

Volume 92 No. 8

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

December 3, 2025

**Top Ladies of Distinction Induction Ceremony**



*Lady Velda Hunter and Lady Wanda Terrell-Galloway (seated) with 2025 Inductees*

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# An Open Letter to the Lucas County Board of Commissioners: Strike While the Iron Is Hot

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

The Truth Contributor

*We now find that it is not only right to strike while the iron is hot, but that it is very practicable to heat it by continual Striking*

- Benjamin Franklin



Affordability is now the issue that drives American politics, with 63 percent of Americans—including 47 percent of Republicans—supporting Medicare for All, even if it ends private insurance and raises taxes.

Translated, it means that the health care crisis is reaching a breaking point that elected officials and decision-makers can no longer ignore.

Support for such measures has risen 26 to 50 points since 2018, signaling that the ground is indeed shifting beneath us and that Americans are no longer willing to tolerate the status quo, as David Sirota recently argued in *A Massive Shift in Health Care Politics*.

If the tide is turning toward Medicare for All models and other health equity proposals, then Lucas County leaders cannot afford to sit on the sidelines.

Lucas County is the poster child for the affordability struggle that so many face in healthcare, housing and basic necessities.

If Lucas County can rally around economic development issues that benefit business leaders and downtown, yet leave out minorities — or convene area leaders and national experts at a summit to decry the lack of a coordinated anti-poverty plan, as they did in early October — why have we never brought the same urgency and seriousness to confront healthcare injustice?

Our own Healthy Lucas County data shows chronic disease rising fastest where coverage is thinnest. Black mothers face maternal mortality and prenatal barriers at unacceptable levels. Life expectancy levels between people of color and others are obscenely lopsided. The rates for hypertension, dialysis and amputations that could have been prevented are disgusting, as families delay care until a crisis because co-pays are unaffordable, transportation is limited, and preventive care feels like a luxury instead of a right.

You don't have to teach Black and Brown families what medical inequity feels like — the billing statements prove that the most dangerous health decisions are often not medical — they are financial.

So here is what must happen next — clearly, urgently and without delay:

Lucas County should convene the region's first Health Equity & Medicare-for-All Readiness Summit within the next 12 months — modeled with the same seriousness, structure and collaborative energy we saw

in the economic summit. The table must seat the same stakeholders — county commissioners, healthcare systems, policy experts, insurers, union heads, lawmakers, grassroots advocates — but with health as the agenda, equity as the priority and public readiness for Medicare for All as the mandate.

Such a summit must be more than a blame session or finger-pointing debate. It must produce at a minimum:

- A coordinated countywide plan for health affordability and universal coverage access
  - with timelines, metrics and accountability.
- A strategy to expand clinics, neighborhood access, maternal health support and preventive care
  - not in theory, but in budget line items and policy documents.
- A roadmap for how Lucas County would implement or interface with Medicare for All
  - so that if national reform accelerates, Toledo leads; if it stalls, Toledo advances anyway.

• A decision about whether Black Toledo lives longer that becomes an actual, implemented policy, and not a philosophical debate about ideals.

The nation is clearly ready for bold reform. And Lucas County can no longer celebrate its economic strategy while ignoring the people's mandate for a health strategy.

Instead, the county must decide whether to match the people's readiness — or be remembered for hesitating while families suffered.

Contact Rev. Donald Perryman, PhD, at [drldperryman@centerofhope-baptist.org](mailto:drldperryman@centerofhope-baptist.org)

## Community Calendar

### December 4

Kwanzaa Park Neighbors – Community Meeting; 6 pm – 7 pm at The Padua Center; Kwanzaa Park Neighbors will be planning for the upcoming Kwanzaa Celebration.

### December 6

Toledo Chapter of Charms present Breakfast with Santa: 10 am to noon; 4725 Dorr Street; A holiday morning of breakfast, festive photo ops and creative holiday crafts

### December 10

“Celebrating the Impact of Aging: “1:30 - 3:00PM  
West Toledo Library Auditorium  
A Poetry Reading and Q & A Panel Discussion. Hosted by the NOT DEAD YET POETS, an eclectic ensemble of like-minded older adults

### December 18

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

### December 21

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

### December 26

NAACP ANNUAL Meeting is scheduled for: December 16 th, 2025 at 5:00 PM  
Location: 1326 Collingwood Blvd ( AALP Building ).

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# The Time Is Now: Congress Should Not Leave Small Community and Minority Banks Out of the Digital Asset Future

By Kevin Harris and Cleve Mesidor

Guest Column

Congress is actively working on groundbreaking legislation that would provide much needed regulatory clarity. The Digital Assets Market Structure legislation being developed by the U.S. Senate Agriculture and Banking committees can be better positioned to foster economic growth, promote financial education and support guard rails for the early and vibrant segments of Americans who actively leverage digital assets.



Kevin Harris



Cleve Mesidor

In Washington, debates over crypto are too often conflated with tensions with Wall Street incumbents, entrenched regulatory turf wars, and the race for global competitiveness. As a result, a critical voice is often absent from deliberations: small financial institutions that have long been the backbone of underserved rural and urban neighborhoods.

As Congress considers legislation governing digital assets, it has an opportunity to take a simple transformative, bipartisan step to ensure they are not once again left behind and left out. Lawmakers should include a federal study examining how Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) and Minority Depository Institutions (MDIs) can safely and compliantly offer digital asset products. The time for this level of regulatory clarity is now!

## Ensuring Access To The Future of Digital Finance

This is not a niche concern. It is a matter of financial inclusion, U.S. competitiveness and necessity for a market structure framework that fuels innovation across rural and mainstream America.

Whether policymakers embrace or resist them, digital assets—from tokenized deposits to stablecoins to blockchain-based payment rails—are increasingly shaping the financial landscape. Large institutions and fintechs are already experimenting with tokenization, on-chain identity solutions, and blockchain-enabled lending. As these technologies become part of mainstream financial transactions, millions of Americans could be locked out if their local community institutions are not part of policy considerations.

CDFIs and MDIs serve precisely the communities most vulnerable to being excluded from transformative financial shifts. If legislation ignores their needs and capacities, we risk repeating a familiar pattern: innovation benefiting the well-resourced first, leaving everyone else to catch up later—if at all.

Including a federal study is not a radical act. It does not endorse any particular digital asset product, mandate their adoption, or loosen regulatory standards. Instead, it offers something essential: clarity!

