



Volume 89 No. 6

*"And Ye Shall Know The Truth..."*

May 14, 2025

## TMA - A Belonging Symposium and A Cultural Exchange



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# Old Lies, New Eyes: Rejecting the Myths about Black Families

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

The Truth Contributor

*He who passively accepts evil is as much involved in it as he who helps to perpetuate it. He who accepts evil without protesting against it is really cooperating with it...*

*- Martin Luther King, Jr.*



For decades, a familiar narrative has claimed that Black families fell apart after the Great Society, launched by President Lyndon B. Johnson, and the gains from the Civil Rights Movement.

It gets repeated ad nauseam in political circles, community forums and churches. But I don't care how many times you pour maple syrup on a shoe; it doesn't make it a pancake. Repeating a lie doesn't make the lie true.

The truth is Black families did not collapse – they were intentionally destabilized. The foundation undergirding their structure was destroyed by economic sabotage, mass incarceration, medical neglect and institutional silence.

Judge Greg Mathis offered a more profound truth at the recent Saving Toledo's Families conference at Warren A.M.E. Church. He talked about growing up in the projects of Detroit – raised by a single mother working

two jobs, who provided him discipline, faith and a home with structure.

It was no accident that Mathis and other Black families survived. Its foundation came from Black tradition – structure, values, community and, most importantly, a few institutional pillars that were still in place.

I was born, grew up, and lived during the mid to late 20th century. So, I can verify that Black progress wasn't an exception. Federal policy and industrial growth opened a surefire path to the middle class. Union jobs meant steady pay, homeownership, vacation trips and college for the next generation. It was the start of real investment in Black labor, stability and futures.

Unfortunately, many of those systems either disappeared or were weaponized against us as systemic injustice, economic abandonment and institutional silence pulled the rug out from under us.

By the 1970s, deindustrialization hollowed out cities, leaving vacant lots in place of Black-owned homes and businesses. Factories shut down and jobs disappeared. Then, schools declined due to the collapse of the tax base. Black workers weren't failing—the system was. The work was taken and with it, Black futures that had just begun to take shape.

Horribly, the cruel federal response to this 1970s crisis was a shift to criminalize poverty rather than to invest in rebuilding.

The government's so-called War on Crime policy diverted billions of dollars from community development, housing, education and other social programs. Instead, it invested in incarceration, police departments and surveillance. Black neighborhoods were flooded with law enforcement and starved of resources. Schools turned into zones of control. The policy treated Black youth as threats, not students.

Then came mass incarceration. Although Black and Brown people smoked and sold marijuana (now legalized) at similar rates as whites, the new "law and order" policy purposely targeted only neighborhoods of color for enforcement. Harsh sentencing for nonviolent offenses tore families apart as the United States became the world's largest jailer. Formerly incarcerated individuals then came home after serving time, ineligible for housing or education, and disqualified for jobs, with no second chances. The damage was generational — and by design.

Moreover, systemic harm has continued in clinics and hospitals outside the courtroom and classroom. Compared to white women, Black women today have a three to four times higher risk of dying during pregnancy. The mortality rate for Black infants is more than twice that of white infants. Regardless of education or income, these differences still exist.

The bottom line is that we need a new narrative that knows the truth about the system, questions it, and creates something better, not just how to get by. This new narrative entails rejecting the notion that there is something wrong with Black families without critiquing the larger system that contributes to this.

Sadly, many churches spend more time bashing people for their "sins" but fail to address the systemic issues that are causing them pain.

"The church's silent and often vocal sanction of things as they are, consoles the power structure of the average community," Professor James Harris of Union Theological Seminary once stated. What passed for Christian education (or preaching) was often nothing more than theological complacency training — conditioning our children to accept a world never designed for their thriving.

The good news is that our story isn't over. Black families fought to stay whole. We were targeted, displaced and criminalized — but we weren't broken by choice. We had the floor taken out from under us and were shoved. Yet, we are not powerless. We can resist, speak the truth and rebuild what was taken.

What We Can Do Now

For too long, false narratives about Black families — brokenness, laziness

... continued on page 3



# Breathe In....Breathe Out!

By Lafe Tolliver, Esq

Guest Column

As many of you may know, I had the privilege of serving in the press corps in the White House during the late 80's and met some super smart and dedicated people in journalism who knew how to track down a story.

I have been fortunate to remain in contact with many of those intrepid reporters and we kick it around now and then about what is what in D.C. However, I simply was not mentally ready for a thick brown envelope that was delivered to me via FED EX a few days ago at my downtown office.

Immediately, I knew where it was from and the group who sent it to me because the packet had the symbol of a balled fist holding three yellow thunderbolts on the flap; it was our code of signaling an emergency that would rank DEF CON 4 if the public were to be apprised of it.

I ran a blue stethoscope image over the package to make sure it was drama free and did not have any fingerprints on it that could be traceable to my impeccable sources.

Gingerly, I opened the package and spilled out its contents on my dining room table. To say that I repeatedly gasped would be an understatement, for what was in that poured out pile would or could shut this country down if it got into the wrong media handlers.

If you believe, as you should, that a repeated lie can run faster than a slow truth, you will see that America, if left unguarded from certain rightwing elements who are pushing for a totalitarian government, is primed to be deconstructed as a democracy; to be controlled by fanatics who believe that a Trumpian government is our only hope against the fabricated left wing commies and the proverbial, "Deep State."

The below itemized conspiracy theories are on a time-release schedule so as to so overwhelm the American public that they will simply give up the fight and champion the lies and distortions of Trump and his clown car of cabinet members and oligarchs.

For a primer on what you are about to read, go to the library and check out George Orwell's *Animal Farm* and 1984...two classics that were prophetic about what life in the future in America could resemble.

So brace yourself and read on but remember, these quack conspiracy theories (aka: lies) will only gain currency as right wing "truths" if you are apathetic about voting, demonstrating or keeping informed about policies and personalities that do not have your best interest at heart.

(1) All of the gold stored in Fort Knox has been secretly transferred to deep underground vaults at Mar-A-Lago and what remains at Fort Knox is AI generated images of the gold still being there.

(2) Trump will declare a national emergency two months before the 2028 general elections due to contrived bombing scares that will stampee the gullible in renewing a call for law and order at any cost.

(3) NASA and Elon Musk have collaborated to secretly place in orbit TF-34B laser platforms that have the capacity to harness energy from the sun and develop an ability to shoot deadly energy bolts at the speed of light, able to target within five yards, either people or buildings that are suspect of being anti-Trump.

(4) The US Supreme Court will nullify the Civil Rights Acts of 1964 and 1965 and mysteriously, two of the dissenting judges will be reported missing on a small sailing craft found drifting in the St. Lawrence Seaway.

(5) Trump will offer Denmark two trillion dollars for the sale of Greenland and it will be an all cash offer financed by his tech billionaires "bros."

(6) Joe Biden will go on a speaking tour about the excesses of the Trump administration but while in the City of Montgomery, the stage on which he is speaking, will cave in and cause injuries to Biden and he must leave the speaking circuit and recover at home. (Note: the platform failure was AI generated!).

