



Volume 88 No. 1 *"And Ye Shall Know The Truth..."* February 5, 2025



Alicia and Nathan Lawson, Proprietors

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The Big Glitch: Lucas County's 2025 Property Tax Fiasco

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

The Truth Contributor



Mistakes are always forgivable, if one has the courage to admit them.

- Bruce Lee

Lucas County's property tax crisis threatens to devolve into "a blame game instead of a change game" as residents begin rapidly losing trust amid finger-pointing within and calls for investigation from across the political aisle.

It was announced way back in September 2024 that assessed Lucas County property taxes had increased by 29.5 percent due to potential calculations. Still, no officials submitted changes or corrections to the State of Ohio.

Now, what officials have characterized as a "minor glitch" in routine property tax revaluations has erupted into a full-scale credibility crisis for county leadership as public outrage affecting 1,200 or more properties boils over from seething homeowners blindsided by unexpected tax increases.

As "clobbered" citizens demand answers and relief beyond the current "Oops, we made a mistake," county officials are scrambling to clean up the mess and contain the fallout from a slow and poorly communicated response process, that is now under intense scrutiny.

Even more concerning is that the timing couldn't be worse.

Though now paused, the recent announcement of tariffs added to the rising cost of essential goods like eggs, and the uncertainty surrounding migrant labor and increased deportations has made taxpayers nervous, jumpy, and sensitive to any policy decisions they fear will adversely shape their

financial security. A sudden spike in taxes is the last thing families and businesses need.

We know that county officials' response has been slow, disorganized, and defensive. When people demanded answers, they got vague explanations and bureaucratic excuses. Desperate property owners requested immediate action and transparency but received further delays, finger-pointing, and outright misinformation. Even now, as the county scrambles to hire an outside entity to review the process, it feels like mere damage control to many.

Yet, despite this unfolding disaster, there is a way forward—but only if Lucas County's leaders take bold, decisive, and immediate action to restore public confidence to a distraught Lucas County citizenry and ensure this never happens again.

Here's what needs to happen:

- De-politicize the property crisis with bi-partisan long-term solutions
- Emergency Relief for Overburdened Homeowners & Businesses
- Fast-track property tax appeals with no red tape - a simple, transparent process for affected homeowners.
- Temporary tax freezes or phased-in adjustments to soften the financial blow.

... continued on page 3



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▲ A Mural of Rosa Parks created in collaboration with The Arts Commission of Greater Toledo by local artist Mercé Culp is on display at TARTA's Transit Hub at 612 N. Huron in Toledo.

Stupid Is as Stupid Does!

By Lafe Tolliver, Esq

Guest Column

A national tragedy occurred this past week when a medium sized commercial plane collided with a large Black Hawk helicopter while the plane was approaching landing at the Reagan National Airport outside of the nation's capital.

All parties involved in the air collision perished. Sixty-seven souls went into eternity. Naturally, questions abound about how it happened and what was or were the causes of this tragedy.

What is even more tragic and now even appalling is that Donald Trump appears at a press conference and starts to blather, without any facts whatsoever, that the cause of the crash could be related to DEI (diversity, equity and inclusion principles) and, of course, Trump has to throw in for good measure, that both Biden and Obama policies caused this crash.

Think for a moment. There is a national tragedy, and the families of the deceased have not yet been notified of their pending losses and the several investigative teams are barely into the weeds on this case, but we have a ignoramus of the first-degree assessing blame!

Why? Trump's first order of any business is to see if he can shift or dump off any blame, remote or otherwise, on any situation that has him involved to someone else, preferably a Democrat and especially if he can cast aspersions on the laudable concepts of D.E.I.

Get ready. The new whipping boy for anything that goes awry in society will be quickly laid at the feet of D.E.I. and those who support it. D.E.I. is the new moniker for the slammed words of Affirmative Action. Trump, always playing to the cheap seats, will rant and rave about the dangers of D.E.I. and if asked to explain its principles, he would just blubber on and remind everyone about Hunter Biden's laptop!

Be prepared for anything and everything that goes bonkers in Trump World that the blame will be quickly assigned to D.E.I. For Trump and his cult followers, D.E.I. is the new silent codeword for Black people, women, LGBTQ and people of color. When a Trumper says, "D.E.I." is the culprit, what they are really saying is people other than White males are not mentally up to the task of being in positions of managerial or authoritative power.

For the ill-informed, D.E.I. simply expands the employment pool so that people who are normally excluded from even being considered for job opportunities are given a chance to at least sit at the interviewer's desk and pith their case.

D.E.I. does not give non-qualified people any points or extra credit to assume positions for which they do not or cannot meet the job requirements. Trump's false and outright lies about D.E.I. are regrettable because such gibberish goes out into the internet airwaves, Fox News (?) and other outlets that do not hold truth close to their hearts.

The conflict and divisiveness that Trump engenders with his constant slamming of D.E.I. shows a willful ignorance born of his own racist traits of which he is utterly unable to shed.

When pushed to the corner, Trump will concoct tales of he is friendly with people of color, and he is the most racist free President ever!

Just think. Why is it that White people never turn the spotlight of D.E.I. on their "own"? Simple answer: They are the gold standard for all things



right, pure and holy and thus a White person is automatically perceived as being talented and qualified...for anything!

Even the clown car of potential nominees that are going through the congressional hearings show that many, many are woeful inept or not even remotely qualified to assume such enormous positions of influence and power...but since they are ethnically White, most will pass muster.

MAGA if anything translates into making America white again as to all power and authority being pooled into the hands of White America... Black people need not apply. Trump is in good company with the likes of Theodore Bilbo, Lester Maddox, George Wallace, Strom Thurmond, Woodrow Wilson and Bull Connor.

How could Trump even remotely state that through his common sense that D.E.I. may have been the culprit of the air crash tragedy, while some of the facts are still sitting at the bottom of the murky Potomac River?

It is Trump's hope that if he can pin the now slandered title of D.E.I. on anything that the Democrats do, he and the GOP can glide by and escape scrutiny for their bizarre policies as per Project 2025.

In a day in which sanity should rule and reign, the likes of an RFK Jr., Kash Patel, Hegseth, Gabbard and others would not even be allowed to carry water glasses into the hearing rooms...but Trump wants flunkies around him so that he can rule the roost in his MAGA cult land.

Until and unless the Democrats come out of their knock down fever along with the few GOP senators who have not drunk the MAGA Kool-Aid, we are in for a few years of rough sledding with a person who wants to tear the house down because of his personal unexorcised demons.

