



Volume 92 No. 9

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

December 10, 2025



HOPE Toledo staff: Autumn Parker, Stacy Cook, Monica Cardenas, Rev. John C. Jones, Sareena Cox, Elisa Huss-Hage, Nancy Okuley, Shawna Woody

*In This Issue...*

Perryman  
Page 2

Tolliver  
Page 3

Ben Jealous  
Page 4

Cover Story:  
HOPE Toledo  
Page 5

Carla  
Thomas  
Page 6

Wilma Brown's  
Surprise  
Page 8

Area Office on Aging  
Holiday Party  
Page 11

Book Review  
Page 13

Classifieds  
Page 15

The Charms  
Page 16

# Earning the Gavel: Vanice Williams' Path to Toledo City Council Leadership

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

The Truth Contributor

*Trust is the glue of life. It's the most essential ingredient in effective communication. It's the foundational principle that holds all relationships.*

- Stephen R. Covey



All signs point to Vanice Williams as Toledo City Council's next president, shedding her interim label when the body reorganizes in January. Despite speculation about challenges, the numbers aren't there for an upset.

Cersandra McPherson has a substantial claim. Her status as the highest vote-getter in the November election could position her for the role. But council leadership has never been determined solely by election-day totals. It's about relationships and trust within the chamber. On that score, Williams appears to have the deeper reservoir of support.

What is perhaps most noteworthy is how Williams is being viewed by peers whom she initially kept at arm's length. Some colleagues point to her growth—not only as a councilmember but also as a collaborator actively rebuilding trust with the Democratic Party that once burned her under previous leadership. Her willingness to coordinate meetings, bring elected officials together, and engage with the party's revitalized organizing structure has not gone unnoticed.

Even Williams' skeptics marvel at how she has matured as a leader. They speak glowingly about the evolution of her vision from narrow district concerns to a more "global" perspective. This is not the behavior of someone simply holding a temporary gavel; it's the profile of a leader blossoming into the role.

After months of internal friction and complaints about "cool-kids-club" decision-making, the council will seek a leader who can broaden the circle, making it more inclusive rather than tightening it. Williams meets that expectation—expanding focus beyond traditional political boundaries and signaling a willingness to hear voices that previously felt shut out.

Williams' close working relationship with Mayor Wade Kapszukiewicz also gives her an advantage—one that matters as city council prepares to enter what could be a tense budgeting season.

Councilmembers are increasingly pushing back on the mayor's "here's your budget" approach, no longer content to rubber-stamp what is placed in front of them—even if they lack the staffing, expertise and experience to fully revise a complex budget document.

Building on these concerns, further tensions arise from structural financial anxieties—rising police and fire costs, and future community development dollars linked to federal funding streams. Consequently, the council president's role grows more consequential.

These financial pressures—police and fire costs, core services, and the limits of the general fund—mean that real community investment will now require critical federal dollars to flow through the Department of Housing and Community Development (Neighborhoods), led by Rosalyn Clemens.

And while local headlines declared that Toledo's DEI was "disbanded,"

the truth is more nuanced: the work has been dispersed across departments, much like many cities are quietly doing.

Williams is a pragmatic choice—offering stability, inclusion, and the promise of a more collaborative council when it's needed most.

In the end, Vanice Williams won't win the council president position because city council suddenly shifted or because an over-the-top political realignment took place. She will win because the councilmembers trust her.

Contact Rev. Donald Perryman at [drdlperryman@centerofhopebaptist.org](mailto:drdlperryman@centerofhopebaptist.org)

## What's Happening This Week in Toledo

Ottawa Park Outdoor Rink (<https://ottawaparkrink.com/>)

2015 Parkside Drive

The Ottawa Park Outdoor Ice Skating Rink is now open for the season and offers public skating, drop-in hockey, freestyle figure skating, ice rentals, birthday parties, and upcoming theme nights.

Skates and adaptable sleds are available for rent. Groups of 15 or more can enjoy a discounted rate. Drop-in hockey is offered daily and requires full protective gear.

Families, groups, schools, and businesses can rent the ice for celebrations or team activities, and birthday party rentals include skate rental with the option to bring food. For pricing and availability, email . Theme night dates and details will be announced soon!

### Thursday, December 11

Disability Housing Needs Public Workshop

Toledo-Lucas County Main Library, 325 Michigan St. – Large Glass Room | 4:30 p.m. - 6 p.m.

The City of Toledo, in partnership with The Ability Center, is launching a comprehensive assessment to better understand the current and future hous-

... *continued on page 3*

## The Sojourner's Truth

Fletcher Word – Publisher and Editor

Tricia Hall – Reporter

Asia Nail – Reporter

Rev. D.L. Perryman – Columnist

Jennifer Retholtz – Webmaster

Jessica Crans – Layout

**A Certified MBE**

The Sojourner's Truth, 7 E Bancroft, Toledo, OH 43620

Phone 419-243-0007

[thetruth@thetruthtoledo.com](mailto:thetruth@thetruthtoledo.com)

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

## Community Calendar

### 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 13

Phillips Temple CME Church Christmas Bazaar: 10 am to 5 pm; Vendors, children's activities, food

### 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 ).

# Jim Crow Circles the White House

By Lafe Tolliver, Esq

Guest Column

For the historically challenged readers who are not versed with the concept of Jim Crow, suffice it to know that this intentionally-created dim-witted buffoon was the product of a white Itinerant actor named Thomas Dartmouth ("Daddy") Rice.

He was not the first white theatrical actor to don rags and use burnt cork to blacken his face in order to mock an exaggerated imitation of African-Americans, but he was the most successful to do it. His crude and vulgar act became a sensation with white audiences.

The word, Jim Crow, came later to encapsulate the fears and fascinations of white people about African-Americans and was used as a shorthand abbreviation for the strict racial segregation laws of both the South and the North and to show the racial animosity and hatred of white society against both the former enslaved person and the newly emancipated enslaved individual.

Its genesis was in the racial fears of white Americans that they needed a population of people whom they could step on and feel superior to and to give them a rationale for their blinding hostility towards the present enslaved population and later, towards those same enslaved folks who were demanding equal rights.

For all intents and purposes, the hatred embodied in the crude symbol of the black raven as a caricature of that hate and legal segregation is now flying and circling the White House under Donald Trump and his sycophantic cabinet members who agree with his policies.

If you have been watching the news lately, Donald Trump has been on a despicable rant and rave about labeling Somalis as "garbage." Garbage because he has been fed a diet of lies and half truths about the Somali population who live in Minnesota.

From Trump's perspective, those Somalis are garbage people from a garbage nation and he does not want them "in his country". He says they smell and offer nothing constructive and should be deported.

According to Trump, their country is a "hell-hole" (just like he characterizes the other African countries as, "s\*ithole" countries) with no value and all they do is complain and complain. We all know that Trump is a stoogie for any information, good or bad, that touches his demented brain and he will run with it as being factually true.

His commentary about the Somalis and their nation is something that Jim Crow would be proud about his progeny, Donald Trump, speaking about people of color because such comments demean and degrade both people and a nation and that is what Jim Crow is about.

