



Volume 91 No. 5      *"And Ye Shall Know The Truth..."*      September 10, 2025



*Clara Petty Plans Trips for Adventurous Souls*

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# Aftershocks Ahead

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

*The dogmas of the quiet past are inadequate to the stormy present. We must think anew, and act anew.*

- Abraham Lincoln



The ground has begun to shift beneath voters' feet in Ohio politics, and the tremors are already being felt.

For years, the state's eroding political landscape has been marked by the same old familiar names, tired formulas, and predictable results. However, the growing intensity of Dr. Amy Acton's 2026 gubernatorial campaign suggests a potential forthcoming aftershock that could unseat the crumbling old order and thus shift the political terrain.

Acton became a household name in the early days of the pandemic, when she served as state health director under Gov. Mike DeWine. Even as her lockdown policies stirred fierce opposition among some, her daily briefings were marked by clarity and empathy, which earned her trust across party lines. That paradox garnered her both admiration and attack, but it also left her as one of the most recognizable and respected figures in Ohio.

Acton brings not only a fresh face but also arrives without "the baggage"

of the Democratic old guard. "She's not another Tim Ryan, who's lost his race, turned lobbyist, and is trying to get back into the only game he knows in a desperate attempt to remain relevant," supporters say.

Instead, Acton stands apart as fresh, credible and unburdened. At the same time, the Party around her "continues to cling to a crumbling playbook that has left them teetering in statewide contests."

Meanwhile, her likely Republican opponent, Vivek Ramaswamy, is already showing cracks. Although the handpicked Trump gubernatorial candidate leads Ryan by double digits, Ramaswamy finds himself locked in a dead heat with Acton, according to recent polling.

Even within Republican circles, Ramaswamy's candidacy feels "imposed rather than earned." "He's brash, he's loud and he's not deeply rooted in Ohio," whisper many GOP voters who are not buying the Ramaswamy candidacy. Those kinds of "hands covering the mouth" complaints leave space for someone like Acton to expose the brittle foundation beneath his campaign.

One factor fueling Acton's growing bipartisan support is her determination to do the unglamorous work — the kind that often goes unnoticed until the tremors are felt. She's "beating the bushes, spending time building bridges in red areas like Shelby and Defiance County and towns like Wauseon, developing relationships where Democrats seldom venture and reaching people who may not agree with her on every policy but who remember her steady, trust-worthy pandemic leadership."

Most notably, Acton's candidacy also forces Democrats to confront their own reluctance to evolve. Too often, women candidates are expected to do the difficult groundwork, only to be told to step aside when a man decides to enter the race. But the ground has shifted. Voters are no longer satisfied with recycled names and empty promises. They are open to something different, and Acton embodies that difference.

Ohio politics has been hardened ground for Democrats in recent years. Yet, as scholar Walter Fluker reminds us, "the ground has shifted." When the foundations move, the aftershocks can be unsettling — but they can also clear the way for something new to rise.

Amy Acton may not be the typical candidate. She isn't. She is fresher, tougher, and unburdened by the old formulas that have left her Party shaky and struggling to stand. She has been working for the past year, quietly building new bridges. That is exactly why her candidacy feels less like a ripple and more like the beginning of a quake.

Ohio should brace itself. The ground is moving.

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



Dr. Amy Acton

## Community Calendar

### September 16

Toledo NAACP Membership meeting: 1326 Collingwood Blvd; 5:00 pm

### September 21

St. Paul MBC Women's Day: 10:45 am; "Hold On: Help Is on the Way;" Speaker is Rev. Regenia Harper, Past Grand Worthy Matron of Amaranth Grand Chapter Order of the Eastern Stars: 419-246-2886

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

Rose of Calvary Flower Ministry 16th Anniversary: 4:00pm  
Pastor Charles H. McBee, Family Baptist Church guest speaker.

### September 28

Bible Way Toledo "Lunch After Church – Community Event;" 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM; Baskin-Robbins, 4015 Secor Rd: RSVP: Text (567) 698-8428

### October 19

St. Paul A.M. E. Zion Church: Connectional Lay Sunday; 11am; Speaker Deborah Sims of St. Paul; Colors - black and gold; MASKS OPTIONAL

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# Cracks in the Foundation

By Lafe Tolliver, Esq

Guest Column

Historians of whatever ilk or stripe should be glued to the news outlets listening for more pressure cracks in America's foundation caused by the constant jack hammer drilling and financial "extractions" by Donald Trump and his band of feckless dupes.



Since Trump has wised up since losing the last presidential election, he has crafted, out of a blazing inner rage of being rejected, a plan to wreak havoc and vengeance on any institution or person that he remotely believes, dissed him.

Now that boiling revenge-fed appetite has focused its attention on the former Trumpster and former governor of New Jersey, Chris Christie, and long-time Trump adviser, John Bolton.

Both men are in the political revenge cross hairs of Trump who, if innocently bumped in a crowded elevator, would shout it was a conspiracy concocted by the ever-present Deep State!

And as for his prey regarding reputable news media outlets, Trump is threatening newsman Jonathan Carl for making recent "meanie" comments about Trump on ABC News.

As regards the wrath of Trump, no one is immune if he believes that you are in tandem with the far left commies who are seeking accountability and transparency from him and his closed mouth government regarding the Epstein Files.

Without giving away the punch line, democracy in America is taken a thrashing, being meted out by an apparently mentally challenged person whom others have categorized his brain as being "oatmeal" and have regretted that he has no regard for the political norms or guardrails in politics that even makes a democracy possible.

The thin veneer that Trump campaigned on about lowering prices and ending the war in one day in Ukraine has worn thin. The emperor has no clothes on! Trump is beginning to bare his behind to all the world and without an inkling of attempted modesty.

His latest trick pony is threatening other big cities (of course, all run by people of color) with sending in armed National Guard troops so he can give the illusion that America is in a crime crisis and, "Only he can solve it!"

The translation is that Trump, who said that he will be a dictator, just for a day, is pushing the envelope of the American will to allow him to seize indefinite "emergency" control powers under the false pretense that once he restores law and order, all will be well.

Of course for the skeptic, the rationale of calling a national emergency and how long that emergency will last, is all in the discombobulated mind of Dear Leader because the nowhere-to-be-found GOP will be silent as lambs being led to the slaughter. A few will protest but the majority will be found hiding under their bedroom blankets, hoping that Trump does not threaten them with a primary challenge.

Be mindful that Dear Leader could not have accomplished any of this wannabe dictator gibberish unless a close majority of Americans gave their tacit assent to such anti-democratic behavior. An aspiring dictator needs a loyal mass of ignorant people to adore him and believe that his every word is manna from heaven.

That is what propelled Trump to the White House: a cacophony of incredulous lies and half truths that, left unchallenged, gave rise to a warped body of political thought that Trump is making America great again.

If Trump tries to strong arm Democratic city mayors and governors with the threat of tanks and armed troops in American cities, the results will not be pretty because not everyone will be a patsy to the ruminations of a man who shows signs of dementia and practices cruelty for the sake of just being cruel.