Contact Lafe Tolliver at Tolliver@juno.com

Perryman... continued from page 2

- Independent audit results MUST be public, not just internal reports hidden from residents.
- Regular town halls throughout Lucas County, including central city wards, and Q&A sessions with county officials to address concerns directly.
- County leadership must take responsibility - not just make excuses.
- Fix the property valuation system for good, ensuring it's fair, consistent, and not politically manipulated.
- Prevent Lucas County residents and businesses from being blindsided by future tax hikes—implement predictable, phased-in increases that property owners can plan around.

If officials are willing to face the problem honestly, there is still an opportunity to restore trust and find a fair resolution.

The public outrage in Lucas County isn't just about the property tax increase—it's about the failure to own up to mistakes and take swift, corrective action.

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

Community Calendar

February 6

The Kwanzaa Park Neighbors will welcome Bernadette Joy Graham to the regular monthly Block Watch meeting, on February 6, 2025 at The Padua Center at Noon. Graham, a Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor, will speak on "Maintaining Good Mental Health." The regular monthly meeting is held in the evening but the February meeting is held at noon. A light Lunch will be served.

February 15

Black History Speaker's Program Roots of Resilience: The African American Church's Role in Toledo's Past, Present, and Future.
Keynote speaker: Dr. Malaika-Beauta Bell, Director of DEI, University of Toledo; 11am - refreshment and free will offering Information: 419-2831434 Where: St Philip Lutheran Church 3002 Upton@ Central

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In Fire's Wake, a Community Comes Together to Prevent Future Disasters

By Ben Jealous
Guest Column

"As we address the aftermath of the wildfires, let us resolve not just to build back better but also smarter, with a commitment to the environment and future generations. As a pastor, I am guided by the principle that caring for creation is an integral part of our faith. Let us take inspiration from the teachings of love and stewardship, embracing the role of being good caretakers of God's earth. Without a shadow of a doubt, community solidarity is crucial in the fight against climate change."



Those are the words of Rev. Larry E. Campbell, DMin, senior pastor of Pasadena, California's historic First African Methodist Episcopal Church. Forty-nine members of his congregation lost their homes to the Eaton Fire last month.

The Eaton Fire raged through the Pasadena area hitting the neighborhoods of Altadena especially hard. Altadena, where many of Pastor Campbell's congregants live, is an unincorporated part of Los Angeles County just north of Pasadena, nestled in the foothills up against Angeles National Forest. I grew up in a California community similarly on the edge of the wilderness. We were used to fires happening out in the forests, but not in our neighborhoods. Thanks to extreme drought, climate whiplash, and the other effects of the climate crisis, the people in these communities now need to grapple increased firestorm threats in their towns and cities.

Altadena lost at least 17 lives and thousands of homes to the flames – many more than the City of Pasadena which, while also devastated, lost just under 200 homes. And the city leaders and community activists of Pasadena have stepped up in a big way to help their neighbors.

"In this community we don't make very large distinctions between Al-

tadena and Pasadena. We all grew up together, we all went to school together, and when families who lost their homes in Altadena reached out to family members for shelter it was their family and friends in Pasadena who opened their doors and welcomed them in. We really are one big community," Pasadena Councilmember Tyron Hampton told the Los Angeles Sentinel.

In the face of tragedy, community leaders are also stepping up not only to rebuild, but to strengthen their communities – and all of ours – against future disasters by working to combat the cause of the fires: warming due to the continued burning of fossil fuels. In 2023, the Pasadena City Council passed a Climate Emergency Resolution, setting a goal for Pasadena to run on 100% carbon-free electricity by 2030. Now, in the wake of the fires, a broad coalition of local activists and advocates are pushing for Pasadena to hit that target.

Those of us who grew up in the Black Church understand Adam's commandment was to defend the Garden, protect the Garden, nurture the Garden. And the Garden right now is out of balance in a profound way. We should all take inspiration from how communities like Pasadena and Altadena are coming together to care for the Garden and take a stand for their future and ours.

This sort of resilience is a familiar part of Altadena's rich history – and its Black history, in particular.

Altadena was one of the first places in Southern California where a thriving Black middle class took root in the last century. It was home to such luminaries as: Octavia Estelle Butler, the celebrated African American author and first science fiction writer to receive a MacArthur Fellowship (also known as the "Genius Grant"); the writer, activist, and early Black Panther leader Eldridge Cleaver; Sidney Poitier, the Hollywood and civil rights pathbreaker who was the first Black actor to win the Academy Award for Best Actor; and Charles W. White, a local artist famous for his depictions of Black history.

Even Altadena's earlier history dating back to the 19th century held sto-

... continued on page 6

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WHY we celebrate

We celebrate Black History Month to honor the achievements, resilience, and contributions of Black individuals throughout history while fostering awareness, unity, and cultural appreciation across campus. It's a time to reflect on the past, celebrate the present, and inspire future progress within our diverse university community.

Visit our website for free virtual resources.

- Hair Wraps & Hair Care (Hosted by Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.)
Monday, Feb. 3, 6 p.m. - Thompson Student Union 2584
- State Night Breakfast (Hosted by BSU)
Tuesday, Feb. 4, 9 p.m. - Presidents Hall
- BBM Kick-Off & Community Service Project
Thursday, Feb. 6, 4 p.m. - 6 p.m. - OMS - Thompson Student Union 2580
- Cultural Cuisine Soulfood Edition*
Wednesday, Feb. 12, 11 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. - The Eatery - Thompson Student Union
- Black Owned Business Pop-Up (Hosted by BSU)*
Wednesday, Feb. 12, 6 p.m. - Toledo Recreation Center
- Barbershop Talk
Thursday, Feb. 13, 6 p.m. - 8 p.m. - Thompson Student Union Ingman Room
- Online 9 Step Show Honoring Greek History: "A Lesson in Greek"
Saturday, Feb. 15, 4 p.m. - Maume Indoor Theater - 601 Conant St.
- NAACP Toledo Branch Meeting*
Tuesday, Feb. 18, 5 p.m. - African American Legacy Project - 1326 Collingwood Blvd.
- Blm Poetry/Jazz (Hosted by BSU)*
Wednesday, Feb. 19, 6 p.m. - Phoenixia's (Inside Thompson Student Union)
- 2nd Annual South Praso Pop-Up & Free Health Screenings*
Sunday, Feb. 23, 1:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. - Friendship Baptist Church - 5301 Nebraska Ave.
- 2nd Annual South Praso: Black History Month Gospel Concert*
Sunday, Feb. 23, 5 p.m. - Friendship Baptist Church - 5301 Nebraska Ave.
- BSU Black Issues Conference*
Tuesday, Feb. 25, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. - BGSU Bowen-Thompson Student Union
- The Golden Hour Ball (Hosted by BSU & FLP)
Tuesday, Feb. 25, 6 p.m. - Thompson Student Union Auditorium
- BSU 55th Annual Fashion Show*
Friday, Feb. 28, 7 p.m. - Thompson Student Union Auditorium

Office of Multicultural Student Success
Thompson Student Union Page
2881 W. Bancroft St.
419 581-2426

For updates on events and locations visit the Black History Month celebration Facebook site.