With Trump's crusade against anything that remotely smacks of D.E.I., his metastasizing remarks filter into the private sector and also in the military and other institutions so that Jim Crow is gleefully crowing about his resurrected and new found life in the White House.

Trump's crusade against anyone of color is the power push behind his invasions into certain US cities that he believes are infested with aliens who are not "like us."

One should note that Trump's plan of removal of illegal immigrants is curiously not being done in Houston, Dallas, Miami, Salt Lake City, Columbus, Atlanta, or Montgomery, Alabama, et. al.

The reason is that those cities are in red states and he will not invade the governorships of states that support him. Jim Crow's travel restrictions are limited to fly only in blue states.

If you saw the presser in which Trump made these un-presidential comments from the Oval Office, you could not miss, at the end of his racist creed, applause from around the conference table.

Trump knows the ring kissers whom he assembled as his cabinet members and they are not going to cross Dear Leader. By their applause they are sharing in his racist remarks because, like Trump, they are birds of the same dark feather.

To his political credit (?), Trump was able to ascertain the racial animosity



of his MAGA base and others and appealed to their latent racial fears about "they" being in power and "they" being more assertive in their rights as citizens.

Like a resurrected George Wallace, Trump played the race card and won two presidential terms. America still has a love affair with racism when you can tone it down and whisper it.

Yet the meaning is not lost on your intended voting audience.

So...Jim Crow is now cackling and strutting again around the Capitol seeking those he can devour with his racist tirades and a compliant GOP (aka: MAGA) dutifully dances to the tune of this Pied Piper, who no longer has to don a Klan robe to get his message across.

Jim Crow is still feasting on the carcass of the demise of D.E.I., and is now dipping its beak into the issue of blowing up so-called drug running boats, staffed by people of color who have now been labeled, narco-terrorists (Note: no evidence of the contents of the boats or the sailors on the boats because blown up boats and dead men tell no tales).

Jim Crow is now preening his feathers to hopefully latch onto the neutered US Supreme Court since it has agreed to determine if Trump's executive order about ending birthright citizenship is legal...or not.

Jim Crow wants to "strut its stuff" if it can convince the docile GOP-led court that affirming birthright citizenship would mean that babies born here would grow up to be adult people of color and it could mean a loss for anxious white America who see themselves becoming a minority population in a decade or two.

Remember, Trump has offered advantageous immigrant rights to white South Africans who want to come to America to "escape" the majority Black population from exercising political, legal and economic rights in their own country! Figure that one out.

Fly on Jim Crow...fly on.

Contact Lafe Tolliver at lafe5x@gmail.com

## What's Happening... continued from page 2

ing needs of people with disabilities in Toledo.

Accessible, community-based housing is essential for independence, yet many residents struggle to find options that fit their needs, budget, and lifestyle. This study will help us identify what accessible housing exists today, what features people need, and what barriers stand in the way.

\*\* More to Love this Season

\* Check out after-school programming (<https://toledo.oh.gov/residents/parks/after-school-programs>)

\* Sign up to ice skate at the Ottawa Park Ice Rink (<https://ottawaparkrink.com/>)

How are you spending Winter in the City? Share your photos and tag @CityOfToledo to show how you're making the most of the season!

## A Grant up to \$1,500 towards your Mortgage Closing Costs!<sup>1</sup>

### DO YOU QUALIFY?

- Purchase of a primary residence located within State Bank's lending area<sup>2</sup>
- Must meet borrower or geography low- to moderate-income eligibility requirements<sup>3</sup>
- A signed purchase agreement must be presented to reserve funds

State Bank CARE Grant funds are limited, so **APPLY TODAY.**



1900 Monroe Street, Suite 108  
Toledo, OH 43604  
419.508.0806

930 W. Market Street  
Lima, OH 45805  
419.228.3361



Program subject to change with or without notice. Other restrictions may apply. Please see lender for complete details. Subject to credit approval.

<sup>1</sup>Actual amount applied at closing.

<sup>2</sup>Property must be located within one of the following counties: Allen Ohio, Allen Indiana, Defiance, Delaware, Franklin, Hancock, Lucas, Madison, Union, Williams, or Wood.

<sup>3</sup>Borrower income must be below 80% of the area median income, or property must be located in a low- to moderate-income census tract, as updated annually by the FFIEC (Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council).

# PRAYING FOR HOPE The leadership lessons Jesse Jackson has given us are not poetic—they are practical, hard-won and urgently needed now

By Ben Jealous

News of the Reverend Jesse Jackson's health struggles has stirred many. It has me praying. And it has me remembering the hard lessons he taught, shaped in the trenches of our people's ongoing fight for freedom.

Look around the world, and it is easy to find charismatic voices rising amid liberation movements. Black America has been blessed with such figures across generations—perhaps because we have been cursed with a freedom struggle that never really ends.

Through all that pain and hope, for nearly half a century, our most consequential and transformative leader has been the Reverend Jesse Louis Jackson, Sr. Some dismiss his leadership as style over substance. "Keep Hope Alive!" they say. Sometimes with reverence. Sometimes half-mockingly.

When I hear that latter tone, I'm reminded how privileged a life one must lead to think hope is just a slogan and not sacred labor. They don't understand the discipline it takes to help a people—or a nation—maintain hope in the face of adversity.



Last summer, at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago, Reverend Jackson invited me to join him and his family in their box. I sat beside my old mentor and friend, holding his hand as Vice President Kamala Harris accepted the nomination for president.

The symbolism of the location for the night was unmistakable. We were in the city that sent Barack Obama to the White House. But we were also in the city that decades before that empowered Jesse Jackson to show America the question was no longer whether it would elect a Black president—but when.

He demonstrated that truth not only through his presidential campaigns in 1984 and 1988—campaigns that broke ceilings and forged coalitions—but through the generations of leaders he encouraged and inspired.

The year after his last presidential run, Virginia elected its first Black governor, L. Douglas Wilder. New York elected its first Black mayor, David Dinkins. Both publicly named Jackson as someone who helped make their possibilities real.

And just this past January, at Chicago's Martin Luther King Day celebration, his impact was visible from City Hall to the state Capitol—a reminder that his legacy is not nostalgia, but political infrastructure.

A decade earlier, I was one of the few Black partners at any Silicon Valley venture-capital firm. I was told there had only been 36 Black men to hold such positions in the history of the Valley. Then Reverend Jackson showed up.

He stood before the boards of some of the largest technology companies in the world and told them plainly they needed to open their doors—not because it was charity, but because it was smart business. Firms that had never once hired African-American investors began doing so soon after.

I asked one top executive if Jackson's public and private confrontations of their leaders had influenced that shift. He didn't hesitate: "He's right. We need to change."

That's the core of Jackson's leadership—not just breaking barriers himself, but inspiring others to do so. He helped ordinary people see themselves as leaders and compelled those with resources to recognize their responsibility. In doing so, he became a beacon of hope and taught others to be beacons themselves. He continues to model that courageous hope even now. His leadership lessons still empower others to help transform our world for the better.

In 2010, Reverend Jackson and I led a delegation of African American leaders to Senegal to mark the 50th anniversary of its independence. Nearly every head of state on the continent was present—including some notorious for human rights abuses. I froze, unsure how to engage them. Jackson did not.