While banks are receiving regulatory guidance regarding decentralized finance, this clarity does not extend to this unique subset of the financial system.

Data show that CDFIs support more than 1,400 smaller lenders operating in rural and urban areas that aren't adequately served by larger banks. Of the roughly 5,900 headquarters and branches of these community lenders, 60 percent [1] are in Republican congressional districts and 55 percent are in states with two Republican senators.

## A Federal Study of CDFIs & MDIs Whose Time Has Come

A well-designed federal study would explore important questions. This could include examining how digital asset services could responsibly expand financial access in underserved communities; the regulatory and technical barriers that prevent CDFIs and MDIs from piloting or adopting these tools; ways digital assets lower costs for remittances, small-dollar lending and community development financing.

Additionally, federal research could offer insights into safeguards for market participants and new entrants that offer protections, while also enabling innovation. This is a smart approach as policymakers continue crafting balanced rules that reduce uncertainty for small institutions, and prevent a bifurcated financial system where only large players can innovate.

CDFIs and MDIs have been asking for guidance to better understand regulations, compliance and how to best protect their clients and institutions. Including this federal study in Senate digital assets market structure legislation will serve to ensure they won't be left navigating this new terrain alone or disadvantaged relative to larger, better-resourced competitors.

## Economic Equity Cannot Wait Any Longer

This is a unique moment in policymaking and rulemaking. If we want a financial system that works for everyone, we must ensure that the institutions closest to underserved communities are prepared—not sidelined—as digital assets evolve.

Congress has an opportunity to take a bipartisan, low-cost step toward ensuring that the next generation of financial innovation is inclusive from the start. A study supporting CDFIs and MDIs in the digital asset space is not just good policy—it is smart policymaking. It acknowledges that responsible innovation and increasing access are not competing goals but mutually reinforcing ones.

*Kevin R. Harris is an entrepreneur and former executive director of the Congressional Black Caucus and Cleve Mesidor is executive director of Blockchain Foundation.*

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# Kaptur Announces More Than \$3.7 Million in Federal Responsible Fatherhood Grants for Toledo-Area Programs

Special to The Truth

Last week, Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur (OH-09) announced that three northwest Ohio organizations have been awarded a combined total of more than \$3.7 Million in new federal funding from the US Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families. These awards, made through the Responsible Fatherhood Program, will strengthen families by supporting fathers with tools for responsible parenting, healthy relationships, and economic stability.



The recipients are:

\* Pathway, Inc. – Brothers United (\$1,250,000): A program dedicated to empowering fathers in Toledo through workforce development, mentoring, and parenting education.

\* Zepf Center – Northwest Ohio Fatherhood Connection (\$1,250,000): This initiative will serve 180 fathers each year, with a focus on promoting

healthy marriages, responsible parenting, and economic independence.

\* Ridge Project, Inc. – TYRO Fathers (\$1,250,000): Based in Defiance, the program supports fathers, including those re-entering from incarceration, with life-skills training, employment preparation, and tools for responsible fatherhood.

“Strong fathers build strong families, and strong families are the foundation of strong communities,” said Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur (OH-09). “These federal investments represent hope and opportunity for hundreds of fathers in Toledo and across Northwest Ohio. By helping men strengthen their role as parents and providers, these programs ripple outward, lifting up children, stabilizing households, and fostering brighter futures for generations to come.”

The funding comes through the Responsible Fatherhood General Program, which provides discretionary demonstration awards to organizations working to improve outcomes for fathers and their children. Collectively, these initiatives will serve hundreds of fathers annually, offering parenting classes, job readiness training, peer mentoring, and wraparound support services.



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Mike and Avis Files, center, and the Brothers United team



# Intercepting Violence, Passing for Peace Flag Football Tournament

By Emily R. Evans  
The Truth Reporter

On Saturday, November 22, from 8:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., Woodward High School was the site of the Mothers Against Violence Flag Football Tournament.

This event was a tribute dedicated to all the mothers who have lost children or anyone who lost a loved one due to the constant gun violence that has shattered so many families and homes and caused irreparable damage to their mental well-being.

Too many are constantly haunted by memories of the ones they have lost along the way. Photos, murals, T shirts, trees, balloon releases, candles burning and sadness are all that is left in so many instances.

There are so many people suffering in the city due to daily effort of trying to understand what happened and trying to fathom the thoughts of losing someone who will never return.

Men and boys from all around the city, different age groups as well as students, signed up to play games of flag football to stand together for peace and unity and to plead to the city and state governments to enact changes to stop the gun violence.

The event organizers emphasized that families are losing so many people to gun violence alone not to mention the natural issues that cause loss so it's imperative everyone do what they can to stop the meaningless shootings.

They noted that people need to stand up as a city and go to counseling, discuss their issues with those who care as well as use the resources available to everyone to try to heal.

Marquita Ford, from the NW Ohio Parents of Murdered Children, said: "This was a survivors' and victims' event and a public way to let the city know that the group is here for Toledo."

There was money raised for victims of many forms of abuse and Ford wants to bring awareness to those in need. Donations are always helpful to support the movement, provide temporary housing, buy holiday gifts for those in need of assistance.

Ford added that they also provide a Blessings Cleaning service which assists the victims if there was a violent act that occurred on a property. Assistance is available to clean up any residue that could traumatize the families further, so in-shock families won't have to deal with the aftermath of such terroristic events.

There are meetings every second Saturday of the month which are usually held at the Collingwood Arts Center or at the various library branches – safe spaces to assist those in need.

Courtroom advocacy is also provided to those who need help. The main point of the event was to promote community and to let Toledo know that it's time to come together -- Toledo Strong.

Aviance Hill, chapter leader for the NW Ohio Parents of Murdered Children, said: "It was the first annual Intercepting Violence Passing for Peace charity event."

The event was a tribute to families of murdered children and loved ones to support and uplift survivors and victims of violence and those who came before and left a legacy. The group promoted peace and unity on the football field and showed power together at the 50-yard line. The group has supported each other and are a formidable community that provides an impact in the community.



All survivors and victims are welcome to help the movement and anyone can donate or join. If you have any questions, please contact 567-215-0045 or via email at [nwoponc@gmail.com](mailto:nwoponc@gmail.com)

This group wants Toledo and anyone suffering to know that you are loved, you are not alone and there is support available. There is no need to cry and pretend you're ok while isolated from the people that are here to listen to how you feel don't even know you are hurting deeply.