The Superior Made RV Resort Is Opening This Spring

By Fletcher Word

The Truth Editor

Nathan and Alicia Lawson recently purchased the former Big Sandy Campground in Swanton, OH and for the nearly 175 individuals or families who are renting lots in what will become the Superior Made RV Resort, the changes that the Lawsons are planning will enhance the camping experience enormously.

The Lawsons completed their purchase of the Big Sandy in December but they are not new to campground ownership and management. The longtime Toledo residents – Macomber and Woodward graduates, respectively – first became involved in the campground business back in 2019 when they purchased a campground in Talladega, Alabama and turned it around over the next few years – using their sales and marketing expertise to increasing membership opportunities; cleaning and upgrading the 20-acre site and transforming an eyesore into a neighborhood gem.

They sold the Talladega business several years ago in order to return home and begin the search for a similar property close to Toledo. They eventually found just the right site after getting in touch with now-State Rep. Erika White, who brought them together with Shanda Gore, EdD, CEO of Mays and Associates, Ltd, who then put them in touch with Dave Zenk, executive director of Metroparks Toledo. Metroparks and the Lawsons teamed up to acquire the property that Big Sandy was part of.

The Lawsons' entrepreneurial adventures began in earnest in 2008 during the Great Recession's housing bust. Nathan, a former truck driver, and Alicia, a former pharmaceutical rep, began buying rental properties ... and it went well. After about a half dozen years of buying and managing their properties, they decided that it was time for another adventure, an adventure that might require a bit less hands-on caretaking.

As Alicia recalls, they settled on the notion that a campground would be an ideal purchase and management experience and they laid out four criteria as they began their search. First, they wanted an area of between 15 and 20 acres; then, they wanted something in the South because they were looking for more sunny days; the space should be no more than five miles from the nearest interstate highway and it should be affordable enough that they could pay for it in cash and avoid taking on too much debt.

After putting out the word, their contacts eventually pointed them in the direction of Talladega, Alabama, not a place they were familiar with, nor a state either had ever even visited. Eventually they came around and took on the challenge of building a campground business just off the Interstate 20 and, by chance, just across the street from a NASCAR racetrack event site. The Time Away RV Resort was off and running.

However, after about three years living in Alabama in their own upscale RV and turning their campground into a profitable venture, the Lawsons decided it was time to return home. For one thing the sun was ... well, a bit too much sun in the Alabama summers. In addition a family illness provided an incentive to return. "We've got to go home," they said.

The Lawsons returned to Toledo and made an investment in three downtown buildings and a parking lot, which they turned over to their daughters,

Arlinda Self and ShirleyAnn Lawson-Roland, to run. (See The Sojourner's Truth, August 23, 2023 at thetruthtoledo.com) And they looked for another campground – this one to be named Superior Made RV Resort.

Clearly the Lawsons have taken an entrepreneurial route atypical of the path most Black investors take. Campgrounds are not only NOT typical investments for the Black community, they are also NOT the types of recreational activities that many Black vacationers partake of. This fact, of course, is not lost on the Lawsons.

Having invested in a campground in Alabama and across from a NASCAR racetrack at that, the Lawsons spent their time working with a mostly white clientele, while trying to increase the Black campground audience as well.

They will try to replicate that effort in Swanton but they realize that Superior Made RV Resort will remain a primarily white recreational experience. But they also hope and expect that through their marketing ef-



Alicia and Nathan Lawson

orts and their ability to provide a welcoming experience that future visitors will include an increasing number of campers of color.

However, every visitor and camper will be able to take advantage of the Resort's partnership with Metroparks. The connection with Oak Openings will enable campers to have access to over 5,000 acres of nature and outdoor recreation.

Contact Superior Made RV Resort at 567-457-4930



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Nat Turner Slave Rebellion Is Subject of New Stage Play

It was the most shocking and bloody slave rebellion in America's history.

At 8 p.m. Feb. 21 and Feb. 22, 2025, New Works Writers Series will revisit the Virginia uprising that sent shockwaves throughout the South. The legend of the man who was regarded by various peers and critics as alternatively fearless, insane, prophetic or lawless will be explored in *Nat Turner's Last Struggle: Finding His Way Home* at the Maumee Indoor Theatre.

"There were few events that impacted the institution of slavery in such a powerful way as Nat Turner's insurrection," says Imelda Hunt, EdD, founder and artistic director of New Works Writers Series. "While it was a horrific and gruesome event that involved the deaths of children, what wasn't acknowledged by the ruling white establishment is that slavery itself set the tone of violence and death among the oppressed class that staged the rebellion. So it remains a controversial discussion almost 200 years later."

Featuring Crystal Harris-Darnell, Richard Brown and Jim Trumm as cast members, *Nat Turner's Last Struggle* is written by P.A. Wray, inspired by the 1831 attempt at freedom Turner led. Joining New Works for this production will be Noah Hinton, Tisha Carroll and Ashanti Hinton.

Hunt says the two New Works performances are opportunities for audiences to learn American history in a manner that engages more than text books.

"It's a great opportunity to be educated and entertained by our dramatic

presentation of true, dramatic events," Hunt says.

Admission to *Nat Turner's Last Struggle* is \$10 at the Maumee Indoor Theatre, 601 Conant St. Tickets will be available at the door and also Henry's Jewelry & Giftware, and Powell's Beauty and Barber Supply.

For additional information, please contact New Works Writers Series at e-mail director@newworkswritersseries.org.

TARTA Services Free Feb. 11 In Celebration

The Toledo Area Regional Transit Authority (TARTA) joins Ohio's 62 other public transportation agencies in celebrating Ohio Loves Transit Week, which runs Feb. 9-15.

As part of Ohio Loves Transit Week – facilitated by the Ohio Public Transit Association – all TARTA fixed-route, paratransit and TARTA Flex services will be free of charge on Tuesday, Feb. 11, as approved by TARTA's Board of Trustees at Thursday's meeting.

"We take our commitment to the people who depend on our service very seriously, and the same goes for our sister transit agencies all over the state," said TARTA CEO Laura Koprowski. "Statewide, these organizations provide close to 60 million trips a year. The commitment of those who provide that service deserves to be recognized."

"Transit continues to drive sustainability and provide an affordable ride to critical destinations for those who may not otherwise have one. Mobility for all citizens is something worth investing in, and we are happy to provide free rides for our own passengers as part of this celebration."

TARTA leadership and trustees will travel to Columbus during Ohio Loves Transit Week to meet face-to-face with state legislators and speak about the importance of public transportation and the value of properly funding transit.