He walked forward, shaking their hands and hugging each with warmth. Later I pulled him aside. "I don't see how I can do that," I told him. He looked me in the eye. "Someday somebody's parent or wife will call me," he said. "A soldier. A missionary. A businessperson. And they will want help getting their loved one free. How will I be able to convince that president to free them if he doesn't know that I love and respect him as my brother?"

It was a lesson in diplomacy that changed everything for me. But it was more than diplomacy. It was a Christian pastor living out Jesus's commandment to "love your neighbor as yourself." This wasn't sentimentality. It was strategy. Integrity. Faith turned into action.

I stepped back into that room and greeted every leader there—without judgment, without reservation. Not because each had earned it, but because transformation requires it. Because hope demands it. Because, as Jackson taught, the work is helping each other become our best—and never giving up on the faith that each of us can do better tomorrow than we did yesterday.

As Reverend Jackson fights to regain his strength in Chicago, his lesson stands: hope is not a feeling you wait for. It is a discipline you practice. And he is still teaching us—by living it—that no matter how dark the moment may be, we must keep hope alive by continuing to fight for a better day.

*Ben Jealous is a professor of practice at the University of Pennsylvania and a former national president and CEO of the NAACP.*



Rev. Jesse Jackson



**Calling all filmmakers, actors, and creative minds!**  
**INFUSE NETWORK**, Your destination for fresh and captivating content is now streaming absolutely FREE on Roku device.

Dive into a world of unique movies, shows and stories waiting to be discovered.

**But that's not all!**  
**INFUSE NETWORK** is seeking talented individuals to join our growing family.

**.Content Creators:**  
 Do you have a story begging to be told? We're looking for passionate filmmakers with original content to submit for consideration.

**.Models & Actors:**  
 Are you ready to shine on screen? We're seeking captivating models and actors to bring our commercials and television shows to life.

**Fuel your imagination and share your vision!**  
 For more information and submission guidelines.

Email us at [millenniummediagroup@gmail.com](mailto:millenniummediagroup@gmail.com)  
 Call 419.514.1284

**INFUSE NETWORK: Stream Free. Create Boldly**

# The Missing Link in Toledo's Education Crisis: Why Early Childhood Has Always Been the Real Story

By Asia Nail

The Truth Reporter

Some stories are loud. Others hide right in front of you, like the string in a sweater that you tug at, not realizing it's the thread that'll make the whole thing fall apart. Toledo's education crisis is one of those stories. We spend so much time staring at the outcomes, low test scores, struggling teens, graduation gaps, that we forget to ask the most obvious question:

*Where did the challenge really begin?*

According to **John C. Jones, CEO of HOPE Toledo**, the real story doesn't start in high school. Or middle school. Or even kindergarten.

"The beginning," he tells me, "is the beginning."

The missing link? It's early childhood education.

**The Problem: We Keep Trying to Fix the End of the Story Instead of the Start**

Imagine trying to repair a cracked diamond ring by polishing the gemstone over and over. Shine it all you want, if the diamond is cracked, it'll break again.

Many cities have been doing this for decades. Polishing the outcomes, summer programs, tutoring and last-minute interventions, all the while neglecting the foundation that holds the entire structure in place: a child's early years.

Jones calls it: the quiet crisis.

"You can almost predict a student's future by the time they're five," he tells me. "Not because of ability, but because of access."

Access to:

- books
- stable care
- trained teachers
- emotional safety
- early math and reading skills
- social play that builds problem-solving
- exposure to language
- nutritious meals
- consistency

These aren't luxuries. They are the bricks of the road a child walks for the rest of their life. Some Toledo children start that road with a lot of obstacles.

**Why Early Childhood Matters More Than People Realize**

Here's the part most folks don't know: **80 percent of a child's brain is developed by age five.**

Meaning the window when the mind is hungriest, spongiest, most curious, playful, most ALIVE, the very years when children learn fastest, is EXACTLY the window we invest in the least!



Rev. John C. Jones, CEO, HOPE Toledo



John Jones announces the HOPE Toledo pre-K initiative

"We expect our teens to leap over mountains," Jones explains. "After giving them uneven ground to learn to walk on."

And it makes perfect sense. Early childhood is the soil, and if it's dry, nothing flourishes.

But if it's rich, even the tiniest of seeds can grow into a mighty tree.

The Toledo Reality: A City Full of Children Who Can Rise Higher With the Right Start

Thousands of Toledo children are missing high-quality pre-K for a number of reasons:

- limited openings
- long waitlists
- cost barriers
- transportation problems
- lack of awareness
- and programs stretched thinner than ever

So we end up with a heartbreaking cycle:

Kids start kindergarten already behind, teachers scramble to catch them up, gaps widen instead of shrinking, by third grade, reading scores tell the whole truth and by high school, the struggle becomes a crisis.

But the crisis didn't start in high school.

It was planted years before.

And here's the part that stays with me, Jones says it almost in a whisper:

"If you look closely, the future of Toledo is hidden inside a preschool classroom."

**The HOPE Toledo Solution: Start Earlier, Start Smarter, Start Together**

HOPE Toledo didn't just wake up one day and say, "Let's help with pre-K because it sounds nice."

... continued on page 7

*Join Us!*  
Every Sundays at 5:30 p.m.  
Let's FEEL THE SPIR together - Acts 2:42

## Worship EXPERIENCE

**Dr. John W. Williams, Pastor**

Eastern Star Missionary Baptist Church  
2102 Mulberry Street, Toledo, Ohio 43608  
(419) 726-1180, FAX: (419) 726-6240  
E-mail: EasternStarMBC@aol.com  
Website: www.drjwilliams.org

## Hit the road with Glass City auto financing!

- New & used auto loans
- Competitive rates & terms
- Convenient payment options

Apply online or at a branch.  
Or ask for Glass City financing at an area auto dealership.

**GLASS CITY FEDERAL CREDIT UNION**

**Toledo • Maumee • Bowling Green**  
419-887-1000 • [glasscityfcu.com](http://glasscityfcu.com)

Financing subject to credit approval & membership eligibility.

We're working for you!

# Have Our Progress and Accomplishments Diluted Our Desire and Ability to Fight?

By Carla Thomas

The Truth Contributor

There was a time when it was illegal for Black people to read. When we couldn't own anything because *we were owned*. When we couldn't eat in the same restaurants as white people, couldn't go to college, and were written into the Constitution as three-fifths human.

Ohhh but look at us now. We don't just eat in those restaurants, we own them. We run businesses, cities and even became president. This didn't start with us. Our ancestors built towns and schools and led movements that rattled America awake. We didn't just make history, we changed it.

But I have to ask, have our progress and accomplishments diluted our desire and ability to fight? Has this progress allowed us to slow down in a way our elders couldn't afford to?

Our ancestors fought like their lives depended on it, because it did. Every step forward cost them blood, sweat and time in jail cells. They didn't have



the luxury of sitting back and saying, "We've made it."

