that certification in hand, you'll have gained the knowledge and acumen needed to hit the ground running.

Finding support: To better meet the needs of a diverse client base, CFP Board has launched initiatives to recruit and support people of color in financial planning. This includes administering third-party scholarship programs that help cover education and exam costs for CFP® certification, which are awarded based on merit and financial need to individuals from underrepresented groups.

Why Americans are Rallying for Afterschool Programs This Fall

Special to The Truth

Afterschool programs help children and youth thrive in school and in life. They provide homework help, opportunities to get active, and access to healthy snacks and meals. They help children develop friendships, meet mentors, learn about STEM (science, technology, engineering and math), explore college and careers, and engage in community service. Through these activities, and more, afterschool programs help youth build the skills they need to succeed.

A million people across the United States are celebrating afterschool programs this fall, and rallying for more resources for them, as part of Lights On Afterschool 2024. More than 8,000 Lights On Afterschool events are taking place in every part of the country. In California, students are displaying wiggle robots, paintings and block-builds they created. In Colorado, parents are jotting down their dreams for their children and putting them in a Dream Box. In Florida, students are sharing what they learned about the migration of monarch butterflies. In Indiana, students are showing the PSAs they created about how substance use has affected their lives.

As a testament to the importance of afterschool programming, some big names are lending their support. Superstar Usher is serving as honorary chair of Lights On Afterschool this year, organized once again by the Afterschool Alliance.

"Afterschool programs keep kids safe, inspire them to learn, and give working families peace of mind that their children are safe, supervised and learning after school. Lights On Afterschool is a chance to showcase the skills students hone and the talents they develop at these programs," said Afterschool Alliance executive director, Jodi Grant.

To learn more about afterschool programs and Lights On Afterschool, visit afterschoolalliance.org.

This year, Lights On Afterschool comes as funding for programs across the nation, provided from federal pandemic relief, winds down. These funds have helped afterschool programs meet rising costs and provide support for millions of youth. In recent years, Congress has failed to significantly increase funding for 21st Century Community Learning Centers, the chief federal funding stream for afterschool and summer learning programs.

"There aren't nearly enough afterschool programs to meet the soaring demand," Grant added. "For every child in an afterschool program in our country, four more are waiting to get in. We urgently need greater investments from all sectors so all students can benefit from the essential supports afterschool programs provide."

Courtesy StatePoint

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Smith Elected President, Morrison Vice President of TARTA Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees of the Toledo Area Regional Transit Authority (TARTA) elected Toledo representative Kendra Smith as President and Sylvania representative Mary Morrison as Vice President at its final meeting of 2024.

Smith is Vice President of Community Health at Bon Secours Mercy Health. She has also held leadership positions at ProMedica, Preferred Properties, Inc. of Ohio, the Toledo Museum of Art, and the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning.

Smith, who was named a YWCA Milestones Award winner in 2023, has served on the Board of Trustees since February of 2021 and has served as Vice President for two years. "I am honored by the confidence the board has in my ability to serve in this new role," Smith said. "Together with the dedicated public servants on this board, I am excited to continue playing a part in TARTA's rapid improvement. The pathway to personal advancement begins with increased access to services and opportunities for everyone.

It's been a great experience working with this board, the TARTA team and community members to build this system for the benefit of everyone in Lucas County and Rossford. We have made so much progress in a few short years, and I look forward to the work ahead and helping Laura and her team continue to drive positive change in this community."

Morrison has been an officer on TARTA's board since December of

2020 and has served as President the last two years. Morrison came to TARTA with an extensive background in management and community engagement. She held leadership posts at The University of Toledo, Bowling Green State University and The Toledo Hospital Foundation.

Smith, Morrison and other trustees have helped guide TARTA through one of the most active periods in the authority's history. They have helped oversee the completion of a comprehensive operational analysis (TARTA Next), the expansion of services to Holland, Springfield Township, Oregon and other communities, the launch of an on-demand microtransit service (TARTA Flex) and the first steps to building a fleet of zero-emission vehicles at TARTA.