Another Ohio Loves Transit Week event will take place Saturday, February 8 in celebration of Rosa Parks Day. Families will be able to take part in group reading of a story on Rosa Parks at 11:30 a.m. at the Mott, King Road, Heatherdowns and Holland branches of the Toledo Lucas County Public Library.

Guest readers will include TARTA CEO Laura Koprowski, Ohio state legislators Elgin Rogers and Josh Williams, and representatives from the Toledo Chapter of the NAACP.

In Fire's Wake...continued from page 4

ries of both Black achievement and racial unity. Robert Owens was born into slavery in 1806 and later became the wealthiest Black man in Los Angeles County. He made his home just above Altadena at El Prieto Canyon, which was named for him ("El Prieto" being Spanish for "the dark-skinned one"). Altadena is the final resting place of Ellen Garrison Jackson Clark, the abolitionist and civil rights pioneer. And it was the final home to Owen Brown, son of the abolitionist John Brown and the last surviving participant in his father's raid on Harper's Ferry. The younger Brown was celebrated locally among the area's mixed Black and white post-Civil War community.

But a UCLA study found Altadena's Black residents suffered disproportionately in the recent fires, due to past policies like redlining. Sixty-one percent of Black households were inside the Eaton Fire perimeter versus 50 percent of non-Black households. Nearly half of Altadena's Black residents had their homes destroyed or severely damaged. And 57 percent of Altadena's Black homeowners are over the age of 65, making them particularly vulnerable in the disaster's aftermath.

This, the first week of Black History Month, let us resolve not to let the climate crisis take away our history. And let us remember that what is really at the heart of Black History Month is our people's commitment to making us truly one nation. It should be a priority to prevent future disasters that would lay waste not only to homes and buildings but to rich local histories and precious generational wealth. The people of Altadena and Pasadena are showing us what that path forward looks like.

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

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Domonique Glover Choreographs His Third Toledo Opera Production

By Fletcher Word
The Truth Editor

The Toledo Opera, once again, did not have to venture far to find a choreographer for its upcoming production, *South Pacific*. Right here in town is a proven and experienced artist, one whom the Opera has used before on several occasions and with great success.

Domonique Glover has demonstrated in recent years that the Toledo Opera is just the right setting for his dance creations. He has previously choreographed *Ragtime* and *Merry Widow* after appearing on the Toledo Opera stage for the first time in 2018's *I Dream* production.

Glover's path to his current eminent position has been a circuitous one indeed. As a student at Scott High School in the early 2000s, he would not have envisioned such artistic success at this point in his life.

Glover graduated in 2004 from Scott with a GPA of 4.56, as the valedictorian of his class, and with an academic scholarship to Morehouse College. Chemistry seemed to be in his future.

Several years ago, Glover spoke with *The Truth* about his college academic experience and how he became enamored of dance while a student at Morehouse.

"About a year and a half in, chemistry just wasn't clicking for me," said Glover. "I don't remember when the seed was planted in me but we were basically told as children that a high school diploma was not enough, and that we weren't finished with school until we at least earned a bachelor's degree. It wasn't forced on us but it was highly encouraged and rewarded, and after a while that ethic became instilled in us and second nature."

So Glover reassessed his objective, and switched his major to math. "Something I always enjoyed and was good at," he said. Math was the skill that he knew wouldn't fail him. "There are certain things that I consider gifts," said Glover. "It's my ability to take mathematical information, and retain that information, process it, and explain it to someone else."

Glover was back on track academically. And then came the dancing.

On a whim, he says, he joined a dance troupe "Just for kicks. I felt old because I started so late," he said. "But most of the people who are gaining notoriety are in my age group." (The Truth, March 8, 2017)

Glover graduated from Morehouse with a degree in mathematics and returned to Toledo to begin a career as a teacher and to continue dancing.

"The more I traveled, the more dancing I did – it kind of snowballed ... and I started to get more ideas."

A friend asked him if he had ever choreographed and that led to an opportunity to create the dance routines in the musical *Fame* at the Toledo Repertory Theatre.

*"I enjoyed the creative part," he says of his first venture. Now in his latest venture, *South Pacific*, there is so much more to enjoy about what he calls the "classic of classical" musicals. "The orchestration is beautiful," he notes.*

However, beyond the plentiful, outstanding musical numbers such as "Some Enchanted Evening," "I'm Gona Wash that Man Right Out of My Hair," "There Is Nothing Like a Dame," "Happy Talk," there is also the fact that *South Pacific*, as with a few other musicals of the 1950s such as *West Side Story*, began to try to raise audiences' consciousness about some of the issues plaguing society, such as racism.



Glover in the Toledo Opera's *The Merry Widow*

"Carefully Taught," Glover notes, "is a really haunting song" about racism.

"Carefully Taught," Glover notes, "is a really haunting song" about racism.

In addition to his ar-



Domonique Glover during rehearsal



tistic endeavors, Glover is also a teacher, currently in support services at St. Francis de Sales. As for the future, he is undecided about his next move. He wants "to do my own thing," but he's not in any hurry to move out for the bright lights of Broadway or Hollywood yet. So perhaps, Toledo will be able to hold on to one of the Glass City's glittering artistic talents for a while.

"I believe it doesn't really matter where you do it ... people will come to support you [if you do it well]," he says.

*Performances of *South Pacific* at the Valentine will be on February 14 and 16. For ticket information contact 4190255-7464 or toleodoopera.org*

TOLEDO OPERA

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Historic Sorority Honors Women Leaders

By Tricia Hall

The Truth Reporter

The ladies of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Zeta Alpha Omega Chapter of Toledo welcomed family members, friends and supporters to honor six local women.

The 117th Sorority's Founders Day celebration, titled Black Girls Rock in Exemplary Service, was held on Saturday, February 1, 2025 in Maumee, Ohio. The celebration honors the sorority's 117th Founders' Day and acknowledges women and local entities that have demonstrated exemplary service.

The 2025 Honorees:

- Anita Madison, Social Humanitarian Award
- Olivia Holden, Icon Award
- Kwinlyn Tyler, Community Change Agent Award
- Mariah Maddox, Young Gifted and Black Award
- Angela Lucas, Shot Caller Award
- Mary Dawson, Sisterhood Award
- Grace Community Center, Trailblazer Award
- Queens Village of Toledo, Legacy of Excellence Award

Kristian Brown, served as the event's mistress of ceremony and ushered guests through the agenda. The event dais was introduced by the chapter's protocol chair, sorority members Karah Henderson and Latrice Flowers sang the Black National

... continued on page 12



HONOREES: Back (L to R) Angela Lucas (Shot Caller Award); Katrina Barry, chapter vice president; Clara Petty, event vice chair; Felicia Dunston, event chair; Richelle Watkins, chapter president; Nori Washington, Alpha Lambda chapter member; Marissa Bobo, Iota Iota Chapter president and Elaine Page of Grace Community Center (Trailblazer Award). Front (L to R) Kwinlyn Tyler (Community Change Agent Award), Mariah Maddox (Young Gifted and Black Award), Mary Dawson (Sisterhood Award); Olivia Holden (Icon Award), and Anita Madison (Social Humanitarian Award).