With respect to what we've achieved, we can't afford to pretend the work is done. It's easy to believe we've already arrived. We got money now. Titles. Followers. Access. There's nothing wrong with celebrating that, as long as we remember, *better than is not good enough*. Not when Black men are still being lynched in 2025. Not when police are still killing Black people at disproportionate rates year after year. Not when Black pregnant mothers still face medical racism and die from childbirth complications at more than **three times** the rate of white mothers. Not when this administration continues pushing policies that target Black and Brown communities and protect systems built on white supremacy.

We talk about progress as though it's liberation, but progress inside a progressively anti-Black system is not true liberation. We're still surviving the same harmful systems, dressed up to look like success.

So the real question is this: with all the progress we've made, are we truly seen as equal in this white-supremacist America, or just more comfortable with what we've been given? Because individual progress doesn't mean collective liberation. A few of us may be winning, but if even one of us is still being killed, targeted, or discriminated against, we haven't arrived as a people.

Roland Martin said something that should make us all stop and think:

*"We have Black infrastructure: D9, Prince Hall Masons, Eastern Star, The Links, but that infrastructure is being used for personal gain, inward gain, not external Black gain. That is our greatest problem. We get a little piece of something and become satisfied."*

*"We've gotten so individualistic that people feel like they've 'made it' because they're in this group or that organization, instead of using that power for our people."*

... continued on page 11

**The Truth Colours  
Gallery**

**ART & CRAFT  
WORKSHOP**

Painting, Crafting and  
Drawing!

check out the  
Gallery studio

STAY  
COO

I LOVE  
STREET  
ART

7 East Bancroft St  
Franklin n Bancroft

Facebook  
The Truth Colours  
Gallery

Nikolacolours  
347-286-9227

## National Urban League Calls on Leaders to Reject Trump's Divisive Rhetoric and Stand Against Bigotry

Special to The Truth

National Urban League President and CEO Marc H. Morial issued the following statement in response to President Trump's comments about Somali Americans:

"The President's abhorrent slurs against Somali Americans are not simply beneath the dignity of his office — or of any self-respecting adult — but dangerous and fundamentally un-American. These words are attack on the very principles of equality and dignity that define our nation.

"Immigrants and their descendants are the foundation of this country, and Somali Americans are no exception. They contribute to our communities, our economy, and our culture. To demean them with hateful rhetoric is to fuel division and incite hostility against an entire group of people based on their heritage.

"The National Urban League calls on all leaders — regardless of party — to reject this language unequivocally. We must stand together against bigotry and affirm that America's strength lies in its diversity and its commitment to justice for all."



Marc Morial

*Education Crisis... continued from page 5*

They studied the data.  
They saw the long-term outcomes.

They followed the true cause to the root.

And they realized:

**if we don't fix early childhood, we'll never fix anything else.**

So their approach is simple but powerful:

**1. Partner with local childcare centers**

Not to replace them, but to strengthen them.

**2. Increase access to high-quality pre-K**

Especially for families who think they can't afford it.

**3. Support teachers and classrooms**

Because a child's first teacher shapes everything.

**4. Guide parents through the system**

Many families don't even know they have options. Early childhood shouldn't feel like a maze. It should feel like a welcome mat.

**The Human Side: What Happens When Kids Start Strong**

This part might be the most important.

Jones doesn't talk about early childhood as a theory. He talks about children he's seen bloom because someone believed in them early.

A child who learns to share in pre-K grows into a teen who can collaborate on a project. A child who learns letters at age three becomes a confident reader at seven. A child who feels safe at age four becomes a student who participates at 10. A child who gets early wins becomes an adult who believes she can win again.

It's not magic.

It's momentum.

And momentum is everything.

**So What Should Toledo Ask Itself?**

John C. Jones says real change starts with real questions. Here are the ones he believes every parent, leader, neighbor, and taxpayer should be asking right now:

If we know early childhood is the key, why aren't we protecting it?

- **What would it look like if Toledo decided that every four-year-old deserves a real shot?**
- **What if the most important building in the city wasn't a stadium or factory, but a preschool?**
- **What would happen if we stopped trying to fix outcomes and started shaping beginnings?**

These are the questions that turn communities around. These are the questions that make leaders look in the mirror.

**The Vision: A Unified Early Childhood System**

Right now, early childhood education in Toledo is a lot like a jewelry box with beautiful but mismatched pieces. The quality is there, but everything is scattered.

Different centers.

Different standards.

Different access points.

Different funding pots.

Different agencies do good work but are not always connected.

Jones wants something bolder.

He wants a unified early childhood system, where every partner works together side by side, where families have one clear door to walk through, and where every child has access to high-quality pre-K, not just the lucky few.

He describes it like a puzzle:

"Each piece matters on its own, but when we fit together, the picture becomes unstoppable."

HOPE Toledo wants to be the big picture, the connector, convener, and stabilizer.

But big visions need big stability.

**A City Built on Strong Beginnings**

John C. Jones believes Toledo can become a model city, one that shows the nation what happens when you pour into children before the world pours its weight onto them.

He sees a future where:

- kindergarteners walk in ready



- teachers can teach instead of rescue
- families feel supported
- high school success is expected, not miraculous
- the workforce grows stronger
- the cycle of struggle breaks

Early childhood isn't a side story.

It's the whole plot. John C. Jones doesn't guilt people. He doesn't lecture. He simply asks:

**"What's the smallest thing you can do that would make a real difference?"**

Not the biggest.

Not the fanciest.

Not the most visible.

Just the smallest.

Because small things done consistently become big things without warning.

And one day, Toledo will look back and realize:

Its future didn't change because of one hero. Its future changed because thousands of regular people finally realized...

they were the missing piece.

No one understands this fight better than Jones. He's the kind of leader who doesn't panic—he plans.

He doesn't complain—he collaborates.

He doesn't throw blame—he builds bridges.

When I asked him what comes next, he didn't sigh or shrug. He says something that hit me right in the chest:

This is the chapter where we decide what kind of city we want to be.

**The Next Chapter Is Ours to Write**

The HOPE Toledo staff believe deeply in this city. They believe Toledo can create a system so strong that other cities come here to study it. They believe children born today can grow up without carrying yesterday's burdens. They believe powerful change is possible when regular people decide they're part of the solution.

Although sustainable funding is a challenge, this isn't just a money issue for our city.

It's a belief issue.

It's a unity issue.

It's a community courage issue.

Toledo has the ingredients.

*... continued on page 11*

YOU'RE CORDIALLY INVITED TO

**PURSUIT**  
MAGAZINE

**WEAR YOUR STORY**  
MAGAZINE LAUNCH PARTY

FOR TICKETS:  
THEPURSUITMAG.COM

**SATURDAY**  
**DECEMBER 13**

A SHOW STOPPER CONNECTING THE PURSUIT MARKETS OF TOLEDO, ATLANTA, LOS ANGELES, & HARLEM

ONE SEAGATE  
TOLEDO, OH 43604

PART OF PROCEEDS TO BENEFIT:  
CONNECTING KIDS TO MEALS

HIGHLIGHTING:  
WBTS - WHO'S BEHIND THE SHOW

**6:00 PM - 9:00 PM**

DON'T MISS OUT ON THE LAUNCH GALA OF THE SEASON

# Wilma Brown Surprised on Her 90th Birthday

The Truth Staff

It's not always easy to surprise someone on her birthday. However, on Thursday, December 4, former Toledo City Council President Wilma Brown was indeed flabbergasted as friends and former colleagues greeted her and shouted out their "SURPRISE!" as the guest of honor entered the meeting room of the Indiana Avenue Missionary Baptist Church.