And no...by any stretch of the imagination and in spite of what White Christian Nationals (Note: no such person as a "white Christian national!") babble about on social media, Trump is not a Christian. Full Stop. His life and his brutal actions against the least of these, portray one whom is not remotely familiar with the God of the New Testament.

A cursory reading of the gospels will quickly dismiss that Christ is on the side of the evil machinations brought forth by Trump & Company. Regardless of how many crosses or crucifixes that Trump's clown car members may wear, they may still hear the chilling words of Christ at the judgment throne when he says to any pretenders, "Depart from me, I never knew you!"

A Trumpian America was achieved and can only be continued by a willful repudiation of foundational truths of fairness and equity for everyone. If the American general population were to lock arms against his madness and not resign themselves to three plus more years of a mental midget trying to play a modern-day Mussolini, this darkening nightmare would be over with an impeachment and conviction of a fake populist.

It is laughable that Trump wants to harangue in public those he falsely believes are guilty of fraudulent conduct but there he is, a 34 time convicted felon of fraudulent conduct saying to all, "No one is above the law!"...except if you were in the insurrectionist mob on January 6th at the Capitol and were pardoned by Trump for your crimes.

How rich is that!

Putin is leading Trump by a nose ring when it comes to Ukraine because Trump is Putin's Puppet and he will not cross his puppet master; no matter how many times Trump threatens Putin with sanctions because at the last minute, Trump will always find an excuse to back pedal and avoid a direct conflict with Putin.

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

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# DC Black Church Initiative Is Gracefully Asking DC Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton to Resign

*Your time has come!*

The DC Black Church Initiative (NBCI) is a coalition of African American faith communities that works to eradicate racial disparities, gracefully asking DC Delegate Eleanor Holmes Norton to resign. At 82, you do not have the fire in the belly to fight the Republican takeover, let alone President Trump.

The Black Church loves you and thanks you for your service. We will be visiting you soon to discuss how we can assist you. If you refuse to go, please note that you will not have the support of the Black Church in the future, but you will always have our appreciation, respect, and love.

Rev. Anthony Evans, President of the DC Black Church Initiative, said, "This is hard for me and other clergy. We love Eleanor, but the scripture says there is a time for everything, and now it is her time."

We beg in Christ to step aside and allow the voters of DC to pick a younger person who will stand up in the finest tradition of the civil rights that you helped to create and birth. Now is the time to graciously exist with your dignity intact.

You have a remarkable legacy to leave as you continue this act in an extraordinary life yet lived.

Before her congressional service, President Jimmy Carter appointed her to serve as the first woman to chair the **U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission**. She came to Congress as a national figure who had been a civil rights and feminist leader, tenured professor of law, and board member at three Fortune 500 companies. Congresswoman Norton has been named one of the 100 most important American women in one survey and one of the most powerful women in Washington in another. The Congresswoman's work for full congressional voting representation and for full democracy for the people of the District of Columbia continues her lifelong struggle

for universal human and civil rights.

Her success matches Congresswoman Norton's accomplishments in breaking barriers for her disempowered district in bringing home unique economic benefits to her constituents. Among them are senatorial courtesy to recommend federal judges, the U.S. Attorney and other significant federal law enforcement positions for the District; up to \$10,000 per year for all D.C. high school graduates to attend any public U.S. college or university and up to \$2,500 per year to many private colleges and universities, known as the **District of Columbia Tuition Assistance Grant (DCTAG)**; a unique \$5,000 D.C. homebuyer tax credit, which has sharply increased home ownership in the District and was a major factor in stabilizing the city's population; and D.C. business tax incentives, including a significant wage credit for employing D.C. residents, which has maintained businesses and residents in the District.

Congresswoman Norton has also brought significant economic development to the District of Columbia throughout her service in Congress, creating and preserving jobs in D.C. The most significant are her work in **bringing the U.S. Department of Homeland Security** headquarters compound to D.C., which is one of the largest federal construction projects in the country; co-sponsoring the bill that developed the 55 acre-Southeast Federal Center, the first private development on federal land; her work that resulted in the relocation of 6,000 jobs to the Washington Navy Yard; and her successful efforts to bring to the District the new headquarters for the U.S. Department of Transportation, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, along with an additional Metro station at New York Avenue (now the NoMa - Gallaudet U Station), which resulted in the development of the NoMa neighborhood.

Congresswoman Norton helped end the city's most serious financial crisis in the 1990's, by achieving a historic package that for the first time restructured the financial relationship between Congress and the District, by transferring \$5 billion in unfunded pension liabilities and billions more in state costs to the federal government.

The Congresswoman, who taught law full-time before being elected, is Professor Emerita at Georgetown University. After receiving her bachelor's degree from Antioch College in Ohio, she simultaneously earned her law degree and a master's degree in American Studies from Yale University. Yale Law School has awarded her the Citation of Merit for outstanding alumni, and Yale Graduate School of Arts and Sciences has awarded her the Wilbur Cross Medal for outstanding alumni, the highest awards conferred by each institution on alumni. She is the recipient of more than 50 honorary degrees.

DC Black Church Initiative is the parent organization of NBCI. The National Black Church Initiative (NBCI) is a coalition of 150,000 African American and Latino churches, comprising 27.7 million members, that works to eradicate racial disparities in healthcare, technology, education, housing, and the environment. NBCI's mission is to provide critical wellness information to all of its members, congregants, churches, and the public. The National Black Church Initiative's methodology utilizes faith and sound health science. We also offer our member congregants and the public helpful and healthy science-based tips on how to develop and maintain a healthy lifestyle.

The National Black Church Initiative's purpose is to partner with major organizations and officials whose primary mission is to reduce racial disparities in various areas, as cited above. NBCI provides faith-based, innovative, and cutting-edge solutions to complex economic and social challenges. NBCI's programs are guided by credible statistical analysis, science-based strategies and techniques, and methods that are proven to be effective.



Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton



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# Toledo Sigma Gamma Rho Alumnae Gala Shines Light on Women Leadership and Youth Achievement

By Alexandria Leatherberry

The Truth Reporter

The Iota Theta Sigma Alumnae Chapter of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. hosted the fourth Annual Firefly Nights Labor Day Gala Saturday, August 30, 2025. The Sigma ladies invited guests to the Heatherdowns Country Club to enjoy an evening of dancing, fellowship, food and a special signature cocktail to match the spirited energy poured out from the guest of honor.

The Gala was dedicated to honoring distinguished community leaders Sheena Barnes, Amelia Gibbon and Valerie Simmons-Watson, ThD, as well as awarding two scholarship recipients, Langston Baker and Kayden Humes.

Tawiona Brown, member of Sigma Gamma Rho, Inc., led the evening, alongside Lutricia Prater, in presenting awards and sharing the platform with the honorees. The honorees did not hesitate to take the moment to ignite the guests with a call to action, furthering an example of their dedication to their work in the community. Each honoree held her own focus on investing in underserved neighborhoods, empowering authentic leadership and strengthening community equity through access to systems like public education. The youth scholars also held a candle as a beacon of light for change through service and exemplary leadership.