Golden and Pearl Sorority members



Current and Former Chapter Presidents



COMMITTEE: Back Row (L to R) Leigh Utleigh, Olla Avery, Ashleigh Foster, Ashley Benson, Marissa Bobo, Pamela G Jones, Donnetta Carter, Andrea Price, Patrice McClellan. Front Row (L to R) Katrina Barry, chapter vice president; Felicia Dunston, chair; Richelle Watkins, chapter president; Clara Petty, vice chair.

Pathway Inc. Brothers United Celebrates Black History Month

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Top Ladies of Distinction Hold Prayer Breakfast

The Truth Staff

The Toledo Chapter of Top Ladies of Distinction, Inc and Top Teens of America opened Black History Month with the organization's Annual Prayer Breakfast on February 1 at The Premier Banquet Hall.

The theme for this year's event was "Continuing with Service in Action, Leading with Prayer."

This year's Prayer Breakfast was organized by Lady Denise Black-Poon, chair and Ladies Wanda Terrell-Galloway and Clara Petty, co-chairs.

The program opened with a welcome from Terrell-Galloway, the TLOD Toledo Chapter president and from Teen Latrice Talmer, Top Teen of America, president.



Denise Black-Poon; Michelle Jeffries Rhodes, DMin; Wanda Terrell-Galloway; Deborah Gardner; La'Shardae Scott, PhD

Lady Delise Simmons introduced the special guest, La'Shardae Scott, PhD. Scott is the CEO/president of SCOTT, which stands for: Scott

... continued on page 10



Bottom Row (L-R): President Wanda Terrell Galloway, Denise Black-Poon, Clara Brank, Barbara Tucker. Top Row (L-R): Delise Simmons, Shontrell Flanagan, Jackie Jackson, Marsha Quinn, Dianne Johnson, Bulista Kimbrough, Sandra Strong, Sherese Norwood. Absent: Alisha Gant, Madelyn Standard, Mary McKinley Reed, Pamela Effinger, Clara Petty, Denise Caldwell, Elizabeth Flournoy, Delores Bates, Delores Anderson



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PATHWAY

Trump's On Again-Off Again Funding Freeze Fires up Local Dems

By Fletcher Word
The Truth Editor

Confusion reigned on Wednesday, January 29, as local Democratic elected officials attempted to sort out what President Donald Trump's White House and Office of Management and Budget were attempting to do by freezing government funding on trillions of dollars in grants and loans.

The confusion was exacerbated by conflicting statements from the White House stating that the freeze was rescinded because a federal judge had placed a pause on the order, while the press secretary's statement claimed that the order was still in place.

The order, issued Monday night, January 27, was an attempt to purge the government of what President Trump has called a "woke" ideology. A federal judge in the District of Columbia temporarily blocked it Tuesday afternoon, but the lack of clarity sent schools, hospitals, nonprofits and other organizations scrambling to understand if they had lost their financial support from the government.

In Toledo, Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur gathered local elected officials and non-profit agency leaders for a press conference to announce that the time has arrived to organize and fight the expected onslaught of decrees from the White House ending programs to aid Americans of all types.

"We will fight with every ounce of strength that we have to fight," said Kaptur opening the press conference and setting the tone for the rest of the speakers.

Those speakers included Lucas County Commissioners Lisa Sobecki and Pete Gerken.

"Freezing the funding causes nothing but chaos and destruction,"

said Sobecki. "And that is what they want – chaos and destruction."

"We better stand up and get our act together," said Gerken. "We won't back down so let's start putting our collective voices together ... organize and mobilize, otherwise they win"

In addition to the elected officials who spoke, a number of non-profit leaders also addressed the issue of the funding freeze since their agencies and those they serve will be dramatically impacted by the withdrawal of federal funds, where it continues with this particular executive order from the White House, or happens at some later point in this four year presidential term.

Doni Miller, CEO of Neighborhood Health Association, was among those who addressed the funding issue.

"We provide health care to anybody without [regard to who has] the ability to pay," she said of her agency which operates 13 clinics within Lucas County. "Health care is a right which is fundamental ... if the American dream is within our reach, we have to stop politicizing health care."

Miller noted that if such freezes continue, either now or at a later time, there will be no second chances for so many of those in need of the services that agencies such as NHA provide.

"The damage can be irreversible," she said. "We have an opportunity to be pro-active."

Ladies of Distinction...continued from page 9

Center for Observation Treatment & Transition, a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting sickle cell awareness, education and research. "We specialize in facilitating the transition from pediatric to adult treatment."

Deborah Gardner sang the opening number accompanied by pianist Mike Odoms and prayers of thanks were led by Lady Clara Brank, chaplain.

After breakfast was served, Lady McKinley Reed introduced the speaker, Michelle Jeffries Rhodes, DMin.

Rhodes, an ordained elder, is a graduate of Scott High School, holds an associate's degree in Executive Secretarial Science, a bachelor's in E-Business, a master's in management and a doctorate in Biblical Exposition.

Rhodes founded Crazy for Christ Ministries, a non-profit dedicated to education and support in 2007. An accomplished author, she has published four books: *JUST Pray; Shifted! Murder, Trauma, God's Redemptive Power – A True Story of Love and Forgiveness and Shifted! A Journal*.

She currently hosts an international radio show – Spirit ti Spirit – on WNZN 89.1 FM (Lorain, Ohio), where she teaches personal development based on biblical principles. Rhodes spoke on the issue of "Serving Youth and Adults."

After the speaker, the ladies held a blessing of Prayer Cards and Recognition before closing remarks by President Lady Terrell Galloway.

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These Executive Orders Can Hit Black Students the Hardest

The flurry of Trump's orders has left educators concerned about students' safety and censorship of what they can teach.

By Aziah Süd, Word In Black

Guest Column

When President Donald Trump signed a barrage of controversial executive orders rolling back civil rights protections and racial equity policies, he didn't explicitly address education. But he did set the tone for what schools and education policy leaders should expect during the next four years.

That includes an end to diversity in teacher hiring, a green light for immigration officers to raid public schools, no government protection for LGBTQ+ students, and no pushback for districts that ban books or restrict teaching Black history.

Just hours after taking the oath of office, Trump signed dozens of his own executive orders and rescinded almost 80 orders signed by the Biden administration. Many of these executive orders have already been implemented, while others will likely be challenged in court and overturned. The overall effect, however, signaled a decisive break with former President Joe Biden's educational policies.