Wilma Brown celebrated her 90th birthday last week in an event hosted by Robin Wheatley, Pam Hayes and Maggie Benson.

Guests heard tributes from former Toledo mayors Carty Finkbeiner and Paula Hicks-Hudson and current Mayor Wade Kapszukiewicz, along with numerous others whom Brown has worked with and influenced over her many years in public service.

Plaques from the city and the state were presented as the many aspects of Brown's life were noted and honored.

A native of Birmingham, Alabama, Brown arrived in Toledo to attend and graduate from Scott High School and pursued higher education at the University of Toledo, Davis Business College and Bowling Green State University.

She served on the Toledo Board of Education for 12 years and on Toledo City Council for 14 years, becoming the first woman to be voted president of Council. She has also held various business and non-profit roles such as designer at Models, Inc, program director at the American Cancer Society, community health coordinator for the City of Toledo's Health Department and membership director for the Maumee Valley Girl Scout Council. She is still a member of the Civil Service Commission.

One of her more significant accomplishments is her leadership of the annual Debutante Cotillion hosted by the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Toledo Club. The Cotillion, now in its 58th year, was the brainchild of Brown, who served as the general chairman for decades – she still serves as the Cotillion treasurer.

There were so many accolades offered at the Thursday celebration of Brown's 90th birthday and City Councilman George Sarantou, who served with her for years, summed up her city council presidency. "She was a terrific president, very fair, always engaged, did her homework and kept us in line – I'm eternally thankful to you on behalf of the citizens of Toledo for all that you do."



Former City Council President Wilma Brown - seated - with former Councilmembers Paula Hicks-Hudson and Wade Kapszukiewicz and Councilmembers Cerssandra McPherson and George Sarantou



Robin Wheatley

Denise Black-Poon



Former Mayor Carty Finkbeiner and Councilman George Sarantou



Former Mayor Paula Hicks-Hudson and current Mayor Wade Kapszukiewicz with Wilma Brown

**CARIBBEAN RESORTS FOR ADULTS**

*Sandals*

**For More Information, call Tyus Tours & Travel  
866-547-5362**

**HOLIDAY LOAN**

It's the season to "sleigh" the holidays your way!

**New Members!**

**Established Members!**

Borrow up to **\$2,500** apply in branch

Rates between **12% - 18% APR**  
Rates vary based on credit approval. Terms and conditions apply.

Up to **12 Months** to repay

[www.toledourban.net](http://www.toledourban.net) 3053 Monroe St. Toledo, OH, 43606 (419) 255-8876



# FUN YOUR WAY.

Your numbers.  
Your wagers.  
All on your own terms.  
That's Fun Your Way.



**WATCH  
THE HOW-TO-PLAY  
KENO VIDEO**

Play Responsibly. Need Help? 1-800-589-9966  
Lottery players are subject to Ohio laws and Commission regulations.



# Fourth Graders to Be Selected to Serve as Kid Mayor and Kid Council Members

*Special to The Truth*

Attention fourth graders in Toledo Public Schools and Washington Local Schools. You have the exciting opportunity to become Toledo's next Kid Mayor or Kid Council Member!

Thirteen students will serve a one-year term as Kid Mayor or Kid Council (https://toledo.oh.gov/get-involved/kid-mayor) members.

#### Do you want to:

- \* Learn about local government: Meet with city officials, including the Mayor, City Council members, and other government representatives.
- \* Present ideas: Share proposals and projects to improve the community and present them at special events or meetings.
- \* Get involved: Participate in community projects, volunteer activities, and initiatives like the Litter League team.
- \* Represent your peers: Serve as a voice for fellow students in local government discussions.
- \* Attend special events: Gain firsthand experience in public and civic life through meetings, tours, and ceremonies.

#### Program Details:

The Kid Council consists of 12 students from Toledo Public and Washington Local Schools, while the Kid Mayor serves as the lead student representative. The program teaches students about local government and civic engagement through tours of city departments, community projects, and presentations to city officials. Participants should be comfortable being interviewed by the media and speaking on camera at events.

Previous Kid Mayors include Evelyn Bush (2022), Gabrielle Mukiira (2023), Lillian Joseph (2024), and the current Kid Mayor, Dashiell "Dash" Harden.



*Gabrielle Mukiira, former Kid Mayor of Toledo and her human book display*



*Toledo School Board Member Randall Parker III with Kid Mayor Gabrielle Mukiira*

#### How to Apply:

All fourth graders in Toledo Public and Washington Local Schools are eligible. Students can get more information and applications from their teachers or principals. Applications will be accepted from December 15, 2025, through January 9, 2026.

For more information contact Caryn Maloney at .

**THE SOCIAL BUTTERFLY PRESENTS**  
**The 14<sup>th</sup> Annual CHRISTMAS BAZAAR**  
**SATURDAY DECEMBER 6<sup>TH</sup> 2025**  
**11AM - 4PM**  
**FREE ADMISSION & FREE PARKING**  
**ONE STOP SHOP FOR ALL YOUR HOLIDAY NEEDS AND NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES**  
**DJ | FOOD TRUCK | DOOR PRIZES**  
**ST. CLEMENT HALL**  
**2990 TREMAINSVILLE RD, TOLEDO OH 43613**  
 SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS:  
 THE SOCIAL BUTTERFLY, THE SOJOURNERS TRUTH NEWSPAPER, ADVENTUROUS TRAVELS  
 FOR VENDOR INFORMATION VISIT OUR WEBSITE: [WWW.THESOCIALBUTTERFLYLLC.COM](http://WWW.THESOCIALBUTTERFLYLLC.COM)  
 OR EMAIL: [EVENTS@THESOCIALBUTTERFLYLLC.COM](mailto:EVENTS@THESOCIALBUTTERFLYLLC.COM) OR CALL (419) 367-9765

## UToledo Admissions Event Accelerates Application Process, Waives Fee

Prospective students can apply for free and receive a same-day admission decision during The University of Toledo's In-Person Rocket Chats from Monday, Dec. 15, to Wednesday, Dec. 17.

"In-Person Rocket Chats streamline the admission process," said Sarah Shepherd, director of undergraduate recruitment at UToledo. "Our staff will help prospective students navigate this exciting first step to their academic journeys, ensuring that they receive a same-day decision and the support they need to enroll as soon as the spring semester."

The open house-style event will run from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday, Dec. 15, through Wednesday, Dec. 17, in Rocket Hall Suite 1100. Attendees are encouraged to arrive by 3 p.m. to allow enough time to complete their application.

Free parking is available in Area 25.

While In-Person Rocket Chats are aimed at those interested in starting classes in the spring semester, all prospective students are welcome. They should bring copies of all high school and college transcripts, as well as any additional supporting information they'd like to include in their application.

Those who apply through the event will have the regular \$40 application fee waived.