(7) The tariff wars will increase to the point that certain stores like Target, Walmart and Loews will only be open two days a week and credit cards will not be accepted...cash only.

(9) Head Start and SNAP programs will be eliminated on the basis that the states need to raise their own funds to support the needs of feeding the poor and assisting the poorly educated.



(9) White birth rates will fall to an all time low level so that Trump will grant White birth mothers \$10,000 per birth along with a generous housing allowance and food vouchers up to an amount of \$800 per month for five years. This will be challenged in court on the basis of equal protection.

(10) Tourism will be discouraged due to tourists taking dollars outside of the US and spending it abroad and not at home. Only certain countries will be permitted to admit American tourists. There are no Asian or African countries on that permitted list.

I read what I read, memorized the list and quickly made a fire in my fireplace and burned up the documents...and none too soon for there was a knock at my front door and masked agents in unmarked cars were in my driveway.....to be continued.

Contact Lafe Tolliver at [tolliver@juno.com](mailto:tolliver@juno.com)

*Perryman... continued from page 2*

ness, dysfunction — have shaped policy and public opinion to justify disinvestment, punishment and disparate treatment. But with new eyes, we see the truth: Black families have never lacked strength — they've lacked support.

Recognizing the truth is not enough, however. We must act on it. That starts with rebuilding the systems that were designed to fail us:

We must fight for real investment in public schools and early childhood education in Black communities. Education can't be an afterthought — it must be a foundation to break generational cycles.

We must demand serious reform in maternal care, reproductive justice, and healthcare access. Black women and families deserve systems that protect life — not put it at risk.

We must treat the damage of mass incarceration as a justice issue. This is about dignity, repair, and value for Black lives.

We must shift the narrative from it's just about "sin" to it's about systems. Not just law, but liberation; Personal piety and political accountability are two sides of the same moral coin—both matter.

Above all, we need a community-informed federal blueprint for equity, education, and the fight against poverty — no matter which party is in power.

The truth is this: when there was real investment in civil rights, healthcare and opportunity, Black communities thrived and made real progress, as did the entire nation. The problem was never Black families — the problem was the policies built on the lie that Black families were the problem.

Now is the time to reject those old lies — and look with new eyes at what justice truly requires.

Contact Rev. Donald Perryman, PhD, at [drdperryman@enterofhopebaptist.org](mailto:drdperryman@enterofhopebaptist.org)

## Community Calendar

### May 17, May 31

The Toledo-Tanga Sister City Committee's Free Hybrid Drone Training program for students – 6th – 12th grades in Tanzania, Africa and Toledo. Learn how to fly, code and program drones. UT's Nitschke auditorium; 7:45 am - 11:30 am. Contact Norma King, Drone Academy Director at [njking@bex.net](mailto:njking@bex.net), 419-536-4615 or Leslie Henriquez President, Toledo- Tanga Sister City Committee at [LesHenriquez@aol.com](mailto:LesHenriquez@aol.com) 419-699-8686.

### May 18

Toledo NAACP Youth Council Meeting at Sanger Branch Library: 3:00 pm

### May 18, June 1

Shutting the Door on Forgiveness: Join us for an in-person adult Bible study workshop series designed for individuals facing challenges with forgiveness; Crusaders for Christ Church; 10 AM to 11 AM; register at [eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com)!

### May 28

Annual Meeting for the Warren A.M.E. Church Vision Empowerment Board: 1:30 PM. If you would like to attend, request a link from [natejacksonj1@gmail.com](mailto:natejacksonj1@gmail.com)

### May 31

A First Ladies' Affair: Registration deadline May 15. Formore details, visit [eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com).

# Now Hear This

By June Boyd

Guest Column

There is something gnawing at my heart. As a 60-year-plus politician and activist, there is something horribly wrong in our country.

I am not a woman of wealth; however, I am a woman of character, strength, wisdom and knowledge who loves her community. My family and friends are in support of what needs to be done relative to the dismantling of every facility representing Black history, or anything involving African Americans in this country by President Donald Trump and Elon Musk.

If you had not noticed, systematically and slowly on a daily basis, they are attempting to destroy any part of Black history and the existence of DEI which is the basic fairness through diversity, equity and inclusion. These people have ordered any facility that has utilized the philosophy of DEI must stopped and they are threatened if not in compliance.

The most disturbing issue; around four or five days after Donald Trump was elected, a suspicious text landed on the cell phones of a number of African Americans across the country, including teens, telling them to get ready to be picked up by a van that would take them to the plantation into slavery and to pick cotton.

HOW DARE HE?

I am talking about Elon Musk because if the spirit speaks and tells you something; listen

My awakening into politics really began in August of 1988, when I was a delegate for the Rev. Jesse Jackson for president. At the Democratic convention, as he gave his nominating speech, it was one of the most powerful I had ever heard. It was about a quilt, and what it represented.

I witnessed a Caucasian male elected official in tears as I heard him say "He would be President if it were not for his race." Rev. Jackson gave us all a message of determination, realization and what it meant to be qualified, but not accepted. With dignity, he advanced as a candidate.

Now, it is time for all of us; the over 48.3 million African American men, women and children in America to call on the honorable and powerful attorney, Benjamin Crump, and encourage him to file a class action lawsuit representing all of us, and the recipients of the text against Elon Musk and

Donald Trump for attempting to destroy our history, existence and heritage.

The monetary amount should be determined by Mr. Crump, but enough to reward those who received the texts at least \$1 million. If Elon Musk could give that amount to some voters for supporting Trump and other issues, he must pay up.

The Rev. Al Sharpton, ACLU and all the civil rights units in America must press for this action. Apartheid will not succeed in America any more than it did in South Africa. Donald Trump and Elon Musk must know we will not tolerate their attempt to destroy our existence, our history, and the memories of those civil rights leaders gone before us and what they fought for. There should also be legislation to stop Trump for continuing to dismantle our legacy.

Together, those two people are in the process of attempting to destroy the very fabric of African American society and what we mean to this country, and what we have contributed. There are too many of us to let this destruction continue. There is power in numbers and, for once, every one of us needs our voices heard.

We shall overcome, and move forward together. This is for our children and their opportunity to maintain our history for generations to come.



June Boyd and Jesse Jackson



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## Toledo Library Summer Read Challenge Starts

*Readers of all ages can participate and win prizes*

Summer Read, the Toledo Lucas County Public Library's annual summer reading challenge, returns June 2. Readers have until Aug. 2 to complete the challenge and win prizes along the way.

"The Toledo Library's Summer Read challenge helps students grow strong reading habits between school years," said Nancy Eames, the Library's youth services coordinator. "Adults, too, benefit from participating in the reading challenge, from reading as a family to making progress on their own reading goals for the year."