For example, after Trump signed the order titled, "Ending Radical And Wasteful Government DEI Programs And Preferencing," the Education Department almost immediately took several steps to dismantle its Biden-era DEI programs and practices.

"Illegal DEI and DEIA policies not only violate the text and spirit of our longstanding Federal civil-rights laws," according to the executive order. "They also undermine our national unity, as they deny, discredit, and undermine the traditional American values of hard work, excellence, and individual achievement in favor of an unlawful, corrosive, and pernicious identity-based spoils system."

Almost immediately, the Education Department put employees charged with leading DEI initiatives on paid administrative leave, but did not clarify how many staffers had been suspended, according to USA Today. The paper reported that department officials said they also canceled millions of dollars in contracts related to DEI training and services.

The Department of Education announced nearly a dozen new political appointees for top leadership positions — including several who worked for Linda McMahon, Trump's education secretary nominee, when she ran the America First Policy Institute, a conservative think tank, according to USA Today.

The potential educational impact can range from districts no longer feeling the need to hire Black teachers or teach American history that includes honest accounts of slavery and Jim Crow.

Ending DEI programs in public schools also undoes the Biden administration's work challenging districts that restrict or ban books.

When the order was signed, the department's Office for Civil Rights Enforcement dismissed 11 formal complaints about book bans in local districts and retracted guidance that removing books may violate civil rights laws, according to a DOE press release. OCR also dismissed six other pending cases.

Reversed Protection for LGBTQ+ Students

In another executive order, titled Defending Women From Gender Ideology Extremism and Restoring Biological Truth to the Federal Government, Trump officially declared he will recognize just two sexes: male and female.

"My Administration will defend women's rights and protect freedom

of conscience by using clear and accurate language and policies that recognize women are biologically female, and men are biologically male," according to the order.

The order effectively dismantles Biden-era protections for K-12 transgender students, ending a long struggle by parents who want schools to address their children by their preferred pronouns and names. While local schools still have the option to respect students' wishes, parents no longer have Education Department protection if a school decides not to do so, and a school risks losing federal funding if it ignores Trump's order.

Education Week reported that the executive order directs the U.S. attorney general to instruct government agencies that civil rights laws that ban discrimination based on sex —including Title IX, the federal law that prohibits gender discrimination at federally funded schools — no longer apply in cases involving sexual orientation or gender identity.

The move likely will do little to reverse the spike in calls to LGBTQ+ youth crisis centers, a rise linked to Trump's election. In a statement, Jaymes Black, CEO of The Trevor Project, an LGBTQ+ suicide prevention and crisis intervention organization, said the executive order wasn't a surprise, "and for many communities, these (actions) are not new."

"Lucky for us, we sit on the shoulders of leaders who have faced tremendous obstacles and uncertainties, for generations," he said.

ICE Can Make Arrests at Schools

Prior to Trump returning to office, the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and Customs and Border Patrol agents had to "sensitive locations," including places of worship, hospitals, and schools, when conducting enforcement activities like making arrests. But the Trump administration overturned the 13-year internal policy that protected students from being pulled out of their classrooms, with the fear of themselves or their parents being deported.

Kalyn Belsha, a reporter for Chalkbeat, told NPR that some parents in cities like Chicago and Los Angeles have kept their children home from school, while the schools themselves have prepared for the possibility of ICE agents knocking at their doors.

"They're preparing for the possibility that things could be happening outside the school while families are dropping their children off or potentially waiting at their bus stop," she said. "But then also, what would they do if an agent actually knocked on the door and said, 'I would like to come in potentially to talk to a staff member or a parent or a child?'"

She told the network about an incident in Chicago when "some federal agents that showed up at a school asking to come in to interview an 11-year-old who had posted an anti-Trump video on TikTok." The agents said they were with the Department of Homeland Security, but "the school was confused and said, 'No, you cannot come in.'"

It turned out that the officers were Secret Service agents. The school activated protocols to protect the student and sent the agents away because they did not have the proper paperwork to interview the child. But the situation could have easily gone the other way, Belsha told NPR.

"I think that's the kind of example of, even if it isn't an ICE agent, [Trump's elimination of sensitive location protections] creates all kinds of chaos for the school and for the school communities," she said.

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Ohio Black Media Week...continued from page 16

"Information is the currency that propels us forward," says Representative Rogers.

As a Black journalist, I know firsthand the power of information. When we hear the phrase "information is power," it's not just a cliché—it's a truth that has shaped our survival, resistance, and progress.

For centuries, Black media has been the heartbeat of our communities, the vessel through which we tell our own stories, unfiltered and uncensored. Black journalists have never just reported the news—we have shaped history. We have exposed injustice, given voice to the unheard, and ensured that the narratives of our diaspora do not get erased or rewritten.

That's why Representative Rogers' work is so important. With House Bill 368, he isn't just honoring the past—he is securing a future where Black media continues to thrive. Because Black media is not just for Black people; it's for anyone who values historical truth.

"Make no mistake about it, all people read Black media," Rogers reminds us.

A Political Struggle for Recognition

"The cost of liberty is less than the price of repression." —W.E.B. Du Bois (The Crisis, the official magazine of the NAACP)

Black media's influence extends beyond storytelling—it plays a crucial role in shaping politics, policies and economic opportunities. As Representative Rogers reflects on his time in Ohio's legislature, he acknowledges how, during the 2016 election, both major parties began to recognize the power of Black media.

"Many talk the talk, but few walk the walk," he says. Black media should not be an afterthought in political and economic discussions; it should be a priority.

If we don't tell our own stories, who will?

It's crucial that we take control of our narrative, especially when it comes to shaping our future. As disheartening as it may be, according to the U.S. Department of Labor, the groups that gain the most from DEI (Diversity Equity & Inclusion) efforts are, in order: white women and male CEOs, Latino/Hispanic Americans, Asian Americans, Native Americans, disabled individuals, veterans, LGBTQ+ people, and finally, Black Americans—the group that receives the least support.

Yet, rather than strengthening policies that benefit them, 2024 majority voters prioritized undermining DEI, a decision that ultimately reinforces a racial hierarchy where Black Americans remain structurally disadvantaged. This phenomenon highlights how deeply ingrained anti-Blackness is in the fabric of American society, where even those who stand to gain from equity efforts will abandon them if it means maintaining the racial status quo.

Building a Legacy of Change

"Racism is not just a matter of personal attitudes or prejudices. It is about the power to define who belongs, who gets resources, and who gets justice."