Northwest Ohio Parents of Murdered Children Co-leader Marquita Ford, Chapter Leader Aviance Hill, Board Secretary Taren Lutchey

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# Some Thoughts About Dr. Larry Hamme

By Annette Wright

The Truth Contributor

A great man passed away the other day.

Life is really interesting, isn't it?

The people we meet...those we maintain relationships with, for whatever reason (family, business, profession, etc.) these people leave some sort of impression on us. Of course, some impressions are meaningless or unimportant. Some are quite profound and last throughout our lifetimes. Others are somewhere in between, right?

Dr. Larry E. Hamme, PhD, had the type of demeanor and personality that seems to have always left a very special impression on anyone who ever met him.

Dr. Hamme passed away on November 03, 2025. Just writing this seems surreal. Here was a man who seemed to have been assigned to life so that others could live. And suddenly he was gone.

I knew Dr. Hamme. Professionally and later personally. At his Homegoing Service I was not surprised to hear stories and testimonies of what a wonderful and dedicated therapist he was to so many people – especially young people. One lady said that she would not be alive today had it not been for her therapist, Dr. Hamme. A very young man, perhaps in his teenage years, arose to give his remarks – barely able to speak as he was overcome with emotions. These remarks and testimonies went on and on.



Larry Hamme, PhD

Then there were his colleagues from Unison Behavioral Health Group, where he retired as Chief Clinical Officer in 2016, the painful loss reflected on their faces. A former fellow student, who attended the University of Toledo with him in the 1980's shared her story about attending the School of Psychology with him where he was the only Black student at that time. He went on to be the first Black student to graduate with a PhD from UT's School of Clinical Psychology program Amazing.

For certain, the most heart-touching moments were hearing his children speak about him. His beautiful daughter, Sana, who recently gave birth to his greatest gift, a grandson named Koah Elias, and his son, Lamar, who surely has made his dad quite proud of him, as he was the total image and likeness of Dr. Hamme.

I'm not sure if many people really understand or appreciate the great loss our community has suffered in the transition of this great, great man.

As a very close friend, I just thought I'd share this with you.

## Head Start Temporarily Closed

Due to continued delays in receiving its award notification for the upcoming federal funding cycle, Toledo Public Schools (TPS) will proceed with its plan to temporarily close a majority of its Head Start and Early Head Start programs, beginning tomorrow, Monday, December 1.

This will directly impact over 1,000 TPS families and 100 employees.

District officials continue to lobby federal delegates and the appropriate government agencies to expedite the release of the official grant notification, so that their youngest learners can return to the classroom.

The district will continue to provide updates to all affected families, staff, and the community as soon as new information is received.

# New Generation of Black Church Leadership Rising to Continue Battle for Freedom

*Installation of Pastor Kevin Lamár Peterman at Historic DC Church Indicates Next Power Move for Social Justice in America*

By Hazel Trice Edney

It was on Nov. 24, 2014, when then Howard University student Kevin Lamár Peterman first felt a sermon rise from his belly.

That was the same day that a grand jury decided not to indict a white Ferguson, Missouri police officer, Darren Wilson, in the fatal shooting of 18-year-old Mike Brown, an unarmed Black teenager walking down the street in his neighborhood. It was a police killing that sparked historic protests across America; including fiery demonstrations in Ferguson that were met with military force.

Having returned from the uprisings in Ferguson, Peterman was leading a community and student protest on the steps of Howard's Douglass Hall when the announcement came that Wilson would not be indicted.

"I remember giving a speech that night that I felt turn into a sermon. And it was really social justice that led me to ministry," Peterman said in a recent interview. "I felt that the best way to advance the cause of Black people in America was through the church and through education. And so that's kind of how my ministry began."

A little more than 10 years later, the stirring that Peterman felt that night has now come full circle. On Saturday, Nov. 22, 2025, at the age of 32, he was installed pastor of the Nineteenth Street Baptist Church, the oldest and most historic Black Baptist congregation in Washington, DC, dating back through enslavement more than 180 years.

Today, as issues of racial justice continue to simmer – and grow – across the nation, the pastoral installation of Peterman and other young men and women in his age group is being viewed as a resurgence of sorts, part of a spiritual uprising of a new generation of civil rights leadership in the Black church.

"What you're seeing is that there are a number of young Black preachers who are taking over historic Black churches in historic cities, who are doing this work of social justice and also doing the work of social impact while also preaching salvation," Peterman said. "Every generation of ministers is called to move the thermometer one notch, one pace forward. It's like a race. The baton has been passed to the next generation to run our leg of the race."

Among those who have risen to church leadership from coast to coast – during what Peterman describes as the "Black Lives Matter" era is Melech Thomas, who led protests alongside him after the Baltimore police custody death of Freddie Gray. Thomas was installed pastor of Baltimore's Payne Memorial AME Church earlier this year.

Also, the Rev. Devon Jerome Crawford, pastor of the Third Baptist church in San Francisco, the home church of former Vice President Kamala Harris; the Rev. Art Gordon is pastor of the oldest Black Baptist church in New England, the People's Baptist church in Boston; the Rev. Malcolm J. Byrd is senior pastor of the Mother African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, the oldest Black Church in New York State, founded in 1796; the Rev. Marissa Farrow has been named senior pastor-elect of Baltimore's Mt. Calvary Church & Ministries; and the Rev. Rodney Carter is pastor of the Greater Mount Calvary Holy Church, the largest Pentecostal congregation in D.C.

"So, you're seeing a new generation of pastors coming into the pulpit and taking over historic churches and many of us are trying to do the work that was being done 60 years ago, prior to the civil rights movement," Peterman says. "It's not a new vision. It's a continuum. And hopefully, when we die, life in America will be better than it was when we were born."

Therefore, during the services surrounding Peterman's installation, it was made clear that his generation will not carry the mantle alone. As they rise to leadership, they join their mentors, their fathers and mothers in ministry who remain alongside them in the preaching of salvation, the battle for social justice, and the sharing of wisdom and experience.

The three services celebrating Peterman as the new pastor included preachers, known nationally for their leadership. Rev. Dr. Howard-John Wesley, senior pastor of the historic Alfred Street Baptist Church in Alexandria, Va., preached a one-night revival. The installation service was led by Rev. Lawrence E. Aker, III, lead pastor of Cornerstone Baptist Church in Brooklyn,

... continued on page 12



QUEENS VILLAGE

## Protecting Our Children: Awareness Session

Join us for this session to learn about the risks of human trafficking, sexual violence, and unhealthy teen relationships. We will talk about what signs to look for, what makes young people more at risk, and how we can work together to keep them safe.