The Summer Read challenge is simple: participants need to read for 30 days between June 2 and Aug. 2 for a chance to win a variety of prizes (while supplies last). Prizes include:

- \* A tote bag when participants sign up.
- \* A foldable frisbee as a midway prize for kids and teens.
- \* A book to keep from the Library's special selection for kids and teens and a mug for adults when they complete the Summer Read challenge.
- \* Everyone who completes Summer Read is entered into grand prize drawings for Nintendo Switch Lites, Kindles, gift cards and more.

Beginning Monday, June 2, Toledo Library customers can sign up for Summer Read and track their reading in one of three ways: using the paper tracker (available for download at [toledolibrary.org/readingchallenges](http://toledolibrary.org/readingchallenges) or in-person at any Library location), using the online registration form or logging into their Beanstack account.

Participants who register in-person will receive their sign-up prize immediately. For those who register digitally, they can visit any Toledo Library location to collect their sign-up prize.

Summer Read is supported in part by Directions Credit Union, Friends of the Library and the Library Legacy Foundation.

Visit [toledolibrary.org](http://toledolibrary.org) for more information.



# The Museum That Chose to Belong: How Toledo Quietly Made History

By Asia Nail

The Truth Reporter

The air was still buzzing.

When I called **Rhonda Sewell**, director of Advocacy and External Affairs at the **Toledo Museum of Art**, I could hear the excitement in her voice. She had just helped lead a three-day event that, in many ways, felt like history in the making.

"Hi Rhonda, thank you so much for taking the time to speak with me today," I said.

Then I said thank you for something much bigger—"thank you for helping the world remember how to hope."

In a time when museums across the country are shrinking back from diversity work, the Toledo Museum of Art did the opposite. They leaned in. Quietly, boldly, beautifully.

They hosted the **Inaugural Belonging Symposium**, a powerful gathering full of rhythm, reflection and real talk. Nearly 200 people came in person and online.

Over three days and two nights, they filled the museum with laughter, note-taking, honest tears and moments that made hearts shift. It was a space where people from all walks of life came to talk about one thing: what it means to truly belong.

## Why Now? Because the World Needs It

This event wasn't a quick reaction. It was a full year in the making.

"It was always a dream of mine," said Sewell. "When I was hired as director of Belonging, I told our director, Dr. Adam Levine, I'd love to someday host a symposium like this. When the moment came, he said yes—and trusted us with the vision."

That kind of leadership, she says, is rare. And it's exactly what made the event feel safe and sacred. Sewell co-led the project with **Libbey Koppinger**, Development Operations coordinator, and together, with their "Agile team" of planners from across the Museum, they made it happen.

The theme was **ADVANCE: Forward-Thinking Strategies for Belonging in Museums**, but the ideas stretched far beyond gallery walls.

"You don't have to work in a museum to take something away from this," Sewell said. "It was built for everyone."

And everyone came.

... continued on page 6



Libbey Koppinger and Rhonda Sewell

# Yemisi Shyllon Museum of Art and Toledo Museum of Art Launch Historic Cultural Exchange to Boost Museum Expertise and Global Access



Representatives of the Yemisi Shyllon Museum of Art and the Toledo Museum of Art at the memorandum of understanding signing in Lagos, Nigeria, in November 2024. Photo courtesy YSMA

Museums unite across continents to share expertise, foster cultural exchange and expand global access to African Art Lagos, Nigeria / Ohio, United States –

In a landmark move that sets a new precedent for international cultural collaboration, the Yemisi Shyllon Museum of Art (YSMA) in Nigeria and the Toledo Museum of Art (TMA) in the U.S. are proud to announce a transformative partnership aimed at promoting Modern and Contemporary African Art and enhancing institutional capacity through knowledge exchange.

Formalized through a memorandum of understanding signed in November 2024, the partnership will see both museums – nonprofit, educational institutions with a shared mission of service and impact through art – collaborate on a range of programs including a training and professional development exchange, joint curatorial initiatives and traveling exhibitions from YSMA's collection to the U.S.

... continued on page 6

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*Museum... continued from page 5*

### Stars, Ropes and the Rhythm of Belonging

One of the most powerful parts of the symposium was the art—especially a painting by Faith Goodman, a local artist and TMA staff member. Her piece, *Stardust Dutch*, felt like a visual heartbeat of the entire event.

It showed faceless human figures playing double Dutch in the stars.

**Why double Dutch?** “Because it’s a game you can’t play alone,” Goodman explained in her artist statement.

**“It takes timing, rhythm, teamwork—and trust.”**

The jumpers stretch toward the stars, symbolizing what we can achieve when we collaborate. The image made people pause. Some stood still, others whispered but all felt its power.

“It’s this cosmic dance,” said Sewell, “and it reminded all of us that belonging doesn’t come from one person. It’s something we build together.”

### Voices of Commitment

That spirit of collaboration isn’t just reflected in the artwork—it’s woven into the very identity of the Toledo Museum of Art.

“This event aligns with who we are—our values and our strategic goals: to be a model museum, known for our commitment to quality and for fostering a true culture of belonging,” said Rhonda Sewell.

She explains that the Museum’s dedication to belonging is grounded in more than just good intentions—it’s rooted in values chosen collectively by the staff.

“We have four values that align with a symposium like this,” she said. “Our entire staff selected them about five years ago when new leadership came in. These values—community, innovation, trust and diversity—guide everything we do.”

### Leading with Access

TMA isn’t just talking about inclusion, either; they’re making it happen. They were the first major museum in the country to have a Manager of Access Initiatives. This role ensures that everyone, regardless of ability, can enjoy the museum’s offerings.

**Katie Shelley**, who holds this position, brings personal experience to her role. Living with a disability and accompanied by her service dog, Petunia, she ensures that accessibility is at the forefront of TMA’s mission.

### A Community United

TMA’s efforts are resonating. Visitors from all walks of life are finding a place where they belong. The museum’s outreach programs have increased local engagement, and their exhibitions are more representative of wide-ranging cultures and histories.

Sewell reflects on the broader impact:

“In the museum field, access is often lacking. Here at the Toledo Museum

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*Ebele Okobi*

*Yemisi... continued from page 5*

This collaboration marks YSMA’s first major international partnership and is a bold step in amplifying its reach and influence on the global stage, particularly in deepening U.S.–Nigeria cultural relations through the lens of art and heritage.

Recently named the 2025 Best Art Museum in the USA TODAY – 10 Best Readers’ Choice Awards, TMA is an institution renowned for its history and reputation in museum management, curatorial excellence and public engagement.

Reflecting on the value of the joint initiative, Jess Castellote, director of the Yemisi Shyllon Museum of Art, said: “This partnership is a major milestone in our journey to bring Nigerian art to a broader audience. At the YSMA, we believe in the transformative power of cultural exchange. By working with an esteemed institution like the TMA, we are not only building professional capacity but also affirming the place of African art in the global narrative of creativity, innovation, and heritage.”

The collaboration will also offer American audiences the opportunity to experience YSMA’s great collection, which spans centuries of African creativity and expression, ranging from ancient cultural artifacts to modern and contemporary works through travelling exhibitions.