TARTA's Board of Trustees also includes:

- Heather Baker (Toledo)
- Joel Beren (Sylvania Township)



Kendra Smith

- Valerie Fatica (Lucas County)
- Brittany Ford (Ottawa Hills)
- Gary Gonya (Toledo)
- Tarik Kadri (Lucas County)
- Rev. Dr. W.L. Perryman Jr. (Lucas County)
- Lou Thomson (Maumee)
- Kevin Weaks (Rossford)
- Dr. Tiffany Whitman (Toledo)

An Open House to Showcase Membership In 4-H Toledo, Ohio

The educators at Ohio State University Extension in Lucas County are hosting an open house featuring 4-H membership activities on Sunday, February 2, 2025, from 2:00 to 4:00 pm at the Toledo Botanical Garden's Crosby Conference Center at 5403 Elmer Drive, Toledo, Ohio.

"4-H memberships are open to youth ages 5 to 18," said Jess Burns, 4-H Educator for Extension in Lucas County. "People may know about 4-H from summer camp or fair activities, but 4-H Youth Development has a variety of project areas such as cooking, leadership, plants, livestock, horses, STEM, robotics, poultry, sewing, photography, woodworking, shooting sports and so much more!"

The OSU Extension is a non-profit educational resource for Lucas County. Included within Extension is 4-H—an informal educational youth development program offered to individuals ages 5 to 18.

4-H Youth Development has additional opportunities for in-school and after school programming in Lucas County. All the programming is designed

to help educate and embody positive activities and habits for youth in Lucas County.

"We will encourage youth attending the open house to experience winter seed sowing, singing along with camp counselors, learning a line dance, discovering 4-H projects and activities, riding a blender bike to make smoothies, and meeting 4-H members to join a club," said Burns. "Walk-ins are welcome as no registration is needed. It's a perfect way to make new friends!"

For more information, contact Jess Burns at Soffee.1@osu.edu or 419-574-0976.

The Ohio State University Extension brings the knowledge of the University directly to the community. The land-grant mission of The Ohio State University is fulfilled by responding to the needs of the local community while also addressing state, national, and global issues. The areas of OSU Extension Lucas County include Family and Consumer Sciences, SNAP-ED, EFNEP, 4-H Youth Development, and Agriculture and Natural Resources.

The Toledo Public Library Multilingual Social Night

Do you speak another language? Are you learning to speak another language? If you're looking for a space to continue to practice your language skills, attend a Multilingual Social Night. All ages, languages, and abilities are welcome. Advanced registration is requested but not required to attend.

The Multilingual Social Night will take place at the Sanger Branch Library, in Meeting Room A, on Thursday, January 9 from 6 to 8 p.m. This event is free and open to the public

Registration: https://events.toledolibrary.org/event/12319649?utm_sour

ce=Toledo+Lucas+County+Public+Library&utm_campaign=892c9e11a0-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2025_01_03_01_40&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_-892c9e11a0-157321241

According to the United States Census Bureau, nearly 26,000 Lucas County residents speak a language other than English. It is also well-researched that bilingualism and multilingualism positively affect cognitive abilities (Viorica Marian and Anthony Shook, "The Cognitive Benefits of Being Bilingual." Cebrum: the Dana Forum on Brain Science, Oct. 31, 2012.

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The Best of 2024!

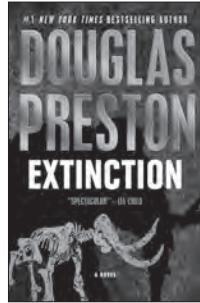
By Terri Schlichenmeyer
The Truth Contributor

Once the holidays are over, you may look around you at a floor full of spent wrapping paper and sad ribbons and wonder, "What's next?"

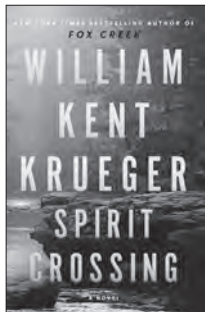
A whole new year, that's what, and a dozen great books worthy of reaching back to find. Here they are, in no certain order, the Bookworm's Best of 2024...