**December 8, 2025**  
**5:30-7pm | Mott Branch Library**  
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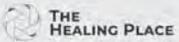
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Health Section • Health Section

# A through Z of Healthy Eating

Patrice Powers-Barker, OSU Extension, Lucas County

The Truth Contributor

As we wrap up the year, list all the ways you eat healthy! You will notice that a few of the recommendations are not specific to food but they have been shown to help with an overall healthy lifestyle and also help manage health conditions that also depend on healthy eating. Do NOT feel obliged to do all twenty-six suggestions! They are suggestions for you to choose just one or two that are important to you right now. Take this month to create a new healthy habit for yourself.

We'll start with appetizers. What are healthy foods you enjoy eating and you can add to your day as a small appetizer or even a snack? Plan for those smaller but tasty foods to hold you over between the larger meals. They can easily be used to add fruits or vegetables or other healthy foods to your day.

Breakfast is an important time to "break the fast" from not eating all night. A healthy breakfast option sets the tone for the day. It can be simple – Cereal, milk, and fruit on top include three food groups within one bowl.

Diet is a word that has been co-opted and made negative especially from fad diets. A diet just means the food you eat (good or not so good). If you are looking for an eating plan to help you add more healthy options, look for diets that have been researched and help with healthy living like the DASH Eating Plan: Reducing Hypertension through Diet and Lifestyle, The MIND Diet, or the Mediterranean Diet.

Enjoy! Eating a healthy snack or meal should be an enjoyable experience. What do you need to change to make this happen?

Flavor your food and lower the amount of salt. Some easy seasonings can be fresh lemon or lime juice, fresh or dried herbs, or flavored vinegar.

Bring a grateful attitude to the meal. Some people choose a prayer or blessing while others might just take a quiet moment to appreciate all the hands

that have worked to grow and prepare the food you are about to eat.

Health conditions can sometimes direct what type of healthy diet you should follow. Although it is not easy to make lifestyle changes, use your health and medical professionals to help make an easy-to-follow plan to eat healthy.

Intuitive eating has been described as a "non-dieting" approach to pay attention to your body and eat when hungry, enjoy the food, and not bring a judgmental attitude to the moment.

Just Keep it simple. Although it sometimes feels like there are a lot of "rules" for healthy eating, it can be simple. Just keep to the basics of food groups, add a splash of flavor and enjoy.

Leftovers can be lifesavers! When making a meal, plan enough to eat an additional meal the next day, without the additional work of making two meals.

Move more! Even a simple ten-minute walk following a meal can be beneficial.

Notice what you are eating and how much you are enjoying it. Notice when you feel hungry and when you feel full. After you start to pay attention and

...continued on page 10



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Health Section • Health Section

# 10 Things I'll Do Better for My Skin and Hair in 2026

By Dr. Hope Mitchell, Board-Certified Dermatologist

The Truth Contributor

As 2025 closes, December is a good time to reflect, and prepare to reset, and renew our commitment to healthier skin — because our skin is more than appearance; it's a reflection of overall well-being.



Each January offers a clean slate, a moment to recommit to habits that nurture our bodies and minds. And when it comes to your skin — your body's largest and most visible organ — small, intentional changes can make a lasting difference. As a board-certified dermatologist, I often remind my patients that skincare isn't about perfection; it's about protection, prevention, and consistency. Here are ten resolutions to consider that will help you glow confidently into 2026.

**1. I'll wear sunscreen every day — no excuses.**

Sun protection is the single most important habit for maintaining healthy skin, regardless of race. Eliminating sunscreen from a skincare regimen is the single most common cause of uneven skin tone, dark spots, melasma and hyperpigmentation. There are many sunscreen options on the market (including moisturizers with spf) that do not leave a "white cast" on melanated skin. A broad-spectrum, SPF 30 or higher, applied daily, is non-negotiable — even in the winter.

**2. I'll keep my skincare routine simple and consistent.**

You don't need a 10-step routine to achieve great results. Stick to the basics: a gentle cleanser, a moisturizer suited for your skin type and daily sunscreen. Consistency will always outperform complexity.

**3. I'll moisturize while my skin is still damp.**

Applying moisturizer right after cleansing helps seal in hydration and strengthen your skin barrier. This simple step is especially important in the dry, cold months when moisture loss is common, and "ashy skin" is on the rise.

**4. I'll stop picking at my skin.**

It's tempting to touch or pick at blemishes, but doing so can lead to permanent scarring, delayed healing, infection, and long-term, sometimes irreversible discoloration. Instead, seek a dermatologist to guide you toward safe and effective treatments for acne and other skin concerns.

**5. I'll schedule an annual skin exam.**

Just as you visit your primary care provider for checkups, your dermatologist should be part of your preventive health routine. Annual skin exams help detect conditions like skin cancer early, when they are most treatable.

**6. I'll prioritize sleep, hydration and nutrition.**

Your lifestyle shows on your skin. Aim for at least seven hours of sleep each night, drink plenty of water, and choose foods rich in protein, fiber, antioxidants, omega-3s, and vitamins A, C, and E. These habits support your skin's ability to repair and renew itself.

**7. I'll stop comparing my skin to others.**

Every person's skin is unique, and comparison often leads to frustration. Focus on your own progress and celebrate the improvements you see — whether that's fewer breakouts, better hydration, or a smoother texture.

**8. I'll pay attention to my scalp and hair health.**

Healthy hair starts with a healthy scalp. If you're noticing changes such as thinning, breakage, or shedding, early evaluation is key. Many causes of hair

...continued on page 10

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Health Section • Health Section

# MemoryLane Care Services Launches Hospital-to-Home Program

Special to The Truth

MemoryLane Care Services, in collaboration with the Area Office on Aging of Northwestern Ohio, Inc., is introducing a program to help ease the transition home after a hospital stay. The Care Transitions Intervention® (CTI) program, also known as a hospital-to-home program, supports adults living with dementia or developmental and intellectual disabilities and their family caregivers.

The Care Transitions program connects families with a dedicated coach, who provides guidance, resources, and emotional support during the recovery – at no cost to participants. As part of the program, the coach conducts two in-person visits, one in the hospital and one at home, as well as follow-up phone calls.