—Dorothy Roberts (The Nation, Harvard Law Review)

Change is never the work of one person—it takes a collective. That's why Representative Elgin Rogers Jr. garnered support from a bipartisan group of legislators, including Senator Dr. Vernon Sykes of Akron, who has served in the Ohio legislature for over 40 years, and State Representative Josh Williams of

Sylvania Township. These leaders understand that Black media plays a crucial role in shaping public discourse and ensuring that the voices of marginalized communities are heard.

Rogers also engaged Black media outlets for feedback, ensuring that the bill was crafted with the community in mind.

"I could have done the bill alone," Rogers reflects, "but there's power in numbers."

That power translated into bipartisan support. House Bill 368 passed with backing from lawmakers across the political spectrum. But this wasn't just about politics—it was about ensuring that Black media continues to be recognized and supported by many.

"Every year, hopefully for generations to come, this bill will continue to bring awareness that Black Media is important—not just for Black people, but for all people," Rogers says.

Beloved Black Community

"We delight in the beauty of the butterfly, but rarely admit the changes it has gone through to achieve that beauty." —Maya Angelou (The New York Times and The Oakland Tribune)

We stand on the shoulders of giants—those whose unwavering voices have echoed throughout history, shaping the course of a nation. The writers, journalists and press creators who paved the way fought not just for representation, but for the recognition of our power, our intellect, and our humanity.

"Ohio Black Media Week" will commemorate our stories, told on our terms, from the archives of slavery to the roaring winds of the civil rights movement.

...continued on page 13



Ohio State Representative Elgin Rodgers presents a proclamation to Ed Dixon at Scott High School

Historic Sorority... continued from page 8

Anthem, Richelle Watkins, the chapter president, and two undergraduate chapter members welcomed everyone to the occasion.

"We are celebrating our 117th Founders' Day and also celebrating Black Girls in Exemplary Service. These are women in our community that align with the program initiatives of the sorority," shared Watkins.

The program continued as Felicia Dunston recognized the sponsors and shared acknowledgements, Clara Petty presented the sorority's history, the invocation was delivered and lunch was served. Katrina Barry presented the program initiatives and the chapter president closed the program with remarks.

"Thank you to our chairperson Felicia Roberts Dunston and co-chairperson Clara Petty. Thank you for your hard work and dedication that makes this a success," said Watkins.

Black Girls Rock in Exemplary Service was also co-sponsored by local collegiate chapters Alpha Lambda and Iota Iota Chapters.

For additional information about Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Incorporated, Zeta Alpha Omega Chapter visit <https://zetaalphaomega.org/>

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Black History Month books for Kids by various authors and illustrators

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

The Truth Contributor

Your mother tells you stories.

She talks about things that happened before you were born; Grandpa does it, too, and you like to hear every tale. So why not have these stories about Black History on your shelves?

For the boy who loves looking good, *Saturday Morning at the 'Shop* by Keenan Jones, illustrated by Ken Daley (Beach Lane Books, \$18.99) is a great book to have around. One day each week, everything happens at the barber shop, and not just haircuts! This is a fun read and a cultural touchstone for boys ages 4 to 8.

Young cooks will love *Jollof Day* by Bernard Mensah, illustrated by Annalise Barber-Opp (Dial, \$19.99), the story of father and son in the kitchen for a special event that starts early and ends in mouthwatering goodness. Kids will love the story, parents will love the recipe at books' end.

The child who has activism in their soul will want *We Miss You, George Floyd* by Shannon Gibney, illustrated by Leeya Rose Jackson (University of Minnesota Press, \$17.95). It's a brief but well-done look at the life and murder of Floyd and why it's important. Younger kids will like the pictures but older children will understand the story best.

It's also important for kids to know about their heroes, and *Sharing the Dream* by Shelia P. Moses, illustrated by Keith Mallett (Nancy Paulsen Books, \$18.99) begins with an exciting trip: the whole family's going to the March on Washington and young Agnes knows why it's important. Read this story to children ages 3-to-8 and be sure your older ones know about the biographies at books' end.

Speaking of heroes, *Unstoppable John* by Pat Zietlow Miller, illustrated by Jerry Jordan (Viking, \$18.99) is a slice-of-life story that's perfect for kids who crave books. It's the tale of young John Lewis, who loved to read almost anything he could get his hands on – but he couldn't get a library card. Back then, libraries were only for white folks but John knew that if he was persistent and kept working on it, soon libraries and other

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2024, 2025
\$17.95 - \$18.99
various page counts

places would open up to people who looked like him. This is a heroic book for 5-to-9-year-olds and a nice launching point for other, similar biographies.

And finally, for the child who loves world history, *Through Sand and Salt* by Elizabeth Zunon (Bloomsbury, \$18.99) is a book you'll want. It's the tale of a young Malik who travels with his father's caravan across the Sahara desert to take salt to Timbuktu. It's a long journey filled with danger and excitement, new friends and old lessons. Just beware, there's a lot to this book, in a longer story that's perhaps too much for a small child in one sitting. Break it up into two read-alouds, or give it to older kids, ages nine to 12. They'll enjoy it much more.

And if these Black History Month books aren't enough, be sure to ask your favorite bookseller or librarian for more. For kids of all ages, they've got stories.

Ohio Black Media Week...continued from page 12

We were, and are, not just surviving—we are thriving in a legacy of strength and defiance, one that continues to inspire and empower us today.

Let us remember that the Black press and Black creatives have always been at the forefront of our struggle for justice, equality, and empowerment. Our resilience is written in the pages of history, in the ink of those who refused to be silenced, in the beats of hearts that refused to break. We've always understood that when we tell our own stories, we own our future. So, to every Black writer, every journalist, every artist, and every creator: your work matters. It is vital, it is necessary, and it is part of the fabric that weaves us into a magnificent legacy.

The Future of Black Media

"A people without the knowledge of their past history, origin, and culture is like a tree without roots." —Marcus Garvey, posthumously pardoned 2025 (The Negro World, UNIA's official newspaper)

As I write this, I am reminded that my role as a Black journalist is **not just to report on history—but to be part of it.** The work of Black media is never finished. We don't just write about injustice—we challenge it. We don't just document movements—we help build them.

Representative Rogers puts it best: **"We want black media to thrive and be around for another 400 years."**

His words serve as a reminder that Black media is not just an industry—it's a living legacy, one of resilience, empowerment, and transformation. And as long as there are stories to tell, injustices to expose, and truths to be preserved, the Black Press will continue to write history.

Because information is power—and that power belongs to us all.



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CLASSIFIEDS

February 5, 2025

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St. Philip Lutheran Church, 3002 Upton at Central is seeking tutors in Math and English for our "Raise a Child" tutoring programs. This will be for 4th to 6th graders from McKinley Stem Academy on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4pm to 5pm, from February to May. This is a wonderful opportunity to share your time and talent with children who need assistance in these subjects. Background checks and child safety classes will be required. Please call 419-283-434 if you are interested.