FICTION

If you're a fan of best-selling novels, you won't be surprised to see *Extinction* by Douglas Preston (\$29.99, Forge) on this list. It's the tale of a high-level vacation spot run by a big-money corporation and scientists determined to bring back certain kinds of long-extinct animals. Problem is, someone – or something – is hunting the lodge's guests...



For the mystery lover who likes a bit of mysticism and some true-life in their novels, *Spirit Crossing* by William Kent Krueger (\$28.99, Atria) is a great pick. When the body of a Native American teen girl is discovered, Cork O'Connor's son-in-law hopes the body solves a missing-persons case. Or cases, plural. This book is part of a series but it can be read alone; just know that you'll want them all, once you've finished this.



Terror, tech, and trouble. What could go wrong, right? In *William* by Mason Coile (\$27.00, Put-

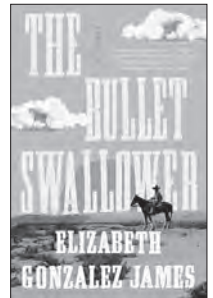
nam), a geeky scientist builds a robot who goes out of control and takes over. The scientist's pregnant wife seems distant and cold, especially when she's near his laboratory. Could the robot be at fault? Mix horror, robotics, and a twisty ending and you'll be happy.



Inheritances always come with certain feelings, don't they? In *Fallen Fruit* by Shawnelle Madison (\$28.00, Amistad), one woman receives property that the locals tell her is a place of no good. Along with it, she inherits a no-good trait that befalls the offspring of one of her ancestors, an inheritance that she can prepare for, but that she cannot escape. And that makes a very good tale.

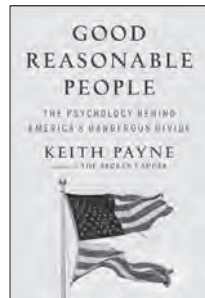


Based on a true-ish story, *The Bullet Swallower* by Elizabeth Gonzalez James (\$26.99, Simon & Schuster) is a tale of a book, a heritage, and a curse. It's a western, so you can expect horses, gunslingers, bad guys, dusty trails, and to sit in one spot for an entire afternoon until you've finished it.



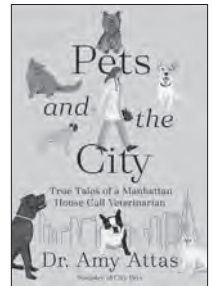
NONFICTION

Over the holidays, you learned a thing or two about your relatives and their politics. *Good Reasonable People* by Keith Payne (\$29, Viking) is a book to reach for now. Here, Payne makes sense of the divide that plagues America, in a way that helps you understand both sides. Read it soon, before Family Barbecue season hits.



Pets in the City by Dr. Amy Attas (\$25,

Putnam) is a memoir, but one that animal lovers will devour. Attas is a veterinarian in New York City, tending to the beloved pets of the Rich and Famous, but she also writes about the other half: dogs, cats, and critters that she knew, loved, were owned by everyday New Yorkers, and that Attas cared for. If you have a pet, this is your book.



Now that the holidays are over, if you need a way to pay for all those gifts, you'll be happy to read *Selling the Dream: The Billion-Dollar Industry Bankrupting Americans* by Jane Marie (\$29, Atria). It's a deep, thorough, but personal look at mid-level marketing (MLM) schemes, the people who fall for them, the chances of success (slim!), and how to avoid getting involved in them in the first place. The price of this book may save you thousands...



When Women Ran

Fifth Avenue by Julie Satow (\$32.50, Doubleday) is one of those books that'll satisfy a range of readers: history lovers will enjoy the narrative about the department stores of years past. Business-minded readers will like the stories of retail gone by. Women's history fans will like the individual tales of women executives in the last century. All in all, this book's a winner.



If you're a collector, you know how much you like talking about your accumulations and meeting like-minded people. In *The Witch's Door* by Ryan Matthew Cohn and Regina M. Rossi



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Toledo Lucas County Public Library's Annual Winter Reading Challenge, Winter Read, Is Underway

Youths and adults who read two books between January 2 and Feb. 28 are eligible for Winter Read grand prize drawings, which include Kindle Fires, Nintendo Switches, and various gift cards.