- The Transitions Coach helps the individual and their caregiver to:
- Understand their medications and how to take them correctly
  - Know what symptoms to watch for and when to call their doctor
  - Schedule and keep track of follow-up appointments
  - Organize health information

“Being hospitalized is stressful for anyone, but it’s especially overwhelming for family caregivers and people living with dementia or developmental disabilities,” said Lyndi Wrostek, MSW, LSW, social worker at MemoryLane Care Services. “We want to make sure families have the support they need during this challenging time. Our Transitions Coaches work alongside individuals and their loved ones to build confidence and skills that lead to better health outcomes.”

The Care Transitions program is available for adults with dementia or signs of cognitive impairment, adults with intellectual and developmental disabili-

ties, and primary caregivers who are hospitalized and caring for someone with dementia, and reside in Lucas, Henry, or Wood counties in Ohio, or Monroe County, Michigan.

For more information about the Care Transitions program, contact Lyndi Wrostek at 419-720-4940.

MemoryLane Care Services, established in 2016, is a leading nonprofit organization serving northwest Ohio and southeast Michigan families impacted by Alzheimer’s disease, dementia, and memory loss. Through its Adult Day Centers in Toledo and Bowling Green, MemoryLane provides expert, personalized care in safe and engaging environments that enhance quality of life for adults living with memory challenges. The organization’s comprehensive support includes professional care counseling, individualized coaching, and evidence-based education programs that empower family caregivers with essential skills and resources. Learn more at [www.memorylanecare.org](http://www.memorylanecare.org).

The Area Office on Aging of Northwestern Ohio, Inc. promotes the health, well-being and safety of older adults, persons with disabilities and family caregivers to foster independence. The Area Office on Aging provides you and your loved ones with quality services that allow you to be as independent as possible, empowering you to live your life to the fullest. Each year, over 40,000 older northwest Ohioans are served through the Area Office on Aging and its network of 180 providers across 10 counties: Defiance, Erie, Fulton, Henry, Lucas, Ottawa, Paulding, Sandusky, Williams, and Wood. To learn more about how the AOoA can serve you or your loved ones, call 419-382-0624.

The Administration for Community Living Grant program is supported by the Administration for Community Living (ACL), grant number (#90ADPI0111-01-00) U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$1,000,000 with 100 percent funding by ACL/HHS.

## 10 Things...continued from page 9

loss — including those more common in women of color — respond well to timely treatment.

### 9. I'll protect my skin barrier.

Your skin barrier keeps moisture in and irritants out. Over-exfoliating, using harsh cleansers, or skipping moisturizer can weaken it. Gentle care, hydration, and avoiding overly aggressive routines will keep your skin resilient and calm.

### 10. I'll make self-care part of my skincare.

Stress can trigger flare-ups of acne, eczema, and other conditions. Take time to rest, practice gratitude, and do things that bring you joy. When your mind is at ease, your skin often follows.

Finally:

Healthy skin doesn't happen by chance — it's built through daily choices and consistency. As you step into 2026, think of skincare as self-care and make your dermatologist part of your wellness team. Together, we can create a plan that helps you protect, nurture, and celebrate the skin you're in.

*Dr. Hope Mitchell is a board-certified dermatologist and founder of Mitchell Dermatology in Perrysburg and Fremont, Ohio. With over 25 years of experience in medical and cosmetic dermatology, she is passionate about empowering patients to take charge of their skin health. Visit [MitchellDerm.com](http://MitchellDerm.com) or follow @DrHopeMitchell for expert skincare insights and updates.*

## A Through Z...continued from page 8

notice, also observe what works best for you. Observe what small changes you can make to feel even better.

Prep some foods ahead of time to easily and Quickly pull together your favorite quick meals. What makes your meal preparation easier? Is it chopped onions? Is it your breakfasts prepped for the work week? Make it happen and thank yourself later!

As mentioned above, there are not a lot of hard and fast, “rules” when

... continued on page 11

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Health Section • Health Section

## A Mental Health Moment

# Holding Ourselves, Healing Together: A Mental Health Reflection on 2025

By Bernadette Joy Graham, MA, LPCC

Licensed Clinical Mental Health Therapist

As 2025 draws to a close, many of us in the Black community are carrying both pride and exhaustion. We have weathered a year of continued economic pressures, widening health disparities, community violence, political tension, and the ever-present demand to stay resilient even when we're weary. Yet despite these challenges, we remain here—still building, still loving, still fighting, and still dreaming.

As a licensed clinical mental health therapist, I have witnessed firsthand the emotional weight that many of us have been carrying silently. And I've also witnessed something else: our growing willingness to talk openly about mental health, to reach out for help, and to prioritize our well-being in ways that past generations were not always able to. That shift is powerful. It is cultural change in real time.

### 2025: A Year That Tested Us

This year brought multiple stressors that disproportionately affected Black individuals and families:

- Economic instability that left many juggling multiple jobs, rising living costs, and persistent financial anxiety.
- Continued racialized stress, from national headlines to workplace dynamics, that re-open the wounds of generations.
- Community violence that has left too many grieving, hypervigilant, or living in a state of quiet fear.
- Persistent health disparities, especially in mental and emotional health access, treatment, and support.
- The ongoing pressure to "be strong," even when our nervous systems are begging for rest.

These challenges do not exist in isolation; they impact our bodies, minds, families, and futures. And while we continue to show unmatched resilience, we must no longer confuse survival with wellness.

### Ending the Year With Intention, Not Just Endurance

As we close out 2025, take a mental health moment and I invite our community to reflect with honesty and compassion:

- What did we survive this year that we never want to normalize?
- What pain have we been carrying without giving ourselves permission to feel it?
- Where have we been silent, simply because we didn't feel safe speaking up?
- What would it look like to choose rest—not as a reward, but as a right?

Mental health is not just an individual concern. It is a collective one. We heal in community. And we hurt in community as well.

### The Importance of Mental Health Moving Forward

In 2026, our community will continue to face challenges, but we can also enter the year with a renewed commitment to protect our mental and emotional well-being:

1. Normalize therapy and support.

Seeking mental health care is not a sign of weakness—it is a declaration of value.

2. Prioritize rest and nervous system health.

Rest is one of the most revolutionary acts we can choose in a world



that profits from our exhaustion.

3. Strengthen emotional safety in our families.

When we raise children who can name their feelings without shame, we heal generations before them.

4. Learn to recognize trauma responses.

Irritability, shutdown, overworking, perfectionism, people-pleasing—these are often symptoms, not personality traits.