REPORTER NEEDED

The Sojourner's Truth is seeking a part-time reporter. Call 419-243-0007 for more information.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Lucas Metropolitan Housing (LMH), located in Toledo, OH is seeking experienced applicants for the following position(s): Accounting Specialist, Housing Specialist. For complete details, visit <https://www.lucasmha.org> and click on Careers. Deadline: 02-05-25. This is a Section 3 covered position. HUD recipients are encouraged to apply and are to indicate on the application if you are a LMHA Public Housing client or Housing Choice Voucher Program participant. Persons with disabilities are encouraged to apply. NO PHONE CALLS. Equal employment opportunity shall be afforded to all qualified persons without regard to age, race, color, religion, religious creed, gender, military status, ancestry, disability, handicap, sexual orientation, genetic information or national origin.



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The Toledo Regional Transit Authority (TARTA) intends to hire a firm to add Contracted Security Officers to provide protection, assistance, information, and miscellaneous related services to the management, employees, and visitors of TARTA facilities.

Duties of these contracted officers at TARTA's Transit Hub (612 N. Huron Street, Toledo) and Central Avenue garage (1127 Central Avenue, Toledo) may include:

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- Observing passengers in TARTA facilities and on buses
- Observing employees while on duty
- Assisting in investigation of accidents, incidents and other safety issues

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 February 7. Submissions must be delivered by 3 p.m. on February 21 through opengov.com (free to sign up, can follow TARTA for all future procurement notices). Questions may be directed to: Steve Wise, Manager of Safety, Security & Training, TARTA at swise@tarta.com.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW SERVICES RFP25-R001

Lucas Metropolitan Housing (LMH) will receive proposals for **Environmental Review Services in accordance with RFP25-R001**. Received in accordance with law until **February 6, 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.



LUCAS COUNTY DEMOCRATIC PARTY ENCOURAGES RESIDENTS TO RUN FOR OFFICE; SEEK PARTY ENDORSEMENT

This week, the Lucas County Democratic Party (LCDP) has opened its 2025 endorsement application for candidates running for public office who would like to do so as an official "endorsed Democrat." "The May Primary is quickly approaching," said Schuyler Beckwith, chair of the LCDP. "Many local races will appear on the ballot – Mayor, Council, and Municipal Court. We have strong Democratic incumbents but we also know there are many Democrats across the County who are ready to run."

The deadline to submit an endorsement application to the LCDP is February 6, 2025. It can be found on LCDP's webpage at lucascountydemocraticparty.com/screening. Signatures to run for office are due to the Lucas County Board of Elections on March 7, 2025, with the May Primary happening on May 6, 2025.

In Lucas County, May primaries will be occurring in the City of Toledo, Village of Berkey, Village of Holland, Village of Ottawa Hi Is, City of Sylvania, City of Waterville, and the Village of Whitehouse, as well as judge-ship seats on Toledo Municipal Court.

"If there are Lucas County residents who want to run for office but don't know where to start, please contact the LCDP. We want Democrats who believe in expanding personal rights, who believe in organized labor, and who believe in community-centered solutions to make that leap to run for office," said Beckwith.

Being an endorsed LCDP candidate has numerous benefits, such as access to volunteers, fundraising opportunities, and a greater connection to active local Democrats. Again, the deadline to submit an endorsement application to the LCDP is the end of the day, February 6, 2025.

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Contract	Estimated Cost
General Contract	\$1,600,000.00

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Ohio Black Media Week: A Legacy of Truth, A Future of Power

By Asia Nail
The Truth Reporter

In the heart of Ohio's legislative halls, a historic moment has unfolded—one that speaks directly to the soul of Black America. House Bill 368, penned by *Ohio State Representative Elgin Rogers Jr.*, has passed, marking a new chapter in the ongoing fight for representation, equity and truth in journalism. With this bill, Ohio formally designates the week of March 16 as *Ohio Black Media Week*.



Elgin Rogers, Jr.

But let's take a step back. What does this truly mean for us, for our history, and for the path forward?

The Power of the Black Press
"Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced."

—James Baldwin (The Nation, The New Yorker, Harper's Magazine, The New York Times)

From the earliest days, Black-owned newspapers like Freedom's Journal in 1827 to the modern digital platforms amplifying our voices today, Black media has been the heartbeat of our truth. It has told our stories when the mainstream media refused to. It has given us heroes, exposed injustices and reminded us of our worth when the world tried to silence us.

"Black journalists play a vital role in sharing our authentic stories," shares Representative Rogers.

His words ring true, but they also carry a challenge: Are we listening? Are we supporting? Are we ensuring that the next generation of Black storytellers has the platform and the resources they need?

A Legacy of Resistance

"Your silence will not protect you."

—Audre Lorde (Sister Outsider, various Black feminist and independent literary journals)

The fight for Black media is not new. We saw it during Reconstruction when Black newspapers were burned for daring to educate and empower freedmen. We saw it in the Civil Rights Movement when journalists risked their lives to cover the truth about segregation and police brutality. And we see it now, in the battle against misinformation, censorship and the erasure of our contributions.

Every time Black America rises, there is backlash. We saw it after Reconstruction when progress was crushed under the weight of Jim Crow. We saw it after the Civil Rights era when policies were rolled back, and economic barriers were reinforced. And we saw it after the murder of George Floyd, when corporate pledges to racial justice quietly disappeared, and the fight against social awareness became a political tool to maintain the status quo.

But history has also shown us this: The Black Press has never stopped fighting. **The Moment We're In**

"Education is the passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to those who prepare for it today."—Malcolm X (Muhammad Speaks, the Nation of Islam's newspaper)

As we celebrate the passage of Ohio Black Media Week, we must also recognize what it demands of us. Honoring Black media is more than just a symbolic act—it is a call to action.

Representative Rogers explains that House Bill 368 is part of what he describes as a legislative "combo." It is sandwiched between Senate Bill 210 and House Bill 173, another successfully passed measure. Rogers compares this strategic bundling to a folded bill, emphasizing how these pieces of legislation work together as a package to advance their collective impact.

"We must invest in Black-owned newspapers, radio stations, and digital platforms," says Rogers—and he's right. We must challenge mainstream narratives and ensure our voices are heard, not just during Black History Month, but every single day. And we must teach our children that media is power—the power to shape minds, shift culture, and dismantle the systems that seek to oppress us.

But we know the truth. Legislation alone does not preserve a legacy—people do. Communities do. A commitment to truth does.

And that responsibility belongs to us.

Why Black Media Matters

"I have decided to stick with love. Hate is too great a burden to bear."—Martin Luther King Jr. (The Atlanta Daily World, The NY Amsterdam News)

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