Highlighting the significance of the collaboration, Adam Levine, director and CEO of TMA said: “At the Toledo Museum of Art, we are proud to engage in a partnership that fosters mutual learning, inclusivity, and global dialogue. This collaboration with YSMA not only enriches our understanding of African art traditions but also deepens our ability to integrate art into the lives of people — both locally and globally. By working together, we strengthen the institutional ties and cultural connections that inspire, educate, and promote access to the transformative power of art.”

Both museums see this collaboration as a model for future cultural diplomacy efforts – one that uses art to bridge continents, enrich communities, and celebrate shared humanity. At a time when global understanding and cross cultural dialogue are more important than ever, this partnership demonstrates how institutions with shared values can come together to advance mutual learning, preserve cultural heritage, and inspire new generations.

By creating platforms for exchange – of ideas, art, and expertise – YSMA and TMA are laying the foundation for deeper, more sustained connections between Nigeria and the United States through the transformative power of art.

The Yemisi Shyllon Museum of Art (YSMA) at Pan-Atlantic University is Nigeria’s leading art institution, committed to service and impact through the preservation and showcase of the rich artistic heritage of Nigeria. With an extensive collection of artworks spanning centuries, YSMA offers a diverse range of exhibitions, educational programs, and activities designed to create immersive experiences for visitors and to enrich the cultural landscape of the nation.

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# The Fair Housing Center's Homes and Dreams Fundraiser Celebrates Community Leaders

*Special to The Truth*

The annual *Homes and Dreams* fundraiser hosted by The Fair Housing Center was a night to remember, held on May 1, 2025, at the elegant Registry Bistro. Community and supporters gathered to celebrate the heroes making a difference in the fight for fair housing. This year, the event showcased the dedication and contributions of individuals furthering the cause of equality and justice in housing.

As guests arrived, the evening kicked off with a warm welcome from CEO and General Counsel George Thomas, who shared his thoughts on the event's significance. "We decided to create the Homes and Dreams event because we realized that we need to recognize leaders in our community who are affirmatively furthering fair housing," he said. "We cannot do this work alone, and there are so many unsung heroes doing amazing work in this space. Every year, we take a moment to let them know that we see them, and all they do. We were thrilled to recognize this year's awardees."

The night was filled with excitement as attendees enjoyed a strolling dinner and lively entertainment by Mike Williams, all while taking part in the silent auction and raffle. But the highlight of the evening was the awards ceremony, where four remarkable individuals were honored for their dedication to advancing fair housing in the region. Julia Lee, Ashleigh Smith, Alicia Smith and Rashad Daoudi were each presented with awards recognizing their efforts in promoting inclusive housing practices and combating discrimination.

Special thanks were given to the event's sponsors and volunteers, including the Key Foundation Fund, Huntington Bank, and a wide array of local businesses that generously contributed to making the event a success. Their sup-



Mike Williams



Board President Tom Luettkie with Awardee, Alicia Smith, and CEO and General Counsel George Thomas



Board President Tom Luettkie with Awardee, Asleigh Smith, and CEO and General Counsel George Thomas



Board President Tom Luettkie with Awardee, Rashad Daoudi, and CEO and General Counsel George Thomas



CEO and General Counsel George Thomas, with Awardee, Julia Lee, and Board President Tom Luettkie

port allows The Fair Housing Center to continue its crucial work of advocating for equal housing opportunities, educating the community and investigating complaints of housing discrimination.

...continued on page 10



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# Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. Fourth District Hosts 84th Annual District Meeting in Toledo, Ohio

By Alexandria Leatherberry

The Truth Reporter

The Fourth District of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. held its 84th Annual District Meeting May 1 - May 4, 2025, at the Hilton Garden Inn Toledo Downtown. This year's gathering, hosted by the Xi Tau, Delta Epsilon, and Omega Epsilon Chapters, brought together fraternity brothers, Quettes and friends for a weekend of fellowship, impactful programming, and community engagement.

Brother Michael P. West, 36th Fourth District Representative, expressed his excitement for the meeting, stating:

"I look forward to a professional, informative, and festive 84th District Meeting with brothers throughout the Fourth District, Omega, and the communities we serve. We encourage early registration and invite all to embrace the best of what the Fourth District has to offer."

The four-day conference featured programming focused on leadership, mentorship, and community service, including:

- Devin Moore Health Symposium (May 1, 6-8 PM, Hilton Garden Inn) – Promoting wellness and health awareness.
- Fatherhood Initiative (May 2, 12-1:30 PM, MLK Boys Academy) – Encouraging positive male mentorship.



Alan Dinkins, Vince Davis, Keith Jordan

- STEM Program (May 1, 3-5 PM, University of Toledo) – Inspiring future generations in science, technology, engineering, and math.

... continued on page 10



The Local Ques



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**Living With Lupus**  
May 16-18, 2025

**MAY 16, 2025**  
*Living With Lupus Paint & Sip*  
The Trunk | 3553 Franklin Ave. | 7-11 PM  
\$47 Includes painting supplies  
Registration Required: <https://bit.ly/lupuspaintandsip>

**MAY 17, 2025**  
*Karaoke w/ DJ Cheryl*  
Bluegill Fishing Club | 642 N Detroit Ave. | 7-11 PM  
\$10 Membership Fee Free for cardholders. Donations to the Lupus Foundation of Greater Chapter of Ohio will be greatly appreciated.

**MAY 17, 2025**  
*Free Wig Giveaway*  
1010 Dorr St. | 1-4:30 PM  
Giveaway for any woman who has lost her hair (not just those with Lupus). New or gently used wig donations appreciated.

**MAY 18, 2025**  
*Living With Lupus Walk*  
Ottawa Park | 2201 Kenwood Blvd. | 9 AM  
\$10 Registration (snack included) age 7+  
\$5 Registration for under age 7  
All proceeds go to the Lupus Foundation of America Greater Ohio Chapter

# Urban Institute Report Finds Students in Ohio's Ed-Choice Program More Likely to Enroll in College and Graduate

Students participating in Ohio's Educational Choice Scholarship program (EdChoice) between 2008 and 2014 were significantly more likely to enroll in college and earn a bachelor's degree than public school students according to a study by the Urban Institute. The report is the first to track the impact through college graduation of a school voucher program that has been previously shown to reduce test scores, as well as the first to share evidence on the effects of vouchers on the college outcomes of public school students.

The program had the largest benefits for Black, low-income, and male students, and for students who remained in the program for at least four years according to the report findings.

Additional key takeaways:

- Sixty-four percent of EdChoice scholarship users enrolled in college within two years of their expected graduation, compared with 48 percent of public school students.
- EdChoice students were more likely to enroll in four-year colleges (45 percent) than public school students (30 percent).
- EdChoice students who remained in the program for at least four years were 44 percent more likely to enroll in college than students in public schools; effects were much smaller for students who only remained in the program for one to three years.
- Among a smaller group of students who are old enough to be observed through their potential college graduation, 23 percent of EdChoice students earned a bachelor's degree compared with 15 percent of public school students.
- The availability of vouchers increased college enrollment and graduation among students attending public schools as well. Non-EdChoice students who attended public schools that were eligible for the program were about

three percentage points more likely to enroll in college and 6 percentage points more likely to earn a bachelor's degree than non-participants at public schools that were not eligible.