5. Build community spaces where vulnerability is welcome.

Our churches, barbershops, beauty salons, sororities, fraternities, and neighborhood circles can become healing hubs.

### Moving From Resilience to Restoration

For centuries, the world has celebrated our strength—but strength without support eventually becomes suffering. In 2026 and beyond, we deserve more than resilience. We deserve restoration. We deserve joy, softness, safety, and peace. We deserve lives where our mental health is not pushed to the bottom of our priorities, but honored as the foundation for everything else.

If this year has left you tired, know that you are not alone. If it has left you hopeful, hold onto that hope fiercely. And if you are ready to heal, there is no better time than now.

### A Closing Word

As a therapist and as a member of this community, I am deeply proud of every step we take toward mental wellness—whether that step is calling a therapist, setting a boundary, choosing kindness for ourselves, or simply taking a deep breath after a long day.

May we enter the next year with clarity, courage, and compassion. May we continue to break generational cycles that did not serve us. May we remember we are worthy of healing, not someday—but today.

### Resources

- National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI): 1-800-950-NAMI
- Mental Health Crisis Line: Dial 988, then press 1
- Therapy for Black Girls: <https://therapyforblackgirls.com>
- Find Help Today - Psychology Today: [www.psychologytoday.com](http://www.psychologytoday.com)

Bernadette Joy Graham is a Licensed Clinical Mental Health Therapist. Please reach out at [graham.bernadette@gmail.com](mailto:graham.bernadette@gmail.com) for comment, resources or appointment information.

### A Through Z...continued from page 10

it comes to your food but there are healthier choices that you can make for yourself.

Slow down. I know it's often easier said than done but slow down and enjoy your food, the meal, and your company.

Turn off the screens when eating. When eating with others, pay attention to the people with you as well as your food. When eating alone, pay attention to the food and the flavors and how your body feels.

Please understand that making any changes in your daily routines might feel awkward at first. Continue to pay attention, learn and benefit from your healthy food choices.

... continued on page 13

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# What Young People Need to Know About Workplace Retirement Savings

*Special to The Truth*

Workplace retirement savings plans are an excellent way to invest in your future, and the earlier you start, the more opportunity your savings have to grow. Typically automated through payroll deductions, contributions to a plan like a 401(k) or 403(b) are tax-advantaged and easy to make.

Recent research by Edward Jones and Morning Consult shows that three in five Americans who have access to a workplace retirement plan contribute, however 59 percent of all Americans' employers do not offer one, leaving a gap in financial access and education at a critical entry point for investing. For local business owners – who are responsible for creating two out of every three new jobs in the U.S. economy, according to the National Business Association – implementing retirement savings benefits can be challenging. Fortunately, new efforts are being made to support businesses of all sizes in helping their employees reach their financial goals.

"Edward Jones is in the process of expanding its retirement plan product shelf offered through our more than 20,000 financial advisors to include Nationwide and Voya. The firm has also invested in new technologies like Aboon, which streamlines retirement plan design and administration, and Addition Wealth, a digital financial wellness platform providing personalized financial education for clients. With our vast branch network in 68% of U.S. counties, we are well-positioned to serve small- to mid-size businesses in need of workplace solutions, and ultimately, their employees," says Alyssa (Lysa) Harper, principal and head of the Workplace Segment at Edward Jones.

"Local business owners are the backbone of communities. We're hopeful the investments we are making will meet more people where they are and offer more business owners and their employees the advice, products and education they need throughout their financial journey," Harper adds.

If you are offered a workplace retirement plan, following these tips can help you make the most of it:

Start now. Savings can grow over time, making it valuable to start as early as you can – even if you're decades away from retirement.

Start with the match. At a minimum, contribute enough to your employer's retirement savings plan to earn your employer's matching contribution, if one is offered. Ultimately though, you'll want to develop a personalized goal, with

saving 10 to 15 percent of your income being a great milestone to work toward.

Make progress. Consider increasing your savings rate by one percent each year. Some plans even offer an auto-escalation option, making this easy.

Leverage windfalls. Reserve a certain dollar amount or percent of future pay raises, bonuses or financial windfalls to go toward your retirement savings.

Get assistance. Fifty-two percent of Americans say advice from a financial advisor would make them more likely to participate in a workplace retirement plan, according to research from Edward Jones and Morning Consult. Reach out to a financial advisor who can review your situation and provide personalized recommendations for you.

A workplace retirement plan can be a key part of a retirement savings strategy. Fortunately, new solutions being offered to businesses of all sizes are expanding access to retirement savings plans to more working Americans.

*Courtesy StatePoint*

## *New Generation...continued from page 7*

New York; and the events were culminated during a Sunday service preached by the Rev. Dr. Otis Moss III, senior pastor, Trinity United Church of Christ in Chicago, where Peterman served as a pastoral intern.

Aker, the pastor who ordained Peterman at Cornerstone, where he served as young adult and social justice minister, preached from the scripture, II Timothy 1:7, "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind." The title of the message was "A Divine Assignment."

Peterman listened intently, having been ceremoniously robed by his mother, Ms. Donna Holley-Nelms. He recounted that he was raised by a "single parent mother and grandmother in Vauxhall, New Jersey with the church as the center of our life."

Essentially, Aker elaborated that Peterman has been called to preach in a time that has been described as the "fourth industrial revolution," which, in part, means the world's rise to 21st century technology; including AI, (artificial intelligence) and that the multi-generational Black church must not be afraid.

Greater Mount Calvary Pastor Rodney Carter, 34, gave a charge to the congregation that appeared strongly in agreement with Aker. "There are some who are going to grieve the past. I want to encourage you to follow the vision. Don't fight the vessel," Carter said.

Aker's message likely heartened Peterman, who, in the pre-installation interview, expressed that the Black church must use maximum technology and social media in order to communicate its Gospel and social justice messages.

"We have to communicate our story. We have to communicate the work that we're doing at Nineteenth Street. We have to embrace technology one hundred percent. We have to communicate what we're doing and the work that we're doing in 21st century ways. Social media for us has been on the back burner," Peterman said. "The reality is that nobody is looking for or most people under the age of 50 are not looking for something to come in the mail to them. Most people now under the age of 70 want to be online, want to be digitized, want it to be on their phone. We have to embrace multiple platforms. I want people to know that I'm on a mission. I'm on a mission for God. And I am on a mission for my people."