Sheena Barnes said "Public education needs you now, the attack on our education system is happening now" referencing the recent changes to public funding. The former Toledo Public School District Board President reminded the attendees that the newly signed operating budget for Ohio will have a large impact on public education.

Scott DiMauro, president of the Ohio Education Association, reported to WOSU public media "It is still a budget that fundamentally underfunds the nearly 1.6 million students who attend our public schools across the state." Public Schools is the fifth largest district to serve those students.

Valerie Simmons-Walston, EdD, followed Barnes' call to action by elaborating on her mission of empowerment. Recalling her own experiences of fair treatment obstacles she has translated them into testimonial mentorship, impactful engagements and educational advocacy service. Under Next Chapter Enterprises she is launching an empowerment event October 12, S.O.A.R., where she will dive deeper into "Surviving Obstacles Attaining Rewards" a topic she's authored through her latest book release.

Walston was recognized for her commitment to being a driving force behind progressive, large-scale community events that contribute to the total wellness of the individuals in attendance.

The purpose of the commitment to progress was shared in closings of the honorees, "I chose to commit my life, my journey to my community", said Ameila Gibbon, member of Sigma Gamma Rho and executive director of the Reinvest Toledo Coalition. Gibbon was recognized for her work in amplifying community voices by having a direct role in their education and platform positioning.

Soon to bring this initiative to one room where policy makers and

community advocates can meet face-to-face in a town hall setting titled, 'Make it Make Sense'. Gibbon encouraged seasoned leaders on transitioning their role through her own outlook, Gibbon stated "it is my job to prepare the level of leadership."

The youth awarded were examples of the outcomes of well-groomed leadership. Kayden Humes and Langston Baker both held well over 3.0 GPAs in their academic settings while maintaining their community commitments. This was a clear standard that preceded them as descendants of parents with high achievement and community involvement, NaTasha and Melvin Baker, and Rashadd and Ebone Humes.

The ceremonial presentation of the scholarships closed with the thanks of the parents leading back into the celebration with the ladies of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. The chapter continues to support the community through educational initiatives, mentorship and outreach programs. The tradition of the Firefly Nights is the occasion to share with the community their platform and purpose that they look to continue to build upon.



Tawiona Brown, Board of Education Member Sheena Barnes, Lutricia Prater



Amelia Gibbon



Valerie Simmons-Walston



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# YBE ( Young Black Entrepreneur) Community Center Soft Opening

By Emily R. Evans

The Truth Reporter

A soft opening was held on August 30 at the Entrepreneurs Club on Fasset Street for the newest youth community center – the YBE (Young Black Entrepreneurs). This center is a safe place for the youth in the city of Toledo. The center is a vibrant, clean and spacious environment with a great ambiance. The children who had the chance to see the center at the opening were very excited to see the new space available to them and are looking forward to all upcoming events pertaining to the center, many said.

Byron Daniels Jr said the event was held to showcase the space where services and resources will be offered to assist the community. He wants to let everyone know, YBE is here and everyone is welcome. This event was free to the community and offered free school supplies as well as food, bouncy houses and vendors who offered different services.

CJ, one of the children and event set up volunteers from the event, said he had an amazing time. "The bouncy houses were the best part," he added.

He really loved the pre-packed book-bag that was provided to him for free as well as all of the snacks and costumed individuals who were in attendance. He said he can't wait for the community center to open and is excited to meet new friends to play with."

KJ, another child who came and helped with the event, said he is excited to see what games he will have access to at the center as well as all of the new people he will meet since he is home schooled. He had a notebook and pen with him so he could get contact info from the children in attendance. He said he is very happy to have a place where he can relax after a long and uneventful day of school and chores. KJ would like to invite other children to come to the other activities YBE has to offer such as the boxing center located next door to the community center.

Vince Evans, the CEO of the Entrepreneurs Club and the community center and the person with the vision, stated he is here to help the youth release certain traumas that have drenched the community due to daily life. He has after-school activities, mentors to assist with feelings, mental health and activities that youngsters need to decompress from during their struggles from the day.

He wants to give the youth a safe space to share with other children to provide outlets to keep young minds focused in a positive way. Tutoring services are provided as well as fun activities that children will look forward to such as pool, ping pong tables, boxing, after school meals, friendship, trade programs and anything that will assist youth in life. He wants to assist in helping the youth develop mentally and learn survival skills. He offers many programs - from Monday – Saturday.

Evans was asked what advice he would have for the community and he said: "you should be yourself and never follow the crowd." He offers info on flipping homes, culinary arts, boxing etc. There is no fee as long as you have health insurance. Those who do not have health insurance will still be considered for any programs offered.

Evans feels as a community we are stronger together. He feels health and wellness are very important and young people should eat right and at least get up and walk each day since their bodies rely on daily activity to survive.

Shawn Kane, an award-winning artist from Toledo, stated he had a great time at the event and was honored to give back to the community with his performance. The kids smiled as they heard him sing songs as they ran around with no worries. Kane wants the city to look forward to upcoming projects he is working on. He is dedicated to his music and his community and welcomes anyone to reach out to him for any offers to perform at any venue and can be reached at Shawn Kane on Facebook.

This new community center, said attendees, will be the perfect place to send a child after school to receive help with homework, meet new friends as well as a place to just be kids in a safe space.



Byron Daniels and Vince Evans



# Joining Forces at Laurie's Place to Help Moms, Babies and Dads

By Fletcher Word

The Truth Editor

Laurie's Place officially opened during a ribbon-cutting ceremony this past May. However, the resource center took another step forward in providing services for numerous area residents with a Resource Fair on Thursday, September 4 by welcoming community partners who will share the space at 722 N. Westwood Avenue.

Laurie's Place houses Mom's House of Toledo on the first floor. Mom's House has operated for years at its Franklin Avenue location providing free childcare for single moms who are completing any level of their education. This second location near the University of Toledo will continue the work of providing education for children and life-changing programs for both moms and kids.

On the second floor Bella Vita Network offices are located with spaces and classrooms for its pregnancy and parenting classes – including a 100-person meeting room.

Joining Bella Vita on the second floor are community groups: Habitat for Humanity; Lucas County Job and Family Services; Brothers and Sisters United; Queen's Village; Planting Vineyards, LLC; Mercy Health Connections and the Hospital Council of NOW. Those agencies will have rotating office hours at the location.

"This is part of our big picture," said Christina Rodriguez, executive director of Moms House. "We've opened up to the entire community, for the greater goal of serving moms, babies and fathers in our community."

"We saw that we were better able to serve the community when we had other partners – today is the kickoff of that," added Savannah Marten, executive director of Bella Vita.

Laurie's Place is named for the late Laurie Moore. "Her heart was children, safety and love," said Rodriguez. "She had three adopted children and fostered many others. Her husband [Bob Moore] wanted to give us an anchor."

Other community partners who were present at the Resource Fair were: CareSource, Anthem, Molina, Humana, the Toledo Lucas County Public Library and the Academy for Urban Scholars.