Given the rapid expansion of private school choice programs across the country, it is important to understand how they affect the students who participate in these programs and the students who remain in public schools. These findings provide the latest evidence on the long-term impacts of a statewide voucher program on both private and public school students' enrollment in and graduation from college.

The Urban Institute is a nonprofit research organization that provides data and evidence to help advance upward mobility and equity. The Urban Institute is a source for changemakers who seek to strengthen decision making, create inclusive economic growth and improve the well-being of families and communities.

## *Fair Housing Center...continued from page 8*

The evening served as a reminder that this event was about more than just fundraising—it was a celebration of the leaders in the community who are working tirelessly to create positive change. It reaffirmed the belief that when we stand together, we make real change possible. The event highlighted the spirit of fairness and equality that drives The Fair Housing Center's mission and inspires others to get involved.

As the evening drew to a close, attendees left with a renewed sense of purpose, knowing that their support is helping The Fair Housing Center continue its vital work—ensuring that every person, regardless of background or identity, has access to the safe, affordable housing they deserve.

## *Omega Psi Phi...continued from page 9*

- Calvin H. Thomas Fourth District Talent Hunt (May 2, 6 PM, Hilton Garden Inn) – Showcasing young talent in the performing arts. (Open to the public.)
- March Down & District Dance (May 2, 8 PM - 12 AM, Hilton Garden Inn) – Celebrating fraternity culture and tradition. (Open to the public.)
- Brother Hank Galaspie DR Breakfast (May 3, 7:30-9 AM, Hilton Garden Inn) – Honoring excellence within the fraternity.
- Ronald McNair Undergraduate Luncheon (May 3, 12-1:30 PM, Hilton Garden Inn) – Highlighting young leaders in Omega.
- Founders Banquet (May 3, 6:30 PM - 12 AM, Hilton Garden Inn) – Featuring keynote speaker Bro. Charles Coleman Jr., Esq., a civil rights attorney and MSNBC legal analyst.

Toledo holds a special place in the history of Omega Psi Phi, with local chapters dating back to 1937. This year, the Xi Tau Graduate Chapter celebrates 65 years of service to the Toledo community, further reinforcing Omega's dedication to uplifting society.

The 84th Annual Fourth District Meeting welcomed Supreme Council members, International Headquarters staff, visiting brothers from other districts, and distinguished guests. Select events, including the Devin Moore Health Symposium, Fatherhood Initiative, STEM Program, and Calvin H. Thomas Fourth District Talent Hunt, were open to the public. Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. welcomes community members, students, and local leaders to join in these meaningful discussions and activities aimed at uplifting and empowering the Toledo community.



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# One Million Dollars to Fight Teacher Shortage in Toledo

By Jefferson Diaz

The Truth Reporter

The shortage of teachers in Toledo's elementary and high schools is a big problem. Although it's a problem that repeats throughout the United States, Toledo Public School (TPS) is doing everything possible to solve it.

This shortage is rooted in several reasons: low wages, long working hours and lack of work-life balance. All of these reasons help to make Toledo Public Schools dependent on substitute teachers. By the end of 2024, Toledo public schools had 206 long term substitute teachers, which translated into 12 percent of its teaching staff.

Bob Vasquez, president of the TPS board, believes that in order to solve the shortage of teachers, young people must be encouraged to major in education. "We must inspire them and guide them to follow the steps of the teachers that are educating them right now," he says.

Part of that inspiration came this week during the Aspiring Young Educators conference held at the University of Toledo. There, Tom and Betsy Brady donated \$1 million dollars to open the Brady Educator and Social Services Academy on the new Scott Park University campus.

One hundred TPS students between grades six and eight, who have expressed their desire to be teachers when they grow up, attended the conference. Romules Durant, EdD, TPS superintendent, thanked Tom and Betsy Brady for their donation and assured that "they have dedicated their experience, time and passion to creating environments where children can learn," said Durant.

This academy is expected to open its doors for the 2026 - 2027 school year at the renovated Scott Park campus and the million dollars donated will be managed by the TPS Foundation and used to maintain the academy's facilities, curriculum and scholarships.



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Additional key takeaways:

- \* Sixty-four percent of EdChoice scholarship users enrolled in college within two years of their expected graduation, compared with 48 percent of public school students.
- \* EdChoice students were more likely to enroll in four-year colleges (45 percent) than public school students (30 percent).
- \* EdChoice students who remained in the program for at least four years were 44 percent more likely to enroll in college than students in public

... continued on page 13

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## MEMORANDUM

TO: Interested Parties

FROM: DNC Associate Chair Joyce Beatty

RE: Trump is Putting Black Women's Health and Economic Security at Risk

Since January 20, Donald Trump and Elon Musk have unleashed chaos across the country — a coordinated attack that makes one thing clear: They are willing to do everything in their power to derail the lives of Black women. This is the latest battle in Trump's ongoing war against us. For years, we've heard him vow to slash Medicaid, rip away reproductive freedom, destroy safety net programs, strip workplace protections, and choke off funding for small businesses. And every time we hear those threats, Black women know exactly who will pay the price.

That is why this Black Maternal Health Week, we are going to talk about what's really at stake for women like me:

**Slashing Health Care and Threatening Our Lives:**

- From FY18 through FY21, four consecutive budgets in his first term, Trump proposed hundreds of billions in cuts to Medicaid, and he's doubling down in his second term.

- Just last week, Trump's waterboys in Congress passed a budget resolution that will gut Medicaid to bankroll yet another tax giveaway for billionaires. That decision will devastate Black communities and Black mothers. Medicaid covers 40 percent of all births in the U.S., and two-thirds of all Black births.

- Research even shows that expanding Medicaid reduces maternal deaths, so imagine the devastation if Trump and Elon Musk follow through on these plans — Black women and babies will pay the price with their lives.

**Attacking Reproductive Health Care and Maternal Health Research:**

- In his first few months in office, Donald Trump has continued to target reproductive health care. Most recently, he slashed tens of millions in funding for Planned Parenthood, accusing them of violating federal civil rights law by promoting DEI, leaving millions of women in a lurch.

- Nearly half of Planned Parenthood patients are from communities of color, including more than 360,000 Black Americans every year. For many Black women, it's one of the only places to access essential services like cancer screenings, contraception, and STI testing.

- As part of his crusade against racial equity, Trump has ordered the elimination of two out of the three branches of the CDC Division of Reproductive Health, crippling vital research into maternal mortality and health disparities.

- Experts are already ringing the alarm, arguing that dismantling DEI initiatives will harm critical research on maternal health disparities and other issues that disproportionately impact Black women, but of course, Trump

doesn't care.

- Trump and his extremists have also cut funding for a number of National Institutes of Health studies examining maternal mortality and health disparities among Black mothers.