The fact that Nineteenth Street Baptist is located in the heart of the nation's capital, is crucial to his national leadership in social justice, Peterman said.

"As goes Washington goes the rest of the country. The country is always looking to Washington, DC for leadership in every industry and in every sector. The same for the church," he said. "I think the churches across the country are going to be asking the question, 'What are the churches in the nation's capital doing to advance the efforts of marginalized people, of Black people, of Brown people?' So that will be an example for churches throughout the rest of the country.

He concludes, "We particularly have a great opportunity because we eat at the same restaurants where the lawmakers eat. We are literally in proximity of and can go to the Supreme Court and demonstrate and make our voices known in ways that a congregation in Kentucky or Los Angeles or in Houston or Chicago cannot easily do. So, for us, our proximity to power comes with great responsibility and a privileged burden. Our proximity to power comes with a responsibility to speak truth to power on behalf of everybody else as loud as we can speak it."



# Bottom of the Pyramid: A Memoir of Persevering, Dancing for Myself, and Starring in My Own Life by Nia Sioux

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

The Truth Contributor

Every solid building has a strong foundation.

And when you're hired for a new job, that's where you start: at the bottom, in the back office, the least position, the lowest rung. You won't stay there long, if you can overcome the obstacles and seize all opportunities. It won't be easy but you can do it. As in the new memoir, *Bottom of the Pyramid* by Nia Sioux, when you're in last place, there's nowhere to go but up.

Nia Sioux always loved the stage.

Born into an upper-middle-class family, Sioux remembers how much she wanted to take dance classes when she was a preschooler, and that her parents were happy to support her interests. Fortunately, there was a dance studio just down the road from their Pittsburgh home, and so Sioux started classes at Dance Masters of Pennsylvania, later renamed Abby Lee Dance Company (ALDC). There, she worked hard and gradually moved up in the team's lineup, garnering praise and solo dances.

Quickly, the solos, she says, made her mother very uncomfortable. There seemed to be racial undertones to the costumes Sioux was made to wear, and the music didn't seem appropriate for a little Black girl.

Mother and daughter discussed it, and Sioux's eagerness overcame any doubt.

Later, when Lifetime Channel interviewed ALDC dancers for a TV show that was eventually called *Dance Moms*, Sioux was overjoyed to be chosen as one of the show's performers. For awhile, she was the only Black dancer in the team – and that became a problem.

Infamously, the show introduced a "pyramid" in which Abby ranked the

c. 2025  
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256 pages

dancers, and Sioux was almost always at the bottom. Drama was encouraged, criticism was swift, and there seemed to be a lot of favoritism within the dancers' hierarchy. She endured the pain of it but ultimately, she seized other opportunities and decided to quit *Dance Moms*.

"I'd gotten a glimpse of what my life could look like without the show," she says, "and it was beautiful."

No one who's ever watched a half-hour of reality TV should be surprised that author Nia Sioux has written this book, or that what she says happened, happened. The surprise is that *Bottom of the Pyramid* is so entertaining and so satisfying.

Going beyond the usual memoir and past the show's curtain, Sioux shares her life story and its ups and downs, professionally and otherwise. There's a lot of gratitude in that, plus strength and determination – but also some swiping, sniping, and resentment, all of which are like catnip to reality fans. Still, Sioux reminds readers that there were actual humans, young women, behind the lines and second-takes for the camera, and that the over-the-top theatrics could be negatively impactful on their tender lives.

For a reality TV watcher or a fan of the show, past or present, that's a good reminder to watch for authenticity inside the drama. If you never missed an episode of the show or you want to follow the stars, *Bottom of the Pyramid* is a good place to start.

### A Through Z...continued from page 11

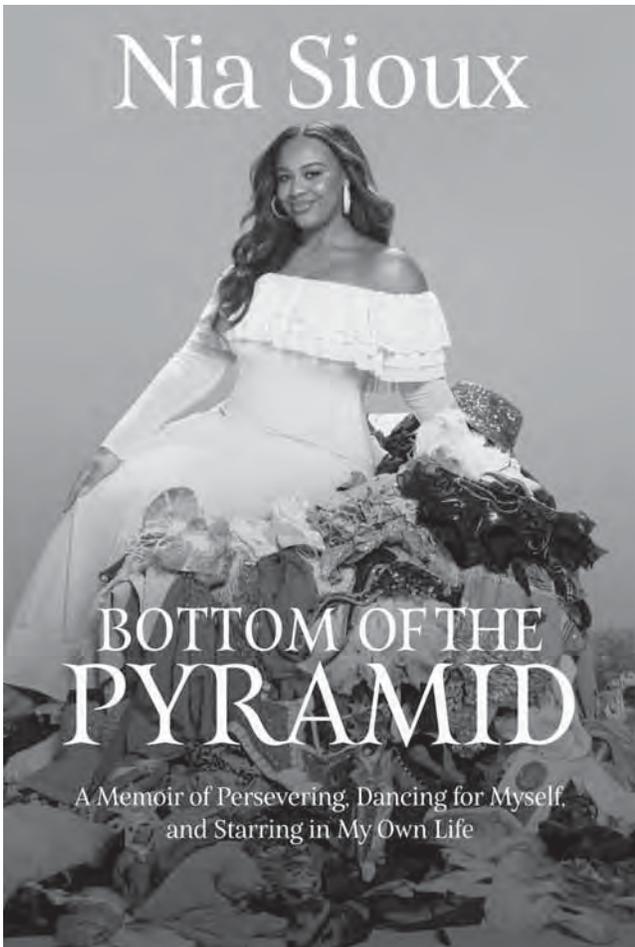
Add a wide variety of vegetables! Fresh, frozen, or canned, make plans to add more vegetables to your snacks and meals.

Use water to hydrate! Although a plain tall glass of water is fine on its own, if you prefer extra flavor, enjoy a cup of tea or add sliced fruit or cucumber to ice water or a splash of lemon or lime juice.

eXperiment with new menus, recipes and taste tests. Look for healthier options and see how you like them.

Take care of yourself. You are worth it!

Get your Zzzzzs. Just like physical activity is important for our bodies and goes hand-in-hand with nutrition, getting enough quality sleep is another important component. New research is showing how intertwined sleep and exercise and nutrition are with one another.