Christina Rodriguez and Savannah Marten



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For questions please call Area Office on Aging at 419-382-0624 ext. 1137



# Strictly R&B Park Jam 2025

By Emily R. Evans

The Truth Reporter

Saturday, August 23, was the highly anticipated day of the Park Jam, which was held at Promenade Park. This year the park was filled with thousands of people exceeding, as it does every year, the number of people in attendance during the prior year. The group Dru Hill performed along with Shawn Kane who is well regarded by those in the city of Toledo.

Lance Gross hosted the event. Lance Darnell Gross is an American actor, producer and photographer. He's best known for his role as Calvin Payne on the TBS/BET sitcom Tyler Perry's House of Payne, winning four NAACP Image Awards for his performance. He also starred in the Fox TV series Our Kind of People with Yaya DaCosta, Morris Chestnut, and Joe Morton.

It was an event that brought people out of the house with good vibes to enjoy music. There were also vendors in attendance, food trucks, a beautifully decorated VIP Tent with a chef, among other crowd pleasers. Each lamb chop in the VIP tent was seasoned to perfection and the presentation of each hors d'oeuvre was impressive.

A few of the Toledo natives gave a brief interview to share info about projects. Jeremy Hampton, one of this reporter's friends from the neighborhood, wants Toledo to join BRB which is a running club. You sign a waiver and run for free with the group. They provide water and there is on-site medical. 24 Main Street is the location to meet if you would like to join the quickly growing group.

Brothers United is also a group Hampton belongs to. The group's main purpose is to assist fathers in better parental engagement and provide resources. It's free to sign up. Sisters United is also a new resource group for women." Love each other more and put our best into the kids and the



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world will be a better place," said Hampton.

Jackie B., a Grammy-nominated singer, provides background for her sister Meeka Meeka. She said: "I love the crowd, the food, the ambience near the water, the people and just the overall experience." This was her first year performing at the Park Jam and it was a pleasure to speak and chill with her before she went on stage in her super cute attire.

Chalise Morris was at the Jam

... continued on page 10



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# Savvy Seniors: How Clara Petty Turned Travel into a Second Home for Adventurous Souls

By Asia Nail

The Truth Reporter

Imagine this: a bus packed with seniors, laughter bouncing off the windows, snacks exchanging hands like gold at a treasure hunt and stories flowing faster than the highway signs they pass. This isn't just a trip — it is a rolling family reunion. At the heart of it all is **Clara Petty**, a woman whose gift of hospitality has blossomed into something much larger than she ever planned: the Savvy Seniors Travel Group.

Petty, a proud graduate of the University of Toledo and licensed social worker, didn't set out to be a travel curator. In reality, she simply wanted to help senior citizens stay active once they retired. "A lot of people retire and don't have hobbies," she shares, "and they're just sitting home. I just wanted to give them something that would keep their bodies moving and their spirits alive."

So that's how it began: a wellness program at the Monroe Street Neighborhood Center, where Miss Clara served ever as executive director until she retired in 2022. But like all great stories, this one took a delightful twist.

One day, in casual conversation with some of the women in the program, Petty mentioned that she was going to visit Cleveland's legendary Karamu Theater. Their eyes lit up. "Plan a trip for us!" they urged. Petty did — and Savvy Seniors was born.

### From Wellness Class to Full-Fledged Journeys

Early outings were simple: day trips to Cleveland for a play, or short visits to local attractions. After a while, the group craved more. Overnight stays. Bus rides across states. Long weekends filled with culture, history and camaraderie.

Petty trademarked Savvy Seniors Travel and created an LLC. Why "Sav-

vy"? Because this group wasn't just busy, they were sharp, stylish, and, yes, a bit sassy too!

Now consisting of more than 150 members, the group once limited only to Toledo residents now includes travel lovers from Michigan, Maryland, Atlanta, Fort Lauderdale and even as far as Colorado. Some even fly in to simply meet the group at their destination. "When you pay for that bus seat," Clara laughs, "that seat stays empty until you sit in it. We're waiting on you."

...continued on page 11



Clara Petty (center) and a few Savvy Seniors



# Block Party

Sept. 13, 2025 • 3 pm

Get the details at [toledomuseum.org/blockparty](https://toledomuseum.org/blockparty)

T  
M  
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Toledo Museum of Art

# The National Civil Rights Museum Announces 34th Freedom Award Honorees

*Special to The Truth*

The National Civil Rights Museum is proud to announce the distinguished honorees for the 34th Freedom Award, recognizing their exceptional contributions to civil and human rights. The Museum's signature event, the Freedom Award, pays tribute to individuals who have shown unwavering commitment to advancing truth, equity, and justice in a time when those values are under threat.

The esteemed 2025 Freedom Award honorees are:

**MARC MORIAL** – As President and CEO of the National Urban League since 2003, Marc Morial has transformed the 100-plus-year-old civil rights organization with a renewed focus on economic empowerment, education, and criminal justice reform. His leadership has expanded opportunities for underserved communities and solidified the Urban League's position as one of the nation's most influential civil rights organizations.



Marc Morial



Velma Lois Jones

**VELMA LOIS JONES** – A lifelong Memphian, trailblazing educator, civil rights leader, and community advocate, Velma Lois Jones' service has shaped generations. She made history as the first classroom teacher elected president of both the Memphis Education Association and the Tennessee Education Association, where she served as the longest-tenured president in the organization's history. She is the first woman elected president of the NAACP Memphis Branch and served with distinction internationally and regionally with Alpha Kappa Alpha

Sorority, Incorporated.

**MARK SUZMAN** – CEO of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Mark Suzman has dedicated his life to addressing injustice and inequality worldwide. From his upbringing in apartheid South Africa to his work with the United Nations and the Gates Foundation, he has built global

partnerships to advance health, education, and economic opportunity for all.

The 34th Freedom Award ceremony will be held Thursday, October 16, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. Central at the historic Orpheum Theatre in Memphis, TN. The evening begins with the Pre-Award Gala and Red Carpet at 5:30 p.m. on Main Street in front of the adjacent Halloran Centre.

This year's event will feature a special performance by Wendy Moten, the acclaimed vocalist and Memphis native celebrated for her powerhouse performances on NBC's "The Voice" and international music stages.

The celebration extends beyond the evening program with the Freedom Award Student Forum on the morning of October 16. At Mississippi Boulevard Christian Church, the inspiring event that engages middle school, high school and college students nationwide both in person and virtually to explore their role in creating positive social change. The Keeper of the Dream Award will also honor outstanding youth leaders already making a difference in their communities.

The presenting sponsor for this year's Freedom Award is FedEx with signature sponsors including the Hyde Family Foundation and Nike.

Sponsorship offers unique opportunities for businesses and organizations to align with one of the most respected civil and human rights events in the world. Sponsors receive premium event access, brand visibility, and the chance to be part of an inspiring global platform that celebrates leadership and justice.