Participants also receive a sign-up prize — cozy hats for kids and grown-ups — when they register (while supplies last). Sign-up prizes can be redeemed at any Toledo Library location.

The challenge runs from January 2 until February 28 and is free and open to the public.

Registration: There are three ways to sign up for Winter Read:

* Online at toledolibrary.org/readingchallenges

* In-person at any Toledo Library location

* Through the Beanstack Tracker mobile app

Groups are also invited to participate. Call your preferred Toledo Library location to get started.

Significance: Winter Read can help readers make early progress on their 2025 reading goals, from making more time for reading to reaching a specific number of books for the year. Reading challenges like Winter Read also help readers of all ages develop strong reading habits.

Free Parking for Visitors to the Toledo Museum of Art

The Toledo Museum of Art (TMA) has announced that beginning Thursday, Jan. 2, parking will be free for all visitors to the museum—thanks to a generous donation from the Taylor Automotive Family, honoring the late Julie Taylor.

“Free parking is the amenity visitors request most often, and we’re excited to make it available to everyone,” said Jennifer McCary, chief culture

and brand experience officer at the museum. “It aligns with TMA’s long-standing commitment to free museum admission, honoring the vision of our founders, Edward Drummond and Florence Scott Libbey, and creating more opportunities for TMA to integrate art into the lives of others.”

For more information about visiting TMA, go to toledomuseum.org/visit<<https://toledomuseum.org/visit>>.

Ben Espy... continued from page 4

altering accident in 1984, Espy’s resilience and commitment to public service never faltered, culminating in his tenure as Ohio Senate Minority Leader from 1996 to 2000.

Beyond his political accomplishments, Espy founded the Columbus Youth Corps, the precursor to the city’s APPS summer jobs program,

and helped establish Columbus’ annual Martin Luther King Jr. celebration. His lifelong dedication to youth empowerment, civic engagement, and community development set a standard for leadership that continues to inspire.

“Ben Espy’s life reminds us of what is possible through service and resilience,” Roberts added. “The Ohio NAACP is deeply grateful for his contributions and steadfast leadership.” Espy’s legacy includes numerous accolades, the respect of his peers, and the gratitude of communities across Ohio. The Ohio NAACP extends its deepest condolences to his family, friends, and all who were touched by his remarkable life.

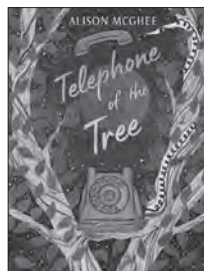
The Best of 2024... continued from page 12



(\$30, Chronicle Prism), you’ll read about one couple’s odd collections: skulls, shrunken heads, stuff that might creep you out just a little bit. But wait: this book is also part memoir, part romance, and fun. Anyone with a curious mind, a collection of oddities, or membership to a museum will love this.

KIDS

Readers ages eight to 12 will enjoy *Telephone of the Tree* by Alison



McGhee (\$17.99, Rocky Pond / Penguin), a story of loss and hope that affects an entire neighborhood – but especially one young girl who misses her best friend. This is a beautiful book, somewhat of a tear-jerker, but for the right reader, it glows.

For the teen who wants something absorbing, a little flippant, and funny, *How to Win Friends and Influence Fungi* by Dr. Chris Balakrishnan & Matt Wasowski, illustrations by Kristen Orr (\$30.00, St. Martin’s Press) is a great way to spend that bookstore gift certificate. It’s a little bit trivia, a whole lot of fun science, and a good dose of smart-aleck. Perfect.



If you’re looking for these books or something like them, or if you’re starting your own Best Of list, check with your librarian or bookseller for help. They’ll help you decide what’s next.

About the Ohio NAACP: The Ohio State Conference of the NAACP is the state’s leading civil rights organization, dedicated to eliminating racial discrimination and ensuring equality in political, educational, social, and economic rights.

For more information, please contact connect@ohnaacp.com

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The TPS Lecture Series Continues

The Toledo Public Schools' Lecture series continues on Thursday, January 9th at 7:00 PM at Waite High School featuring local historian Frank Butwin.