**Ripping Away Nutrition, Food, and Housing:**

- Trump and House Republicans are now trying to dismantle key nutrition and housing programs. Their plan to slash SNAP benefits is a direct hit on communities already struggling with food insecurity — and that means Black families will disproportionately suffer.

- Black Americans already face higher rates of food insecurity than white Americans, and SNAP is one of the few programs proven to help bridge that gap.

- WIC — a lifeline for pregnant women and new mothers — is also on the chopping block, which would make qualifying for this critical program that provides vital nutrition and health support during and after pregnancy even harder.

- At the same time, fair housing protections are under assault. Trump's cuts to the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD's) fair housing programs threaten to let housing discrimination run wild, making it harder for millions of Black Americans to find safe, affordable places to live.

- The Department of Housing and Urban Development has been gutted, with tens of millions in funding cuts and a forecasted 77% reduction in the Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity's staff — the very people responsible for enforcing civil rights protections in housing.

**Hamstringing Economic Prosperity:**

- For decades, federal jobs have provided Black workers with a pathway to economic mobility, gainful employment and job security. And under Trump, we have seen the elimination of tens of thousands of these jobs.

- Black Americans make up 19% of the permanent federal workforce, and for Black women, the stakes are even higher. Our representation in federal jobs is twice our representation in the overall U.S. population, making up 12% of the federal workforce (while only representing roughly 6.6% (of the U.S. labor force).

- For Black entrepreneurship, the systematic dismantling of Small Business Administration (SBA) programs that ensure Black women have a fair shake will lead to a significant decline in access to the very resources that minority and women entrepreneurs rely on to build and grow their businesses.

Whether talking about health care, housing, jobs, or small business support, Trump's second-term agenda is an all-out attack on Black women and mothers. And we're not going to stand by and let it happen. As a proud

... continued on page 13

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5PM-8PM

**4th Annual STOCK THE SHELVES FOOD DONATION EVENT**

**11 AM - 1 PM on Friday, May 16, 2025**

2149 Collingwood Blvd. Toledo, OH 43620

**Food Pantry Wish List:**

- Canned meats (ex. tuna, chicken, spam)
- Canned Fruits and Vegetables
- Canned Soup, Ravioli, Chili, Beef Stew
- Juice (46 or 64oz bottles)
- Ramen
- Crackers
- Cereal
- Oatmeal or Grits
- Pasta
- Pasta Sauce (Marinara or Alfredo)
- Ketchup, Mayo, Mustard
- Cake or Brownie Mixes and Frosting
- Cereal Bars
- Jelly

Shop our Amazon list before the event!

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Thanks to the generous contributions of donors, sponsors, and volunteers, LSSNWO was able to provide 157,515 meals in 2024.



# *The Afterlife of Malcolm X: An Outcast Turned Icon's Enduring Impact on America* by Mark Whitaker

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

The Truth Contributor

Who will remember you in 50 years' time?

A handful of friends – at least those who are still around – might recall you. Your offspring, grandkids, and greats, maybe people who stumble upon your tombstone. Think about it: who will remember you in 2075? And then read *The Afterlife of Malcolm X* by Mark Whitaker and learn about a legacy that still resonates a half-century later.

Betty Shabazz didn't like to go to her husband's speeches, but on that February night in 1965, he asked her to come with their daughters to the Audubon Ballroom in New York. Did Malcolm X sense that something bad would happen on that night? Surely he was fully aware of the possibility, knowing that he'd been "a marked man" for months because of his very public break with the Nation of Islam.

As the news of his murder spread around New York and around the world, his followers and admirers reacted in many ways. His friend, journalist Peter Goldman, was "hardly shocked" because he also knew that Malcolm's life was in danger, but the arrest of three men accused of the crime didn't add up. It ultimately became Goldman's "obsession."

Malcolm's co-writer for *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, Alex Haley, quietly finished the book he started with Malcolm, and a small upstart publishing house snatched it up. A diverse group of magazines got in line to run articles about Malcolm X's life, finally sensing that white America "needed his voice even more than blacks did."

But though Malcolm X was gone, he continued to leave an impact.

c. 2025  
Simon & Schuster  
\$30.99  
448 pages

He didn't live long enough to see the official founding of the Black Panther Party, but he was influential in its beginning. He never knew the first Kwanzaa or the triumphs of a convert named Muhammad Ali.

Malcolm left his mark on music. He influenced at least three major athletes. He was a "touchstone" for a president...

While it's true that *The Afterlife of Malcolm X* is an eye-opening book, one that works as a great companion to the autobiography, it's also a fact that it's somewhat scattered. Is it a look at Malcolm's life, his legacy, or is it a "murder mystery"?

Turns out, it's all three but the timeline for it isn't always smooth and that may take some getting used-to. Just when you're immersed, even absorbed in this book, to the point where you forget about your surroundings, author Mark Whitaker abruptly moves to a different part of the story. It may be jarring.

And yet, it's a big part of this book, and it's essential for readers to know the investigation's outcome and what we know today. It doesn't change Malcolm X's legacy, but it adds another frame around it.

If you've read the autobiography, if you haven't thought about Malcolm X in awhile, or if you think you know all there is to know, then you owe it to yourself to find *The Afterlife of Malcolm X*. For you, this is a book you won't easily forget.

## *Urban Institute... continued from page 11*

schools; effects were much smaller for students who only remained in the program for one to three years.

- Among a smaller group of students who are old enough to be observed through their potential college graduation, 23 percent of EdChoice students earned a bachelor's degree compared with 15 percent of public school students.

- The availability of vouchers increased college enrollment and graduation among students attending public schools as well. Non-EdChoice students who attended public schools that were eligible for the program were about three percentage points more likely to enroll in college and 6 percentage points more likely to earn a bachelor's degree than non-participants at public schools that were not eligible.

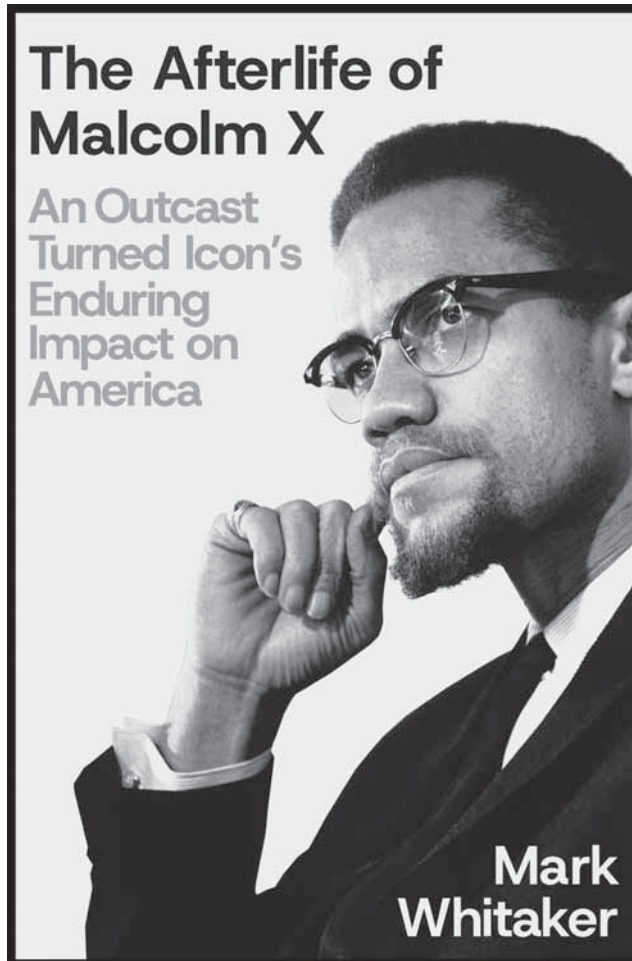
Given the rapid expansion of private school choice programs across the country, it is important to understand how they affect the students who participate in these programs and the students who remain in public schools. These findings provide the latest evidence on the long-term impacts of a statewide voucher program on both private and public school students' enrollment in and graduation from college.