The NATIONAL CIVIL RIGHTS MUSEUM, located at the historic Lorraine Motel where civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated, gives a comprehensive overview of the American Civil Rights Movement from slavery to the present. Since the Museum opened in 1991, millions of visitors from around the world have come annually. The Museum is steadfast in its mission to honor and preserve the site of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s assassination. It chronicles the American civil rights movement and tell the story of the ongoing struggle for human rights, serving as a catalyst to inspire action to create positive social change. A Smithsonian Affiliate and an internationally acclaimed cultural institution, the Museum is recognized as a 2019 National Medal Award recipient by the Institute of Museums and Library Services (IMLS), the top national honor for museums and libraries.



Velma Lois Jones

*R&B Park Jam...continued from page 8*

supporting her fiancé Armone Blakely, who is a talented musician. He plays a plethora of instruments among many other things. Morris feels the Park Jam was an amazing place to network as well as showcase all of the artists.

Dru Hill is an American R&B boy band, whose repertoire includes soul, hip hop soul and gospel music. The group was founded in Baltimore in 1992 by Tamir "Nokio the N-Tity" Ruffin, and as of 2023, is still active. Dru Hill recorded seven top 40 hits, and is best known for the R&B number-one hits "In My Bed", "Never Make a Promise" and "How Deep Is your Love." Its original members were lead singer Mark "Sisqó" Andrews, Tamir "Nokio" Ruffin, Larry "Jazz" Anthony and James "Woody" Green. The group achieved popularity in the late 1990s.

Dru Hills performance was simply electrifying!!!! The choreography was precise and very entertaining down to the roses passed out to the beautiful women in the crowd near the stage. Each member proudly showcased beautiful, authentic voices.

I personally grew up listening to Sisco and all of the songs the group sang. The performance was very nostalgic to the people in attendance as we all sang along to each song performed. The group took pictures with many people after the show.

Shawn Kane became interested in music as a seven-year old singing in

*... continued on page 11*

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**R&B Park Jam...continued from page 10**

church and around the house. His unique voice and sound was noticed by record label executives at J Records which led to him signing a million-dollar deal and releasing the highly anticipated solo disc Southern Comfort. After a short break from the industry, Kane is currently working on a new set of projects and movies.

Kane was raised by his grandmother and family. He had to reinvent himself after growing up in an intense environment. Shawn grew up like many of us in Toledo, it was not all glitter and gold and it was a struggle to survive. Everyday life could be a test

Kane feels everyone should know he loves Toledo. His words of advice to anyone reading is to "do what makes you happy, live your life

and enjoy your experiences. Envision the You that you want to be and go out and be that person. Know that your dreams will come true with Hard work and dedication so when they do come true, you won't get overwhelmed with the new life that comes with it. Invest and believe in yourself because we were already born with everything we need to survive and prosper." Shawn

"We have the whole world to experience and we can no longer be afraid to live our dreams. Some people never get to see their dreams come true. I've seen so many talented people leave Earth before ever experiencing what they desire most in life. They sit on talents that could change life for them and leave a legacy for those that come after them. They keep all ideas inside and it leaves with them. Some people never get a chance to see the Ocean. Fear is a tool to hold you back. No longer allow fear to control your mind and stop you from experiencing life."

**Savvy Seniors...continued from page 9****Why the Bus Matters**

Ask Miss Clara why her group prefers buses over flights, and she will provide you with more than one reason.

First, there's the view. Rolling hills, fields and city skylines roll by like a movie reel. Second, there's space for luggage — and shopping bags! Seniors aren't forced to cram souvenirs into the ridiculously small overhead bins. And most importantly, there's community.

On a bus, strangers become seatmates, seatmates become friends and by the time the bus pulls back into Toledo, they've become family.

**Travel With a Purpose**

Petty may be retired, but her travel plans are far from slowing down. Next stop? Memphis. And on the horizon: the group's first cruise in 2027 with Royal Caribbean. This time, the trip will be open to all ages.

Younger folks are already lining up, pleading with Petty to take them along this adventure. "One girl said she'd carry my bags to come," Petty laughs. "We really do have the best time."

She dreams of expanding, perhaps using two buses for popular trips, some of them hosted by her trusty helpers. "We sell out fast," she admits. "Sometimes there's a waiting list. But it's a good problem to have."

**More Than Travel**

At its core, Savvy Seniors is not just about travel experiences. It's about relationships, resilience and joy. It's about rewriting the story of aging, showing that life doesn't slow down at 60, instead, it simply changes lanes.

"Travel is so good for your mental health," Petty says. "It reduces stress. It's what allows you to take a step back from your daily routine and view the world in new ways. And when you do it with friends, it makes the journey that much sweeter."

Her mission statement says it best: At Savvy Senior Travel, we empower travelers age 60 and over to explore the world with confidence, comfort, and community. We curate enriching experiences that cater to seasoned adventurers, ensuring every journey is accessible, exciting, and unforgettable.

**A Gift of Hospitality**

Miss Clara's friends often tell her she has the gift of hospitality. And she does. From checking in on every traveler to making sure the cooler is stocked with juice and water, she treats her seniors with the utmost respect and dignity.

**Joy on a Budget**

Her bus trips are less like vacations and more like rolling family reunions, where the scenery outside the window is just the backdrop to the real story: connection.

Petty has a saying: *I love travel, so I made it my business.*

But to the dozens of seniors who have found joy, independence, and friendship through Savvy Seniors, she has given something far greater: a passport not just to places, but to belonging.

a month until they can go on a trip. I never want to price them out."

One traveler saved faithfully until she could afford her dream destination. Seeing her determination touched Petty deeply. "Someone even offered to sponsor part of her next trip," she adds, her voice softening. "That's what a strong community looks like."

**Life Off the Bus**

Travel doesn't end when the group checks into a hotel. Nights are spent playing cards, snacking and laughing into the wee hours in breakfast rooms or lobbies. Skip-Bo tournaments can be as fierce as championship matches. "We just enjoy one another," Miss Clara shares. "It feels like family."

**The Road Ahead**

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# From Foster Care to HBCU: SC State Freshman Finds Support Through Move-In Day Mafia

Special to The Truth

Jailah Pinto of New Jersey moved through numerous foster homes before joining Bulldog Nation.

When Jailah Pinto arrived at South Carolina State University from New Jersey this fall, she carried little more than determination.

The Jersey City native, who entered foster care at age four and grew up moving through numerous homes with her younger sister, is forging a new path as the first in her family to attend college.

Her first days in Battiste Hall were minimalist -- her side of the room was almost bare. Pinto was prepared to make do, as she always had. A few days later, that changed when a group known as Move-In Day Mafia rolled up and began carrying in boxes.

Within hours, her room was transformed.

A mission rooted in HBCU tradition

Pinto's story reflects the larger role of SC State, founded in 1896 as

South Carolina's only public, historically Black land-grant university. For generations, the institution has educated first-generation students and those with limited resources, preparing them to become educators, engineers, entrepreneurs and military leaders. The university's legacy is also one of activism and access. SC State has been defined by a commitment to justice and opportunity. Pinto, a sport management major, is part of that ongoing story.

"I really wanted to go to college because I'm the first generation of my family," she said. "I just know I have to make it one way or another, and I think college is the way to go because I'll have my degree and having a degree will get you like in so many places you could use it in so many ways."