Butwin will be presenting in first person General Anthony Wayne; Army officer, statesman, businessman, plantation owner, and member of the United States House of Representatives. Wayne adopted a military career at the outset of the American Revolutionary War, where his military exploits, boldness, fiery personality, and strict disciplinary methods earned

him the nickname "Mad Anthony".

Many communities, counties, roads, and even a university are named after this character from the past, especially in northwest Ohio. The presentation will cover his formative years, military careers, legends, legacies, and his unusual death & burials. The far-reaching significance of his campaign in the Ohio Country of the Northwest Territory during 1792 to 1796.

The event is free and open to the public.

Padua Center... continued from page 16

Brother Washington Muhammad presented the Nguzo Saba (seven principles) to African drums. The Ngoza Saba includes: **Umoja (Unity)**, **Kujichagulia (Self-Determination)**, **Ujima (Collective Work and Responsibility)**, **Ujamaa (Cooperative Economics)**, **Nia (Purpose)**, **Kuumba (Creativity)**, and **Imani (Faith)**. Kwanzaa, a cultural celebration, is composed of a Libation Ceremony in honor of ancestors, the lighting of the Kinara, education, family activities and food to share.

Created in 1966 by Maulana Ron Karenga, Kwanzaa is an African American and Pan-African holiday that celebrates history, values, family, community and culture. (source <https://nmaahc.si.edu>) Kwanzaa lasts for seven days, the day after Christmas until the first of the new year (Dec 26- Jan 1). The colors of Kwanzaa are black (representing the people), red (representing struggle and bloodshed) and green (representing the fertile land of Africa).

About the Padua Center

The Padua Center is located at 1416 Nebraska Ave., Toledo, Ohio. The Kwanzaa Park Neighborhood is bordered by Dorr, Brown, Klondike and Hawley Streets. Members of the Kwanzaa Park Neighbors meet monthly at The Padua Center to investigate ways to work together (Ujima) and improve the neighborhood. The next community meeting is February 6, 2025 at 12:00 p.m. at The Padua Center. (During February and March the Kwanzaa Park Neighbors' meeting is held at 12:00 because of the darkness. Other months the meetings are on the First Thursday of each month at 6:00 pm.)

To learn more about the Padua Center or to volunteer contact 419-241-6465 or visit paduacenter.org.

Building Stronger Communities... continued from page 5

As a leader, Brownlee is unwavering in her values. "I stand in my authentic voice," she says. "I always make it clear that when I am sitting at the table, I have the courage to speak for those who aren't here with us."

She's also a champion of cultural competence. "I take issue with leaders who lack cultural awareness," she says. "Thankfully, our Land Bank team is incredibly diverse. With a multicultural team, it's a blessing to truly represent Toledo and the entire county we serve. We honor and respect one another, and the community does the same in return."

Brownlee's leadership style is built on transparency. "I'm always open and honest about the possibilities of what myself and our team can do," she says.

For anyone curious about the Land Bank's work, their website is a great place to start. Whether you're looking to renovate an abandoned property or explore other opportunities to invest in Toledo's future, the Lucas County Land Bank offers options to suit your goals.

A Vision for Toledo

When asked about her vision for Toledo, Brownlee's face lights up. "I

Kwanzaa... continued from page 16

2. Kujichangulia (Self-determination) KOO-gee-CHA-goo-LEE-ah: To define ourselves, name ourselves, create for ourselves, and speak for ourselves instead of being spoken for by others.

3. Ujima (Collective Work and Responsibility) 00-GEE-mah: To build and maintain our community together to make our sister's and brother's problems our problems, and to solve these problems together.

4. Ujamaa (Cooperative Economics) 00-jah-MAH: To build and maintain our own stores, shops, and other businesses, and to profit from them together.

5. Nia (Purpose) Nee-ah: To make our collective vocation the building and developing of our community in order to restore our people to their traditional greatness.

6. Kuumba (Creativity) KOO-00M-bah: To do always as much as we can, in the way e can, in order to leave our community more beautiful and beneficial than when we inherited it.

7. Imani (Faith) ee-Mon-EE: To believe with all our hearts in our people, our parents, our teachers, our leaders, and the righteousness and victory of our struggle.