Registration is encouraged but not required to attend. To register or for more information, go to the In-Person Rocket Chats website (<https://www.utoledo.edu/admission/rocket-chats/>).

# Area Office on Aging 60th Annual Holiday Party

By Emily R. Evans

The Truth Reporter

The Area Office on Aging celebrated the holiday season with 700 of their closest friends Thursday, December 4, at the annual 60+ Holiday Party held at The Premier Banquet Hall.

"As you know, the winter months can be hard for some, especially our older adults, so it is our pleasure to bring some joy to our northwest Ohio and southeast Michigan communities with an afternoon of friends, fine dining, live music by the Bluewater Kings Band, and prizes at Toledo's Premier Banquet Hall," according to the AOoA press release.

This event is made possible with the support of the AOoA sponsor, Alert Medical Alarms, which continually supports the seniors each year.

This year's event started off with a jam-packed parking lot, smiles, warm welcomes and a location filled with people from all over, most dressed in beautiful holiday attire. The Premier Banquet Hall was decorated beautifully with Christmas decorations and the energy was highly contagious.

Master of ceremonies Sashem Brey, from 13abc News, led the festivities with smiles and broke the ice with laughter. Brey said last year was her first time attending the party and she had such a great time that she couldn't wait to attend this year's festivities.

The event started with a welcome from AOoA CEO Justin Moor followed by Rev. Barbie Harrison, chairwoman of the Board of Directors. Lunch was followed by the raffle, then entertainment by the Bluewater Kings Band. After the talented band got people out of their seats dancing, there was another raffle. Everyone was clearly having a wonderful time while enjoying the entertainment and each other's company.

"The party is a great opportunity for members aged 60 plus to gather to get the holiday spirit, enjoy a meal, dancing and fellowship and to get everyone out of the house," said Moor. "For some people the holidays can be joyous and for others it can be a sad time that they may otherwise spend alone."

There were 700 people from the community, from senior centers, and new



people from all around Ohio. These types of events encourage socialization, exercise and nutrition which are key components to helping people live better.

Events such as the annual parties bring all three together. There were members from 10 counties all over northwest Ohio in attendance.

"It's a fabulous event," said Ireatha Hollie. Hollie is 80 years old and still working at the Area Office on Aging. She noted that there are so many seniors who are isolated and alone. She feels they need a bigger venue to host the events so more people can join.

Each event is usually sold out within an hour. A lot of work and love go into planning. Call in November to see when tickets are going on sale. Advertisements for each event are usually posted at the senior centers as well.

Hollie said it's a time to be friendly, together and to be thankful at 60+ to be able to join these types of events, and to show love." Anyone 60+ who wants to join is welcome. For any questions call 419-382-0624 or go on the website at [areaofficeonaging.com](http://areaofficeonaging.com)."



## Education Crisis... continued from page 7

HOPE Toledo has the vision.

The children have the need.

Now the city must decide if it has the will.

### The First Five Years Are Not Just Years—They're Futures

If we all want better graduates, better outcomes, better hope, and a better tomorrow... then it's time to remember one simple truth: You Can Do Better in Toledo.

It has to start where tomorrow begins.

"With babies," John C. Jones says.

"With toddlers.

With tiny hands holding big futures."

Because the truth is simple:

You can't build a strong city on weak beginnings.

And now that we see the missing link, the only question that remains is—

**Do we want to raise children who are forever catching up, or children who start life already ahead?**

It's a choice.

One that's real.

And we are the ones making it.

*Learn more about HOPE Toledo and their work with children here*

## Progress and Accomplishments...continued from page 6

*These groups are thousands strong, 17,000 members, 20,000 members, but what are we doing with that power? Issuing letters of 'disappointment' isn't action. If we think we've overcome, we're delusional. We haven't. There is work to be done."*

He's right. We've built organizations with thousands of members, but what are we doing with that power?

Somewhere along the way, we got comfortable being included. We stopped expecting change. Corporate America learned how to sell "diver-

sity" back to us and call it progress. They turned our fight into hashtags and job titles. Meanwhile, the same systems still decide who benefits and who doesn't.

We've mistaken access for autonomy and proximity for power.

What's the point in having a seat at the table if you can't control what's being served?

Maybe the real question isn't whether we've made progress, but whether progress has quietly softened our urgency. And if that's true, then the greatest threat to us right now isn't oppression, it's complacency.

**DIXIE** Auto Leasing Toledo, OH

5880 N. Detroit  
Month to Month Leasing  
419-476-8674

WE ARE A FULL SERVICE BUSINESS

Bernadette Joy Graham, LPCC, LLC  
Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor  
419.409.4929  
Mental Health...Get Your Mind Right  
[www.bjgrahamcounseling.com](http://www.bjgrahamcounseling.com)  
2525 W. Bancroft  
Toledo, OH 43606  
[graham.bernadette@gmail.com](mailto:graham.bernadette@gmail.com)

Welcome Home to Sylvan Lakes Apartments!

Our elegant apartments feature spacious bedrooms with ample storage, high ceilings and breath-taking views! Stop in today to see our beautifully landscaped grounds, resort-like swimming pool and clubhouse with its fully-equipped fitness center. Located just west of King road off of Sylvania Ave.

**Sylvan Lakes**  
Apartment Homes

4045 A Langston Place, Sylvania, Ohio 43560  
P: 419-842-8480 E: [investekmanagement.com](mailto:investekmanagement.com)

# Chefs Share Their Secret Ingredients for the Holiday Season

*Special to The Truth*

Every family has at least one perfect dish featuring a secret ingredient or special cooking technique, and it's these twists on tradition that make all the difference.

That's why this holiday season, the McCormick brand is partnering with famed bakery Milk Bar and award-winning founder and CEO, Christina Tosi to inspire home cooks by sharing their best-kept baking secrets. Through their collaboration, they're creating an exclusive, limited-time McCormick x Milk Bar Eggnog English Toffee Cookie available at select Milk Bar locations starting 11/28. A fresh take on timeless holiday flavor inspired by the comfort and creaminess of eggnog and the buttery crunch of English toffee, this golden cookie features hints of McCormick cinnamon and nutmeg and the rich flavor of vanilla extract, complemented with a layer of icing topped with English Toffee Finishing Sugar. Here, they're sharing the recipe for fans to make at home:

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Cook Time: 12 minutes

Makes 18 cookies.

Cookie Ingredients:

2 cups all-purpose flour

1/3 cup instant vanilla pudding mix

1 teaspoon McCormick Ground Cinnamon

3/4 teaspoon kosher salt

3/4 teaspoon baking powder

1/2 teaspoon baking soda

1/4 teaspoon McCormick Ground Nutmeg

2 sticks unsalted butter, softened

3/4 cup granulated sugar

1/4 cup light brown sugar, packed

1 whole egg

1 egg yolk

1 1/2 teaspoons McCormick Pure Vanilla Extract

1/3 cup McCormick English Toffee Finishing Sugar

Icing Ingredients:

1 cup confectioner's sugar

1 tablespoon milk

Directions:

For the cookies, preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Line two large baking sheets with parchment; set aside. Mix flour, pudding mix, cinnamon, salt, baking powder, baking soda and nutmeg in medium bowl; set aside.