Turning an empty room into a home

The organization supplies decked-out dorm rooms and monthly care packages for HBCU students who have either aged out of foster care, are experiencing housing insecurity, or are grappling with severe financial hardships.

Founder TeeJ Mercer explained that the organization works from a student's personal questionnaire, ensuring each room is tailored to individual needs and tastes.

"These kids have always just been handed things and saying, 'Here, be thankful I'm helping,'" Mercer said. "That's not Mafia. We want them to know that we see them. They have autonomy to choose what they want."

Students have received laptops, headsets, wigs tied to self-image, or even podcasting equipment. For Pinto, the program meant turning a sparse dorm into a space that felt like hers.

"Having them is amazing -- I'm really thankful I got accepted into this program," Pinto said.

Origins of the Move-In Day Mafia

The seeds of Move-In Day Mafia were planted in 2022, when Mercer and a small circle of friends volunteered to help a foster student move into college. What began as a one-time act of kindness grew quickly as the group recognized how many students arrive on campus without families, furniture or basic supplies. Mercer said she couldn't shake what she saw. "I remember looking at this kid's room and thinking, 'This is not how you start college,'" she said. "A bare mattress, nothing on the walls, no comfort, no sense of home -- it broke me. I thought, if I can fix this for one student, I can fix it for more."

The group is fueled by partnerships with such major corporate entities as Amazon, Best Buy and Cisco. Their backing ensures students receive not only furnishings, but also the technology and supplies needed to stay on track.

Word spread, and the initiative developed into a structured nonprofit with a bold name meant to signal protection and loyalty.

The "Mafia" moniker, Mercer explained, was a way of telling students, "Once you're in, you're family for life."

She also said the mission was about rewriting the foster-care narrative.

"So many of these kids have been made to feel invisible or like they should just be grateful for scraps," she said. "Mafia is about saying, 'You deserve joy. You deserve dignity. You deserve to walk into a room that feels like somebody cared enough to make it yours.'"

Before this fall, the organization had visited 21 campuses nationwide, helping 84 students.

"And by the time the 2025-26 season is over, I am thrilled and getting that we will have moved in 107 HBCU students across 26 HBCUs," Mercer said.

Beyond move-in day

Moving in was just phase one of the organization's relationship with Pinto. "What is unique about Mafia is that moving day is just the beginning," Mercer said. "We wrap these kids in four years of support with monthly care packages."

That continuing support has already changed lives. One Move-In Day Mafia student is now a 4.0 scholar at Clark Atlanta University. Others are interning with Disney, Chase Bank and the Tennessee State Lottery.

"They're landing jobs," Mercer said, "and it's amazing to watch what these students can do when they're not being stressed with basic needs."

The work is aimed at shifting stark statistics: while 70 percent of foster youth aspire to college, only three percent enroll, and just one percent graduate. "We are really the difference between the kid pushing through and quitting," Mercer said. "So, I'm stopping until my babies have graduated."

A university's embrace

At SC State, administrators see Move-In Day Mafia as a crucial ally. Dr. Tamara Jeffries, the university's vice president of student affairs, said the program fills needs the university cannot always meet.

"Students do and can fall through the cracks, although the Division of Student Affairs is here, and we spend the majority of our time with students because we provide those support services outside of the classroom," Jeffries said. "There are still things that we can't provide that Move-In Day Mafia can."

SC State maintains a campus pantry supported by donations to help stu-



Jailah Pinto



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
 Monday, August 5, 2024

**Lucas County Board of Elections is in need of Election Workers**

The Board of Elections is in need of Precinct Election Officials (PEOs), Election Day workers and seasonal workers, for the November 5, 2024, General Election.

**Precinct Election Officials (PEOs)** begin Election Day at 5:30 a.m., continue through the close of polls at 7:30 p.m., and are released once all jurisdiction duties are completed that evening. PEOs are paid \$20 to attend a two-hour training class, \$50 for Monday night set-up/training and \$133 base pay for working Election Day, for a total of \$203. Positions are also available within our tabulation area and within any of our seven county subdivisions, where shifts generally begin at 7:30 p.m.

**Election Day Work Schedule** and hours worked are dependent upon job specifications. Shifts available are between two and 15 hours, and Election Day workers are paid between \$15.00 and \$21.00 per hour. Some jobs require mandatory training, which is paid at \$20.00 to \$25.00 per class. Examples of Election Day workers are rovers, riders, and hospital workers.

**Seasonal workers** work assignments may begin on Monday, September 9th, 2024, through Election Day, dependent upon work assignments. Starting pay is \$15.25 an hour, increasing to \$16.00 an hour after working 140 hours.

**Qualifications:** You must be a U.S. citizen, at least 18 years of age and a registered voter in Lucas County. You must not have been convicted of a felony and you cannot be a candidate for an office in the election for which you would be working. You must have reliable transportation.

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If you are interested in any Election Day positions, please contact:  
 Pamela Wilson at 419.213.2044 [pwilson@lucascountyohio.gov](mailto:pwilson@lucascountyohio.gov) or Patricia Smith at 419.213.2045 [psmith@lucascountyohio.gov](mailto:psmith@lucascountyohio.gov)

For employment applications, go to Lucas County Board of Elections website:  
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...continued on page 13

# American Kings: A Biography of the Quarterback by Seth Wickersham

By Terri Schlichenmeyer  
The Truth Contributor

Snap.

And with that, and a catch that's picture-perfect, your team is on their way to another win. The guy that threw the football sure knows his stuff. He's worth every penny he's paid, and in the new book *American Kings* by Seth Wickersham, you'll see what it took to get there.

c. 2025  
Hyperion Avenue  
\$29.99  
407 pages

Like so many little boys, Seth Wickersham wanted to play pro football when he was growing up; specifically, he wanted to be a quarterback. Unlike most other boys, though, he took it to an extreme, becoming "obsessed" with throwing a football with the best accuracy, hoping to match the skills of the players he admired.

Alas, despite an entire childhood of near-constant practice and a few wins on the field in high school, he didn't make varsity and ended up playing as a receiver.

He knows now that to be a quarterback is to be a star, but it's also "a way of life."

Here, he writes about Archie Manning, "a legend, a folk hero, a song title... and the beginning of a family franchise..." Wickersham shares the story of Warren Moon, how he stepped up to help his mother when his father died, how domestic violence almost derailed his legacy, and the racism he quarterbacked under for years.

He spent time with Caleb Williams, "the first true professional amateur quarterback" to get money for playing at the college level. He interviewed James Harris, who was prepared to become a teacher "If the league didn't want a Black quarterback..." Wickersham "spent much of 2022 with" Andrew Luck, who "learned quickly that greatness requires an... unlimited selfishness." He writes about how Jack Elway influenced his son's choice of career, what Hollywood had to do with one pro footballer's life, and the post-career of the first player "to throw a consistently beautiful spiral."

Says Wickersham about his subjects, "Anyone could throw a football. Only

a quarterback could make people cheer."