To learn more about Kwanzaa visit: officialkwanzaawebsite.org

To learn more about the Frederick Douglass Community Association visit: thedoug419.org

want Toledo to be a city where everyone feels they belong. A place where creativity thrives, resilience shines, and communities come together to support one another."

Through her work at the Land Bank, she's turning that vision into reality. Every home she renovates, every partnership she builds, and every program she leads is a step toward a stronger, more connected Toledo.

"Our established professionals in the Toledo community embrace young leadership," she says. "It's something that makes this city so special. I cherish the advice and encouragement I've received, and I love passing that on to others."

The Work of a Lifetime

Brownlee's story is a reminder that purpose is the fuel for change. Whether she's managing multi-million-dollar grants or mentoring young leaders, she approaches every task with the same question: How can I make a difference today?

Her journey invites us all to reflect on our own lives. What seeds are we planting in our communities? How are we using our gifts to create a better world?

As Brownlee puts it: "The best neighborhoods aren't built overnight.

They're built with love, patience, and a lot of teamwork."

The next time you pass a revitalized home or see a neighborhood transformed, remember the hands and hearts behind the work. Leaders like Shantae S. Brownlee prove that with trust, passion, and commitment, one person can indeed make a world of difference."

Visit LucasCountyLandBank.org to learn more.

WHAT'S YOUR VACATION FLAVOR?

ELIZABETH P. KRANZ
TOLEDO EXPRESS AIRPORT

allegiant.com

CLASSIFIEDS

January 8, 2025

Page 15

CIRCULATION SERVICES LEADER

The Toledo Lucas County Public Library (TLCPL) seeks a dynamic leader to oversee Circulation Services at the Mott Branch. Join our team and help inspire lifelong learning while providing universal access to a broad range of information, ideas, and entertainment. Please visit Employment Opportunities | Toledo Lucas County Public Library (toledolibrary.org) <<https://www.toledolibrary.org/jobs>> to review the full details and to apply.

The Toledo Lucas County Public Library is an Equal Opportunity Employer and places a high value on diversity in its workplace including race, color, religious creed, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, protected Veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law.

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS ARCHITECTURAL & ENGINEERING SERVICES (A&E) QUALIFICATIONS RFQ24-Q002

Lucas Metropolitan Housing (LMH) will receive qualifications for **Architectural & Engineering (A&E) Services in accordance with RFQ24-Q002**. Received in accordance with law until **January 9, 2025 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.



TOLEDO OPERA TO HOLD RESIDENT ARTIST AUDITIONS FOR 2025-2026 SEASON

Toledo Opera is seeking the following performers to serve as Resident Artists for the 2025-2026 season: soprano, mezzo-soprano, bass/baritone, and pianist. All applications must be submitted through YAP Tracker at YAPTracker.com no later than February 1. Those selected as finalists will be invited to a live audition at the Toledo Opera offices, 425 Jefferson Avenue, Ste. 601, Toledo, Ohio 43604 on Saturday, February 22, 2025. A pianist will be provided.

Toledo Opera's Resident Artist program began in 1985 and has been entertaining and educating the region's youth ever since. Resident Artists serve as touring artists for the Opera on Wheels program which travels extensively, visiting local educational institutions and bringing live opera to the furthest reaches of the Toledo area. Annually, the program is performed for 22,000 students from Findlay to Ann Arbor and Sandusky to Archbold.

In addition to Opera on Wheels, the selected Resident Artists (vocalists) are considered for comprimario roles in Toledo Opera's mainstage performances. Pianists are considered for additional mainstage playing opportunities as well. The five Resident Artists also perform in Toledo Opera's free Opera Outdoors concert series – touring outdoor community hubs throughout Toledo.

Shared James Norman, General Director at Toledo Opera: "For Toledo Opera, our Resident Artist program is a cornerstone of our mission. It not only nurtures the development of emerging operatic talent but also serves as a vital bridge between our organization and the community. Through this program, we bring the transformative power of opera to schools, libraries, and neighborhoods across the Toledo region. These talented artists inspire the next generation of opera lovers and performers while enriching the cultural fabric of our region. We're proud to invest in their growth as they invest in ours."