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## LEGAL ADVERTISEMENT FOR PROPOSALS TOLEDO-LUCAS COUNTY PORT AUTHORITY TOLEDO, OHIO

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** that Electronic Bids will be received by the Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority for all labor, material, insurance, and equipment necessary for the Pavement / Utility / Demolition and Regrading project at 1045 Post Street, Toledo, OH 43610, in accordance with the approved plans and specifications, for the Port Authority at One Maritime Plaza, Toledo, Ohio 43604.

The "Pavement / Utility / Demolition and Regrading project" at 1045 Post Street Property is the former location of Toledo Edison's Delaware Service Center, which was used by Toledo Edison from approximately 1936 to 2008 for offices, storage, and maintenance of lamps; lighting ballasts; utility poles, transformers, and equipment scrapping. The property secured a Covenant-Not-to-Sue (CNS) from the Director of the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in 2018 and future land use is limited to commercial/industrial purposes, with a construction/excavation worker direct contact point of compliance of ten (10) feet below the existing ground surface (bgs). No excavated soil is to be removed from the Post Street Property without characterization and prior written authorization from the Port Authority. Shallow groundwater, if encountered in conjunction with the work, shall not be discharged to surface water, or storm/sanitary sewers without prior written authorization from the PORT AUTHORITY.

The Base Bid for the Demolition and Regrading consists of

- Mobilization/demobilization
- Preparation of a Health and Safety Plan for the project;
- Concrete removal, crushing, and regrading;
- Asphalt removal, crushing, and regrading;
- Utility termination (as necessary); and,
- Pollution control/storm water management.

Alternate Bid

- Trucking, Excavation and Hauling

The total engineer's estimate for the base bid is approximately \$1 million. Bids that are in excess of 20% above the engineer's estimate would be considered non-responsive. This project may be awarded by the Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority at its sole discretion.

Bids will be received through Bid Express, an online electronic bidding system, until Thursday, December 18, 2025, at 10:00 AM, at which time all bids will be opened through the Bid Express website.

The plans and bid proposal documents are available through Bid Express at: <https://www.bid-express.com/businesses/66075/home>. Bidders new to the electronic bidding system must first register on the Bid Express website ([www.bidexpress.com](http://www.bidexpress.com)). Registration is Free. It can take up to five (5) business days to process a Digital ID and it is highly recommended that a Digital ID be enabled 48 hours in advance of submitting an electronic bid. Bidders must plan accordingly. For additional guidance regarding electronic bidding, bidders must contact Bid Express directly. Each bidder shall be responsible for submitting its electronic bid before the bid deadline.

Electronic Proposals must be submitted on the form(s) included in Bid Express and shall be accompanied by a certified check or an acceptable Proposal Bond with satisfactory surety specifying the Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority as the obligee, in the sum of not less than ten percent (10%) of the total proposal amount.

Please note that there will be a pre-bid meeting for this project for all prospective bidders on Thursday, December 4, 2025, 9:00 AM, at the Port Authority's administrative offices at One Maritime Plaza, 2nd floor conference room, Toledo, OH 43604.

Attendance is suggested, but not mandatory. Please submit all questions through the Bid Express service by Wednesday, December 10, 2025, at 10:00 AM local time. Questions submitted after the deadline will not receive a response. Additional information can be found at <https://www.toledoport.org/public-notice>

Thomas J. Winston  
President and CEO  
Toledo-Lucas County Port Authority

## NOTICE TO BIDDERS

Electronic proposals will be received by the Board of County Commissioners of Lucas County, Ohio, by the Purchasing Department, One Government Center, Suite 480, Toledo, Ohio 43604-2247 until 3:00 P.M. (local time), December 1st, 2025 and opened immediately thereafter for #2176- Request for Qualifications- Non-Emergency Medicaid & Title Transportation Services for the Lucas County Job and Family Services Department, according to specifications available for examination, or download the proposal by going to the site, <http://www.co.lucas.oh.us/bids.asp>. Suppliers interested in doing business with Lucas County must register in the Supplier Portal. To access the Lucas County Oracle Supplier Portal, please visit:

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Prior to 3:00 P.M. (local time), December 1st, 2025, each proposal shall contain the full name of each person submitting the proposal and the name of every person or company interested in same. The right is reserved to reject any and all bids.

By order of the Board of County Commissioners, Lucas County, Ohio.

Lisa A. Sobacki – President

Pete Gerken – Commissioner

Anita Lopez- Commissioner

Bid #2176 – Non-Emergency Medicaid & Title Transportation Service- Request for Qualifications Publish: November 9th, 2025

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# Top Ladies of Distinction's Annual Induction Ceremony

The Truth Staff

The Top Ladies of Distinction Toledo Chapter welcomed six new members on Saturday, November 22, at the Delta Hotel by Marriott. The new members are committed to the Top Ladies' mission of "Serving Youth and Adults."

The Induction Ceremony was presided over by Lady Mary McKinley-Reed, Area V Induction chair. Lady Clara Brank, chaplain, offered the meditation and prayer and Lady Wanda Terrell-Galloway, chapter president, greeted members and guests.

Lady Clara Petty served as the membership chair and Lady Marcia Quinn as co-chair. This year's inductees are Ambershaun Byrd, Angie Cassidy, Twaina Harbour, Marlena Lewis, Rochelle Rollins and Valerie Walston, ThD.

After the ritualistic ceremony, conducted by Lady Velda Hunter, National Area V Director, Petty and Quinn introduced the new Top Ladies and all sang the National TLOD hymn.

Top Ladies of Distinction, Inc. was chartered in the state of Texas in 1964 as a non-profit educational, humanitarian organization. Since its inception, the organization has expanded its focus on youth (known as the Top Teens of America), improving the status of women, service to senior citizens, community beautification and community partnerships. Chapter nationwide support the National Council of Negro Women (NCNW), the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), United Negro College Fund (UNCF) and the awarding of national scholarships to at least one in each of TLOD's six geographic areas.

In addition to the support for NCNW, NAACP and UNCF, the National Thrusts also include support for literacy and sickle cell disease awareness.

Moreover, TLOD has included in its program a cooperative peer education facet with Top Teens of America and the National Foundation, March of Dimes.

The Ladies represent a cross-section of resourceful woman power, all of whom work in the interest of the more than 4,000 Top Teens.



Top Ladies of Distinction Inductees



Lady Clara Petty, Twaina Harbour, Marlena Lewis, Ambershaun Byrd, Rochelle Rollins, Valerie Simmons, Angie Cassidy, Lady Marcia Quinn



Top Ladies of Distinction



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