Your favorite chair is oiled for smooth reclining and fast slam-downs. The snacks are laid in for at least a week, and beverages are on ice. You know exactly what you're wearing for the game this weekend. All you need is *American Kings* and you're set.

Author Seth Wickersham calls his book "a biography," but it's just as much a history, since he refers often to the earliest days of the game, as well as the etymology of the word "quarterback." That helps to lay a solid background and it adds color to a reader's knowledge about football itself, while explaining what it takes for men and women to stand out and to achieve gridiron greatness. On that, Wickersham is honest, sometimes calling out his subjects for their attitudes toward teammates and others. Blunt words are used that are unprintable in family newspapers, so beware if you're sharing.

Is your team's QB in this book? Maybe, or a past favorite surely is, so check out *American Kings* and see what you find. Football fans and pigskin prognosticators both will love this book in a snap.

## Foster Care to HBCU..continued from page 12

dents with food and personal essentials, but Jeffries noted that Move-In Day Mafia goes further by fully equipping living spaces and providing monthly care packages.

With Pinto as SC State's first recipient, Jeffries called the program a "game changer" and said she hopes more SC State students will benefit in the future.

"This allows us an opportunity to provide a student with everything that he or she may need to help them be successful while they're here," Jeffries said.

### Building a future at SC State

Despite growing up bouncing around to different foster homes, she stayed grounded in athletics as a multisport student-athlete in basketball, track, softball and cheerleading.

Now settled in at SC State, Pinto is focused on her classes, her sport management major, and her goals. She dreams of a career in athletics, perhaps coaching or sports communications.

Though shy, she wants to make friends and explore student life. She has considered joining ROTC and is open to pledging a sorority after her first year. For now, she is determined to keep her grades strong.

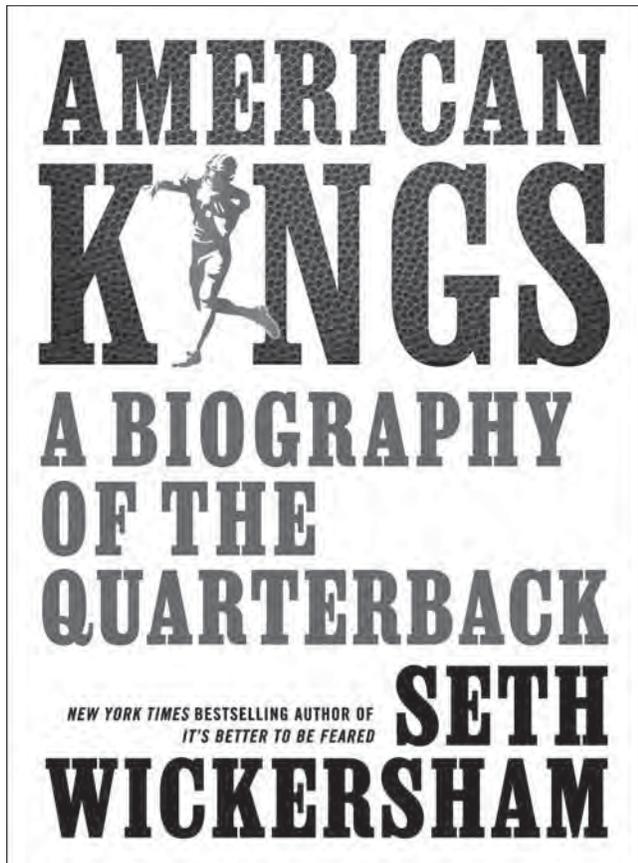
Her motivation is tied to her siblings, who also grew up in foster care.

"I want to show them that even though it's hard, you can still do it," she said. "Like, no matter what you go through, you can make it out."

Her room now holds more than furniture. It represents support, belonging, and the belief that she can carry her determination into a degree and a future she has claimed for herself.

She knows independence has shaped her, but she no longer feels alone.

"At least I know I have somebody helping me and by my side," she said. "I'm not doing it by myself."





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By Twix 'N' Between

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The University of Toledo  
Lucas County, OH

**Bids Due:** September 30, 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
General Contract	\$8,600,000.00
Alternate M-1	\$100,000.00

**Pre-bid Meeting:** September 16, 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:** Hasenstab Architects, Inc., Ben Rantilla, 330-434-4464, [brantilla@hasenstabinc.com](mailto:brantilla@hasenstabinc.com)

## EXPERT TYPIST NEEDED

Typing 17 chapters for book  
Call June: 419-324-9876

## OFFICE SPACE FOR LEASE

A first-floor 1,100 square-foot office suite, close to downtown in a revitalized Warren Sherman area, is available. The space is in a large office building with an enclosed parking lot. HVAC included. The space includes a waiting area, 3 separate rooms for individual offices and a storage space as well as access to a backyard. It's ready to occupy, no remodeling necessary. The neighboring area is flourishing due to recent construction of a large community center. Call 419-509-0492 for more information.

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS: STRATEGIC PLANNING SERVICES

The Mental Health & Recovery Services Board (MHR SB) of Lucas County invites proposals from interested parties with expertise in performing strategic planning services for the MHR SB's next three-year strategic plan. Proposals are to be delivered no later than 5:00 p.m. ET on September 26, 2025. All questions should be submitted to [sspinelli@lcmhrsb.oh.gov](mailto:sspinelli@lcmhrsb.oh.gov) by September 1, 2025. Responses will be posted on MHR SB's website. Details regarding the project deliverables and submission criteria are located on the MHR SB's website: <http://www.lcmhrsb.oh.gov/publicnotice/>.

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## POSITION SUMMARY

WGTE Public Media seeks a visionary, mission-driven President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to lead the organization into its next chapter of service and innovation. Reporting to the Board of Trustees, the CEO is responsible for advancing WGTE's mission by guiding all aspects of the organization, including strategy, content, operations, fundraising, technology, and community engagement.

About WGTE Public Media

WGTE Public Media is a non-profit, multi-platform public media organization serving northwest Ohio and southeast Michigan. Based in Toledo, WGTE provides high-quality, educational, cultural, and informational programming through its public television (PBS), public radio (NPR), and online services.

Key Responsibilities

- \* Lead the development and execution of strategic initiatives that serve diverse audiences across platforms.
- \* Oversee all departments, ensuring a collaborative, inclusive, and innovative organizational culture.
- \* Build strong relationships with staff, board, donors, partners, and the broader community.
- \* Serve as the chief spokesperson and advocate for WGTE at the local, state, and national levels.
- \* Direct fundraising strategies, including membership, underwriting, grants, and major gifts.
- \* Ensure fiscal responsibility, regulatory compliance, and operational excellence.
- \* Champion digital transformation and technological innovation to grow WGTE's reach and impact.
- \* Deepen WGTE's public service role through educational outreach and community-centered initiatives.

Qualifications

Required:

- \* Bachelor's degree from an accredited institution.
- \* Proven experience in executive leadership, strategic planning, and financial oversight.
- \* Excellent communication, relationship-building, and team leadership skills.