For more information about Toledo Opera, please visit toledoopera.org. For media access, please contact Rachael Cammarn at rcammarn@toledoopera.org.

DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL MINISTRY

St Martin de Porres Parish is seeking a part-time (20 hours a week) Director of Social Ministry. A Community Health Worker would be preferred. Main responsibilities include working collaboratively with the Pastoral Team, with the Food Pantry team, and with The Claver House team to continue and expand the social ministry of the parish. The successful candidate will work with various social agencies in the City and Diocese. An active Roman Catholic is preferred. EOE Send letter and resume via email to virginiawelshosf@gmail.com. 419 241 4544



Architectural & Engineering Services

The Toledo Regional Transit Authority (TARTA) intends to award a master agreement for an architectural and engineering firm or firms capable of providing on-call multi-discipline support services for various potential TARTA projects within Lucas County, Ohio.

Projects may involve one (1) or more TARTA facilities, program support and any future properties the agency may acquire. Current properties include:

- TARTA Central Avenue garage, 1127 Central Ave, Toledo, OH 43610
- TARTA Move paratransit office, 130 Knapp St, Toledo, OH 43604
- TARTA Transit Hub, 612 N Huron St, Toledo, OH 43604

TARTA reserves the right to award multiple firms. There is no guarantee of work through this solicitation.

The submission deadline for questions regarding this request for qualifications is Monday, December 23. Submissions must be delivered by 4 p.m. on Monday, December 30 through opengov.com (free to sign up, can follow TARTA for all future procurement notices) or to:

Kattie Bond, Director of Capital Projects

TARTA

1127 Central Avenue

Toledo, OH 43610

Call to place your ad:

419-243-0007

www.TheTruthToledo.com

The Padua Center Annual Kwanzaa Celebration

by Dawn Scotland
The Truth Reporter

The Padua Center held its annual Kwanzaa celebration on Friday, December 27, 2024 at 1416 Nebraska Ave. The cultural festival was open to the community and featured an interactive presentation of Kwanzaa with food and fellowship for all.

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The Lighting of the Kinara



Sister Virginia Welsh, Executive Director of the Padua Center



Brother Washington Muhammad leads the program

Kwanzaa at the Doug

By Dawn Scotland
The Truth Reporter

The Frederick Douglass Community Association held its annual Kwanzaa Celebrations at the Doug December 26 – Jan 1. The weeklong celebration featured music, speakers and vendors with the final night culminating in a community celebration of the Karamu.

Created in 1966 by Maulana Ron Karenga, Kwanzaa is an African American and Pan-African holiday that celebrates history, values, family, community and culture. The ideas and concepts of Kwanzaa are expressed in the Swahili language. The seven principles which form its core were drawn from communitarian values found throughout the African continent. (source:nmaahc.si.edu)

Each night the Doug celebrated Kwanzaa with a special celebration beginning at 6pm. Day 1 of the celebration, December 26, kicked-off with the first principle of Kwanzaa: Umoja (unity). Kwanzaa began with a procession into the auditorium led by Bro. Washington Muhammad, the acknowledgement of elders, libation ceremony, lighting of the Kinara, speeches, activities and the opportunity throughout the night to support black vendors at The Doug.

Rashid Spencer, executive director of Kwanzaa House of Northwest Ohio, remarked, "Today was our opening day for Kwanzaa. Tonight was the first night "Umoja", which means unity. The goal of tonight's principal is to bring the community together and unify one another – working with each other and connecting within the black community as well. Just to make sure that we keep the vision going and possibly push forward to carry on with our youth."

Kwanzaa festivities concluded January 1 with the Karamu, the communal feast at the end of Kwanzaa, that provided free food and fellowship to the community.

The Seven Principles of Kwanzaa (Ngoza Saba) are :

1. Umoja (unity) 00-MOH -jah: To strive for and maintain unity in the family, community, nation. And race.

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Executive Director of the Kwanzaa House Rashid Spencer and Bro. Washington Muhammad

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Lighting of the Kinara



Donald Lynn and the drum processional



Yasin Muhammad and Mother Yvette Muhammad



Procession to start Kwanzaa celebration



Permission granted by the Elder



Poet Jodie Summers