Beat butter and sugars in large bowl with electric mixer on medium-high speed two to three minutes or until light and fluffy. Add egg, egg yolk and vanilla; beat two to three minutes longer or until well blended, scraping sides of bowl, as needed.

Gradually add flour mixture, beating on low speed just until dough comes together, up to one minute. Stir in English Toffee Finishing Sugar, mixing just until combined. Scoop dough in 1/3-cup portions onto prepared baking sheets, placing about two inches apart.

Bake 15 to 20 minutes until cookies have spread and edges are golden brown. Cool on pans one minute. Transfer to wire racks to cool at least 10 minutes.

For the icing, whisk confectioners' sugar and milk in small bowl until smooth (add additional milk or confectioners' sugar, one tablespoon at a time, to reach desired consistency). Spread icing on cooled cookies and sprinkle with additional English Toffee Finishing Sugar. Let stand five minutes to allow icing to set.

Recipe Hints: To spice things up, substitute one teaspoon McCormick Rum Extract and 1/2 teaspoon McCormick Pure Vanilla Extract in place of just vanilla. For a little extra crunch, substitute turbinado sugar or sugar in the raw in place of light brown sugar. No vanilla pudding mix? No problem! Add an additional 1/4 cup flour in place of the pudding mix.

More baking secrets and inspiration can be found by visiting [www.mccormick.com/thecookieconfidential](http://www.mccormick.com/thecookieconfidential).

And as you prepare all the other festive treats of the season, remember that details matter. Be it flour, sugar or flavorings, don't skimp on the good stuff, and don't be afraid to give everything from desserts to cocktails and mocktails that unexpected edge with secret ingredients like brown butter and peppermint extract.

*Courtesy StatePoint*

## Doctors' Tips to Stay Healthy and Safe This Holiday Season

*Special to The Truth*

The holiday season is a joyous time to reconnect with family and friends, but it can also throw your wellness routines out of alignment. Doctors advise prioritizing healthy choices now so you can start 2026 feeling your best.

"Amid the hustle and bustle of the holidays, it's easy to lose sight of our well-being, overindulge in food and drink, and feel stressed. A little awareness and a few healthy habits can go a long way in helping you and loved ones enjoy the season in good health," says Dr. Bobby Mukkamala, president of the American Medical Association (AMA).

For a healthy and happy holiday season, the AMA recommends the following tips:

1. Watch what you eat. Pay attention to labels and avoid ultra-processed foods, especially those high in added sodium, saturated fats and sugar. Consider having a healthy snack before the big meal or offer to bring a healthier dish for the holiday spread. Drink water instead of sugar-sweetened beverages, and eat nutritious, whole foods such as fresh fruits and vegetables alongside richer holiday dishes.

2. Prioritize your mental health. Factors such as holiday spending and navigating time with extended family can bring on extra seasonal stress. Get sufficient sleep and exercise, and don't hesitate to talk to a mental health professional when you need help managing stress.

3. Prioritize physical activity during this busy time of year. A good rule of

... continued on page 13

Inspire Your Inner Artist

Join a community that creates together.  
[toledomuseum.org/classes](http://toledomuseum.org/classes)

# Bloom How You Must: A Black Woman's Guide to Self-Care and Generational Healing by Tara Pringle Jefferson

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

The Truth Contributor

You've just about had it.

Everything and everybody is on your last nerve, which marks the official end of any self-restraint you might've had. You're out of patience, out of breath, out of any shred of willingness to give things more time. You're out of cares. Nope, as of now, and in the new book *Bloom How You Must* by Tara Pringle Jefferson, you're taking care of you now.

All it took was a minor health crisis.

With two kids, a freelance business and 18 hour days, Tara Pringle Jefferson had been experiencing a lot of pain that she usually powered through – until she couldn't anymore. Her doctor examined her, then told her to take the weekend off. Seriously, rest.

This made Jefferson think. For generations, Black women had made sure what needed doing was done. How did they cope under oppression, overwork, few resources?

Looking into the lives of influential Black women in history, she discovered the secret: self-care. Even Coretta Scott King took time away from Martin and the family, Jefferson says. Black women have a legacy of self-care that's usually passed down from mother to daughter, and it's up to each woman to make sure she finds what makes her feel complete again.

Jefferson offers ways to get you started.

Physical Wellness reminds you to moisturize your skin, eat right, get enough sleep and enjoy the body you have. Host a sister circle for Social Wellness. Find your own definition of success for Professional Wellness. "Do church" in a new way for Spiritual Wellness. Don't let a need for Mental Wellness to be stigmatized. Find your inner child, learn to play again and tap into your Creative Wellness. And know that you are a child of survivors who gave you strength but who also passed down intergenerational trauma, so be gentle and kind to yourself. Remember: you're still rehabilitating.

As with most self-help books, *Bloom How You Must* is full of a lot of commonsensical things you probably already know. Also, as with most self-help books, it's always nice to be reminded, with the info you need all in one place.

The best thing about this self-help book is that author Tara Pringle Jefferson focuses exclusively on the self-care and well-being of Black women only. In doing so, she reaches into history to remind readers that the stress they're experiencing today is a modern problem, but it's also nothing new. The care she advocates, therefore, has tinges of ancestry, which is comfortable but can also be surprising, in that she candidly discusses sex, relationships, and changing the way readers approach their spiritual well-being. Readers who are open and willing to change for better health and happiness may be taken aback by that, but it's undoubtedly also going to leave you thinking.

c. 2025  
Armistad  
\$28.00  
304 pages

need help they can only get from inside. If that's you, then find *Bloom How You Must*. Because you must have it.

## Secret Ingredients...continued from page 12

thumb for adults is at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity activity each week. Brisk walks, bike rides, hikes and family-friendly sports like basketball and touch football can provide easy, fun ways to get off the couch and elevate your heart rate. If you're traveling, don't forget to pack your sneakers!

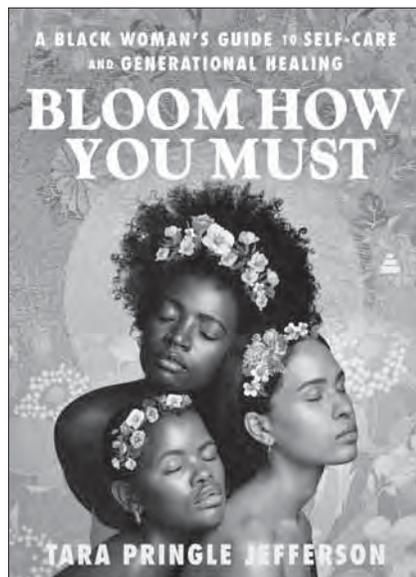
4. Be prepared when traveling. Whether you're flying or taking a road trip, you might be tempted to grab convenient yet unhealthy food for the journey. Consider packing your own snacks, such as fresh fruits and vegetables or small portions of dried fruits and nuts. When flying, pack your medication in your carry-on bag instead of your checked luggage so it's easily accessible. Keeping medication handy will help you avoid missing a dose on busy travel days, especially amid flight delays. Stay hydrated and drink plenty of water during your flight as air travel can cause dehydration. And keep your body moving in-flight to avoid blood clots.