*The Urban Institute is a nonprofit research organization that provides data and evidence to help advance upward mobility and equity. The Urban Institute is a source for changemakers who seek to strengthen decision making, create inclusive economic growth and improve the well-being of families and communities.*

## *Memorandum... continued from page 12*

member of Congress representing Ohio's 3rd District, Associate Chair of the Democratic Party, and most importantly, a Black mother and grandmother, I refuse to sit quietly while Trump puts the lives of Black mothers at risk.

Democrats must — and will — fight back. That's why we're working with state parties and sister committees to hold town halls, lift up voices on the ground, run candidates in key local races, and build infrastructure that keeps Black maternal health and equitable health care access at the center of the national conversation. The Democratic Party is the party of working-class people, and to reclaim that mantle, we need to fight relentlessly for the health and safety of Black women. Together, we can push back on Donald Trump and demonstrate to these Republican clowns in Congress that the people do, in fact, have more power than Trump and his gang of billionaire freeloaders.



# Toledo, Ohio Native Recipient of Presidential Lifetime Achievement Award 2025

*Special to The Truth*

Scharita Barry Lacey, a native of Toledo, Ohio, was honored with the Presidential Lifetime Achievement Award issued by President Joseph R. Biden in recognition of over 20 years of public service, volunteerism, and community impact.

A 1999 honors graduate of Jesup W. Scott High School, Scharita left an indelible mark, being crowned Homecoming Queen (1998) and Miss Debutante 1999 in the Cotillion Ball. She earned a full academic scholarship to Central State University, graduating cum laude in 2003 with a degree in Business Administration (Management & Marketing). She was also honored to serve as the 55th Miss Central State University Queen (2002-2003). She earned her MBA from the University of Phoenix in 2008 and is set to graduate with a second master's degree in Human Services Counseling from Liberty University in May 2025.

Scharita has worked for more than two decades in the federal government, including roles as Budget Officer and Comptroller, managing multi-billion-dollar budgets, working overseas while living in Europe with the Department of Defense, and currently working with the U.S. Congress in Washington, D.C.

Scharita is a licensed and ordained minister of the Gospel since 2002 and travels the nation sharing a message of hope, healing, and empowerment. Through her nonprofit, Ignite Hope, she has supported parents and caregivers raising children on the autism spectrum. Scharita is touched personally by this experience, as her son is diagnosed on the spectrum.

Through her organization, the Virtuous Women's Network, she has provided assistance to women in crisis and transition, including military veterans and spouses, and survivors of human trafficking, domestic violence and breast cancer. Each year, VWN celebrates the achievements of women in business, ministry, and community leadership around the globe and has also awarded scholarships to deserving teen girls.

The Virtuous Women's Network has received City Proclamations from the Mayors of Houston, Texas and Springfield, Ohio. Scharita also founded and leads the Miss Central State University Legacy Queens Organization, whose mission is to empower the current Miss CSU Queen through scholarship, mentorship, coaching, and advocacy from Alumni Queens.

Scharita gives all glory to God and honors her entire family, especially her mother, Patricia Barry, for her resilience and steadfast love and support, and her late grandmother, Marguerite Hueston Barry, for instilling values of faith and service. She is the proud mother of Sidney and Michael, whom she calls the greatest blessings of her life.

Scharita was presented with the Presidential Lifetime Achievement Award during a private celebration gala in Fairfax, Virginia on April 26 with close family and friends present to celebrate her.

For more on her global organization, visit [www.SLEGlobal.com](http://www.SLEGlobal.com)

Toledo, join us in congratulating one of our own Scharita Barry Lacey! A woman of distinction, purpose and excellence in her service to humanity.



*Scharita Barry Lacey*

## *The Family ReOUnion 2... continued from page 16*

Unlike BAR, preparations were already underway for The Family ReOUnion 2 and could not be put on hold for a later date that has still yet to be determined (if even at all). But after the university's actions, we were forced to ask ourselves a serious question:

Do we cut our losses and walk away? Or do we take the risk and press on, even if turnout suffers or resistance tries to stop us?

We didn't back down.

Instead, we chose to press on.

Despite the uncertainty, despite the lack of backing, and despite the looming threat of low attendance or interference, we moved forward with The Family ReOUnion 2, a marquee event of the revamped Black Alumni Weekend (BAW). Students, alumni, local businesses and community leaders understood the importance of continuing the tradition to make sure that the weekend wasn't just a gathering but a statement.

Led by R&R Entertainment in collaboration with a passionate group of current students and committed alumni, The Family ReOUnion 2 persisted. With little time, limited resources and zero institutional backing, we stood our ground and showed up in Athens on April 11, not just to celebrate, but to reclaim our space, our legacy and our voice.

In direct defiance of the federal administration's agenda to gut DEI initiatives, we gathered anyway, we celebrated anyway and we told our stories anyway to continue to create safe spaces for Black students and alumni.

The weekend was filled with joy, storytelling, history and healing. From panel discussions and performances to small business collaborations and cultural gatherings, every aspect of BAW reinforced a simple truth: DEI isn't just a policy, it's a lived value. Even in the absence of official recognition, we created space.

We honored our past and invested in our future. And most importantly, we reminded everyone in attendance that our community will continue to thrive no matter the obstacles. Through music, laughter, fellowship, storytelling and reflection, Black Alumni Weekend reminded everyone in attendance that

our traditions, our culture, and our impact don't depend on institutional support. We gathered in love and protest, in joy and resistance. Just as our ancestors did during the Civil Rights Movement. And in doing so, we reminded Black Bobcats everywhere that this community is ours to uphold and protect.

The beauty of The Family ReOUnion 2, and the entire Black Alumni Weekend, was not just in the celebration itself, but in the incredible diversity of generations who came together. From Bobcats who attended Ohio University as far back as the 1950s, to current undergraduate students still walking the bricks today, the weekend created a bridge across time.

Alumni shared stories of perseverance, campus life and change, while younger Bobcats listened, laughed and found inspiration in their footsteps. Bonds were formed, memories were relived and new traditions were built. All in a space that honored the shared experiences and rich legacy of Black excellence at Ohio University.