Preferred:

- \* Advanced degree in public administration, nonprofit leadership, media management, or related field.
- \* Experience in public media, education, or digital content strategy.
- \* Successful track record in fundraising and public advocacy.

Location

Located in Northwest Ohio within the western Lake Erie basin. The city is home to institutions that draw regional, national, and international visitors, including the Toledo Zoo-voted #1 in the nation-the nationally award-winning Toledo/Lucas County Metroparks System, the award-winning and globally recognized Toledo Museum of Art, and the Toledo Lucas County Public Library, a recipient of the National Medal for Museum and Library Service. Cultural highlights include the Toledo Symphony, Toledo Ballet, and Toledo Opera. With top-ranked schools, several local universities, and easy access to Ann Arbor, Detroit, and Chicago, Toledo is an exceptional place to live, work, and grow.

How to Apply

Please submit a cover letter and résumé to [employment@wgte.org](mailto:employment@wgte.org) or mail to:

Human Resources, P.O. Box 30, Toledo, OH 43614.

Call to place your ad:

419-243-0007

[www.TheTruthToledo.com](http://www.TheTruthToledo.com)

## In Memoriam – Howard Lewis Brown

Howard Lewis Brown was born on September 17, 1947, to Clifford Brown and Theresa Graves in Columbus, Ohio. He was born twenty minutes later than his identical twin brother, Harry Francis Brown. They remained in Columbus until age 5, when they moved to Toledo, Ohio, to live with their “forever parents” Clifford and Dorothy Brown.

Howard attended Toledo Public Schools, graduating from Jesup W. Scott High School in 1966. Howard matriculated at Central State University, where he received a Bachelor of Science in 1970 and a Master of Education from the University of Toledo in 1980.

After the death of his father, Howard returned to Toledo, where he reconnected with the love of his life, Gwendolyn Roberts. They were married on August 22, 1979. With this union came two daughters, Felicia Roberts-Dunston and Crystal Brown. All of his life, he relished being a father not only to Felicia and Crystal but also a father figure to Tammy McKittrick and Myron Duhart.

Howard was employed with Toledo Public Schools for thirty-six years and held numerous positions, including Dean of Students at Woodward High School, Pupil Personnel Supervisor, Director of Multi-Cultural Education, and culminating as Principal of Libbey High School and Small School Leader in 2009. Howard also served as the Toledo Association of Administrative Personnel (TAAP) Vice President and Director of Safety City.

Howard confessed his belief in Christ at a young age. He was ordained as a Deacon at Indiana Avenue Missionary Baptist Church, where he served as a Trustee, Superintendent of Sunday School, Secretary of the Deacon Board, and Director of Christian Education. Howard and Gwen later became faithful members of Second Baptist Church, where he serves on the Deacon Board.

Howard L. Brown is a distinguished and deeply respected member of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc., having crossed into the brotherhood on February 14, 1972, at the Xi Tau Chapter in Toledo, Ohio. Over the past 52 years, Howard has been an exemplar of commitment, leadership, and dedication to the fraternity's Four Cardinal Principles. His devotion is evident through the numerous roles he has held, including Basileus on three occasions, Vice Basileus (multiple times), Treasurer, and Keeper of the History, demonstrating his versatility and commitment to the chapter's success.

Howard's influence extends beyond chapter officer positions, as he has led key committees that drive social engagement, academic empowerment, and health education within the community. In addition to serving as the Chairman of the Social Committee and Scholarship Committee, he chaired the Health Forum Committee, which had been instrumental in hosting the an-



nual Prostate Cancer Education/Awareness Program and Community Health Fair, in partnership with the Toledo Council of Black Nurses and various community sponsors. These programs have not only raised awareness but have also created access to vital health resources for countless community members.

In the wider fraternity, Howard Brown's leadership continued in the 4th District, where he served as Assistant Chaplain and co-chaired the Regional Scholarship Committee. His unwavering dedication and exceptional service to the fraternity and his community did not go unnoticed; Brother Brown received a Certificate of Recognition from the Toledo City Council, honoring his lasting impact and outstanding representation of Omega Psi Phi. One of Howard's greatest sources of pride is sharing the legacy of Omega Psi Phi with his family, alongside his father Clifford Brown, twin brother Harry Brown, Sr., nephews Harry Brown Jr. and Clifford Brown, and grandsons Philip Dunston and Dannie Duhart. Through his steadfast commitment, Howard continued to inspire generations, embodying the values of Omega Psi Phi and leaving a legacy that will impact many for years to come.

Throughout his life, Howard always remained dedicated to his family and the community, serving on various boards and organizations, including the Frederick Douglass Community Association, United Way, Neighborhood Health Services, the Medical College of Ohio at Toledo Foundation and the City of Toledo Board of Community Relations.

The true measure of Howard's legacy was his kindness and his gift of love for his family and friends. He planted seeds of faith, courage, respect for God, and the tenacity of seeing dreams fulfilled. He always encouraged his children, grandchildren, nephews, close friends, and their children to aspire to do their best and follow their dreams while offering himself as a mentor and confidant.

Howard is preceded by his parents, Theresa Graves and Clifford (Dorothy) Brown, his brother, Harry Brown Sr., and his godson, John Jeffrey Roberts. He leaves to cherish his memory, his loving wife of 46 years, Gwendolyn Brown; daughters Felicia (William) Dunston and Crystal Brown; special children Myron (Nicole) Duhart and Tammy McKittrick; grandchildren, also known as Camp Brown, Philip (Keeya) Dunston, Chelsea (Wesley) Amadi, Richard Fleming IV, Sommer Butler, Shanice McKittrick, Shawn Tompkins, Dannie Duhart, Myranda Duhart, and Mycala Duhart; nine great-grandchildren (Camp Brown the Next Generation); godchildren, Taylor Petty and Sydney Petty, and a host of family and friends.

All Services will be held at Indiana Missionary Baptist Church 640 Indiana Ave, Toledo, Ohio 43604 on Friday, September 12, 2025.

Visitation 10 a.m. - Noon; Amazon Lodge #4 Masonic Rites at 10:30 a.m.; Omega Psi Phi Rites at 11 a.m.; Homegoing Celebration at Noon. Arrangements entrusted to the House of Day Funeral Home.

## City Councilwoman Cerssandra McPherson's Birthday Bash

Toledo City Councilwoman Cerssandra McPherson held a birthday bash on Sunday, August 24, at the EC Family Event Center on Indiana Avenue. McPherson was joined by her family members, elected officials and community members to celebrate her 66th birthday, to enjoy a live DJ and assorted refreshments and to do a little campaigning on the side.

McPherson is running for re-election to retain her at-large council seat. Her general theme is that she gets things done for Toledo families as she has helped open the new Wayman Palmer YMCA, has invested millions of dollars to fix the city roads, has financially supported funding for youth programs and founded Glass City JazzFest, bringing pride and energy to Toledo.



Councilwoman Brittany Jones (center) and McPherson birthday guests

Her plan for the future is to put money into the neighborhoods that need it the most, to fix up old buildings and to support local shops.



Councilwoman Cerssandra McPherson and birthday guests