5. Make smart choices and plan ahead if you're driving. In December 2023 alone, 1,038 people died in alcohol impaired-driving crashes in the United States. If you plan to drink, always arrange for a sober driver or alternative transportation. And if you are the designated driver, commit to 100% sobriety. Also make sure to get plenty of sleep before your road trip as drowsy driving is responsible for an estimated 100,000 car crashes each year nationwide.

6. Vaccination remains the best protection against several serious respiratory viruses circulating this fall and winter, particularly as people are spending more time indoors and gathering for the holidays. The AMA encourages you to speak with your physician or other health care professional to determine which vaccines are best for you. The AMA offers infographics to help patients and physicians cut through vaccine confusion and foster open, honest conversations with each other. The infographics can be found at <https://ama-assn.org>.

7. Start New Year's resolutions early. Speak with your doctor or other health care professional about quitting tobacco, nicotine and e-cigarettes, and declare your home and car smoke-free to protect loved ones from secondhand smoke exposure.

"While you're celebrating this holiday season and reconnecting with family and friends, remember to take care of your health. Eating well, staying active, and taking precautions to prevent the spread of respiratory viruses can help you enjoy the season and start the new year strong," says Dr. Mukkamala.



she she advocates, therefore, has tinges of ancestry, which is comfortable but can also be surprising, in that she candidly discusses sex, relationships, and changing the way readers approach their spiritual well-being. Readers who are open and willing to change for better health and happiness may be taken aback by that, but it's undoubtedly also going to leave you thinking.

Men who are curious can absolutely read this book but it's not for them – it's purely for Black women who

## Musty Basement? WE CAN HELP!

Basement Waterproofing
 Indoor Air Quality

Foundation Repair
 Crawl Space Service

BEFORE

AFTER

\$750 OFF

Plus FREE  
Home Air Quality Test (\$399 value)

CALL TODAY TO SCHEDULE YOUR FREE ESTIMATE

1-888-501-2812

New orders only. Cannot be combined with any other offer. Minimum purchase required. Other restrictions may apply. This is an advertisement placed on behalf of Erie Construction Mid-West, Inc. ("Erie"). Offer terms and conditions may apply and the offer may not be available in your area. If you call the number provided, you consent to being contacted by telephone, SMS text message, email, pre-recorded messages by Erie or its affiliates and service providers using automated technologies notwithstanding if you are on a DO NOT CALL list or register. Please review our Privacy Policy and Terms of Use on [homereservicescompliance.com](http://homereservicescompliance.com). All rights reserved.

# Make every day a *HOLIDAY!*

Play Ohio Lottery Scratch-Offs today!



On-sale  
10/07/2025

Play Responsibly. Need Help? 1-800-589-9966

Lottery players are subject to Ohio Laws and Commission Regulations.

**OH!**  
LOTTERY.

## 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:

[https://eieb.fa.us6.oraclecloud.com/fscmUI/faces/NegotiationAbstracts?prcBuld=300000007278812&\\_adf.ctrlstate=l5ps8sau3\\_1&\\_af\\_rLoop=7126760101772357&\\_afWindow-Mode=0&\\_afWindowId=avudlxmca&\\_af\\_rFS=16&\\_afMT=screen&\\_afrMFW=1920&\\_af\\_rMFH=932&\\_af\\_rMFDW=1920&\\_af\\_rMFDH=1080&\\_af\\_rMFC=8&\\_af\\_rMFCI=0&\\_af\\_rMFM=0&\\_af\\_rMFR=96&\\_af\\_rMFG=0&\\_af\\_rMFS=0&\\_af\\_rMFO=0](https://eieb.fa.us6.oraclecloud.com/fscmUI/faces/NegotiationAbstracts?prcBuld=300000007278812&_adf.ctrlstate=l5ps8sau3_1&_af_rLoop=7126760101772357&_afWindow-Mode=0&_afWindowId=avudlxmca&_af_rFS=16&_afMT=screen&_afrMFW=1920&_af_rMFH=932&_af_rMFDW=1920&_af_rMFDH=1080&_af_rMFC=8&_af_rMFCI=0&_af_rMFM=0&_af_rMFR=96&_af_rMFG=0&_af_rMFS=0&_af_rMFO=0)

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. Sobecki – President

Pete Gerken – Commissioner

Anita Lopez- Commissioner

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

The Healing Place  
"Black people make up nearly 40 percent of trafficking survivors in the U.S.

That's not by chance — it's the impact of poverty, racism, and ignored trauma.

The Healing Place provides culturally grounded therapy and group healing for survivors of sex trafficking, sexual assault, and domestic violence.

Your story matters. Your healing matters.  
Call The Healing Place today.  
[419-855-2299] [info@thptoledo.org]

# Toledo Chapter of The Charms Hosts Breakfast with Santa at Braden United Methodist Church

By Alexandria Leatherberry  
The Truth Reporter

The Toledo Chapter of The Charms, a local site of a growing national women's empowerment and service organization, is closing out the year with new initiatives aimed at community giving and cultural enrichment.

Following their most recent event, "Menopause Uncovered: A candid conversation with BIOPIC women", Breakfast with Santa was a nostalgic giveback for the organization. The Toledo Chapter of Charms has been formed by a circle of local professionals on a mission to support the community through personal development and humanitarian service. The group has fulfilled that mission with a slate of programs designed to strengthen both sisterhood and community partnerships.

For the Breakfast with Santa event they partnered with Braden Methodist Church led by Rev. Ernest Ologo. In the community center, the group held crafts, games and story time for a holiday gathering. Clara Petty, the president and national Civic engagement chair, coordinated the event with Toledo members to conclude their seasonal community service activities.

The chapter has made contributions to holiday Angel Trees and the tiny homes Monroe project as another part of their winter service projects. "We want to ensure all our families get a photo with Santa" Petty repeated throughout the event as she and members tended to serve guests food and escort them to meet Santa Clause.

The guests of Toledo Chapter of Charms were filled with pancakes and fellowship with the warm welcome from Braden United. The chapter is updating their social sites with the activities planned and will be continuing to connect for more in the new year.



One of Santa's helpers reads to the children



Clara Petty and her granddaughter Kameron Petty



The Toledo chapter of The Charms



Asia Nail and Leonard with daughter Lenyx and son Junah



A Message of Gratitude to the Citizens of Toledo  
From Councilwoman Cersandra McPherson

To the incredible people of Toledo — thank you. I am truly humbled and deeply grateful for your confidence in me and for the honor of continuing to serve as your Councilwoman. Your vote is more than support — it is a partnership, a shared belief in the work we are doing together to strengthen our neighborhoods, uplift our families, and move our city forward.

Every day, I am inspired by the resilience, spirit, and unity of our community. I promise to continue fighting for you, listening to your concerns, and working tirelessly to make Toledo a safer, stronger, and more vibrant place for all of us. Thank you for your trust, your encouragement, and your belief in what we can achieve together. I am proud to serve you — and I will continue doing so with integrity, compassion, and unwavering commitment.

With heartfelt appreciation,

*Cersandra McPherson*  
Cersandra McPherson  
Councilwoman At-Large



Asia Nail and Valerie Simmons-Walston