Our hope is that this weekend serves as an inspiration, not only to other Ohio universities, but to campuses and communities across the nation. May it be a reminder that when times get tough, we don't fold. We adapt. We persist. We uplift one another. When times get difficult, we rely and depend on our communities. Because as Winston Churchill once said:

"Never let a good crisis go to waste."

Let this be the spark that fuels more gatherings, more advocacy, and more action. Not just in protest, but in celebration. Not just in resistance, but in hope. We will continue to gather, to build, and to protect the spaces that reflect who we are and who we're becoming.

*Credits:*

*The Family ReOUnion 2 Committee: Michel Curry, DeMarjé Hogan, Osahon Ogbonor, Andrew Owusu, Siraaj Woods*

*Sponsors & Partners: Black Alumni Weekend 2025, MYLE, SWC, The J Bar, A-Roc Entertainment, DJ Hef, Mikaela Woods Photography, Avalanche Pizza, Pushing Podcast, The Epsilon Lambda Chapter Of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc.*

*Photos By: Mikaela Woods Photography*



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

1130-25-341  
Mech. Sys. Improv. FY25-26  
FH, HEB, HSB  
The University of Toledo  
Lucas County, OH

**Bids Due:** June 03, 2025, at 2:00 p.m. through the State's electronic bidding system at <https://bidexpress.com>

**EDGE Participation Goal:** 5.0% of contract of the contract sum with EDGE-certified business(es).

**Domestic steel use is required per ORC 153.011.**

Contract	Estimated Cost
Bid Pkg. 1 -Main Campus- General Contract	\$1,095,800.00
Bid Pkg. 2 -Health Science Campus- General Contract	\$520,475.00
Total Bid Pkg. 2 Alternates	\$451,800.00

And any proper combination submitted on electronic Bid Form

**Pre-bid Meeting:** May 20, 2025, at 10:00 a.m. – Main Campus, Plant Operations Building - Room 1000, The University of Toledo, 2925 East Rocket Drive, Toledo, OH 43606.

**Walk-Through:** Immediately following Pre-Bid.

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

**More Info:** Fishbeck, Kevin Lafferty, PE, 419-893.3141, [klafferty@fishbeck.com](mailto:klafferty@fishbeck.com)

## TOLEDO OPERA TO HOLD AUDITIONS FOR NEW CHORISTERS IN CARMEN AND THE ELIXIR OF LOVE

Toledo, OH— Toledo Opera is holding auditions for chorus positions for the 2025-26 season. The 2025-26 season will feature: Bizet's Carmen (August - October 2025 commitment) and Donizetti's *The Elixir of Love* (November 2025 - February 2026 commitment). Auditions are scheduled to take place on Saturday, May 17, 2025 from 10:00 A.M. until 3:00 P.M., and on Sunday, May 18, 2025 from 3:00 P.M. until 6:00 P.M. Those interested in auditioning should prepare one or two selections which best demonstrate their vocal range and abilities. For the adult chorus, one selection in either Italian or French is preferred. A pianist will be provided. Toledo Opera is seeking the following singers: all voice types for a SATB chorus.

### *Carmen by Georges Bizet*

October 10 & 12, 2025

Valentine Theatre

Mixed voices: soprano, alto, tenor, baritone, bass. Music rehearsals begin on July 27 and run weekly on Sundays. Staging rehearsals will begin September 22 and typically run Monday through Friday in the evenings and on Saturdays and Sundays in the afternoons/evenings.

### *The Elixir of Love by Gaetano Donizetti*

February 13 & 15, 2026

Valentine Theatre

Mixed voices: soprano, alto, tenor, baritone, bass. Music rehearsals begin on November 9 and run weekly on Sundays. Staging rehearsals will begin on January 26 and typically run Monday through Friday in the evenings and on Saturdays and Sundays in the afternoons/evenings.

For more information regarding auditions, visit <https://www.toledoopera.org/performances/auditions-2025-2026/>. To schedule an audition, please email James Norman at [jnorman@toledoopera.org](mailto:jnorman@toledoopera.org). For more information about the 2025-26 season, visit [toledoopera.org](https://www.toledoopera.org). For media access, please contact Rachael Cammarn at [rcammarn@toledoopera.org](mailto:rcammarn@toledoopera.org).



TAKING YOU PLACES

## Partial 2025 Program of Projects

### TOLEDO AREA REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY

#### 5307 FEDERAL FISCAL YEAR 2025

Partial Funds Available for 2025 Capital Projects Section 5307: Federal Fiscal Year	Activity	Fed Share	Total Budget
5307 FY25	Vehicle Replacement	\$4,288,000	\$5,360,000
5307 FY25	Rehabilitation and Renovation	\$1,434,547	\$1,793,184
5307 FY25	Operating Assistance	\$2,000,000	\$4,000,000
<b>Total Section 5307 funded items</b>		<b>\$7,722,547</b>	<b>\$11,153,184</b>
5339A FY25	Vehicle Replacement	\$668,644	\$835,805

Written public comments on the proposed Program of Projects will be accepted by the Toledo Area Regional Transit Authority until the close of business on **June 13, 2025**. Comments received by the closing date will be considered in preparing and carrying out the program. An opportunity for a public hearing will be offered if requested in the comments.

Comments can be submitted via mail to: Chief Executive Officer, TARTA 1127 W Central Ave., Toledo, OH 43610. Alternatively, you can email your comments with the subject line "Program of Projects" to [info@tarta.com](mailto:info@tarta.com).

This program will become final and will be submitted to the Federal Transit Administration on completion of the public participation process unless amended by the action of the Board of Trustees of the Toledo Area Regional Transit Authority.

**Laura Koprowski, CEO, TARTA**

## SEEKING MBE/WBE SUBCONTRACTORS/SUPPLIERS

On behalf of Developer Pivotal Housing Partners, West Chester Ohio, General Contractor Ruscilli Construction Co. LLC 5815 Wall Street Dublin, Ohio 43017 is building a new build 20-unit townhouse affordable housing apartment project called The Grand at 1157 Grand Ave., Toledo Ohio 43614 and a new build 50 unit 4 story affordable housing apartment project called The Glen at 3440 Glendale Ave., Toledo, Ohio 43614. Ruscilli is requesting interested MBE/WBE subcontractors/suppliers and Section 3 Businesses or Section 3 individuals to contact Sylvester Gould at Gould Development Company LLC, Nitschke Technology Complex, 1510 N. Westwood Ave., Suite 2025 B, Toledo, Ohio 43606 for potential project opportunities at 419-787-7837.

# The Family ReOUnion 2: Ohio University's Black Alumni Unite Amid DEI Challenges

By Siraaj Woods

Special to The Truth

On March 4, 2025, Ohio University issued a sudden press release announcing the cancellation of the much-anticipated Black Alumni Reunion (BAR). Citing political pressure and the threat of losing over \$200 million in federal funding due to anti-DEI (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion) legislation, the university placed the highly anticipated weekend of events "on hold," giving organizers, alumni and students alike less than a month to decide how to respond.

... continued on page 14



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