



Volume 94 No. 7

*“And Ye Shall Know The Truth...”*

April 8, 2026

### *In This Issue...*

Perryman  
Page 2

Tolliver  
Page 3

Cover Story:  
Dr. Karen Adams-Ferguson  
Page 5

Carla Thomas  
Page 6

The Reentry Coalition  
Page 7

Kid Mayor  
Page 8

Are You Registered to  
Vote?  
Page 9

Ben Jealous  
Page 11

Book Review  
Page 13

Classifieds  
Page 15

Silent Soldiers  
Page 16

### **Delivering More Than Babies**



*The Legacy of Dr. Karen Adams-Ferguson, MD*

# When Freedom Becomes a Private Club

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

The Truth Contributor

*If you have come to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together.*

- Lilla Watson



America turns 250 this year.

But before the fireworks go up, somebody in the Black community needs to ask a hard question — not only about what America owes us, but also about what we owe each other.

Here it is: Have we turned the freedom for which we struggled and bled into a members-only club?

Before you roll your eyes, suck your teeth, and smack your lips, I have the standing to ask this. I was born and raised in the Black Church led by my grandfather. It is the community that shaped me, the tradition that formed me and whose music and theology are in my bloodstream.

This is not a subject I studied from the outside — I hold a terminal academic degree in Leadership and Organizational Change, with a concentration in the Black Church. My credentials are not the kind you buy, borrow or receive at a banquet. They are a terminal degree from a regionally accredited institution — one recognized by the federal government and every legitimate university in this country.

So here is the truth.

America's founding sin was not just slavery. It was what I call the "privatization of freedom," turning the universal language of liberty into a members-only club. All men are created equal meant some men. Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness meant certain lives. The Declaration of Independence was the greatest private club ever written.

And for 250 years, the Black freedom tradition has been the most powerful voice in America, demanding that the club open its doors.

But something is happening inside that tradition that needs to be said out loud.

Call it what it is — the privatization of freedom. This occurs when a community once dedicated to universal liberation begins to limit that liberation to its own members. It uses the language of rights, dignity and God-given humanity to justify protecting its interests, even as it quietly excludes others. This shift is not always intentional or obvious, which makes it especially dangerous. The privatization of freedom always feels justified to those within the group.

It looks like this.

It looks like demanding the First Amendment when it protects us and dismissing it when it protects someone we disagree with. That is not a principled position. That is convenience.

It looks like invoking the name of the Black Church — the institution that sat at the center of every freedom struggle — in support of positions that it spent generations fighting against. Lilla Watson called it out a long time ago — if you are here because your liberation is bound up with mine, let us work together. But if you are just here to use my numbers, go home.

It looks like the Black church — the institution that knows better than anyone in America what it costs to be told your humanity is conditional — then turning around and using that same conditional logic on somebody else's community. We do that all the time in the Black Church to those who don't fit "our aesthetic" — from excluding women from the pulpit, the formerly incarcerated, the addicted, the poor, and to those who love God with everything they have and are told that who they love makes them less than whole.

Theologian Angela Parker argues that America has never been able to apply its own revolutionary logic to Black and Brown bodies. She is right. But her insight does not stop at America's door. It walks right through and into the doors of the Black Church.

Yet, Frederick Douglass refused to stop talking about women's rights when people told him to stay in his lane. Fannie Lou Hamer would not let her freedom be partial. King said you could not fight one injustice while ignoring the others.

And then we do the very thing these icons of freedom spent their lives fighting against.

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

Fast, Easy, and the Lowest Flooring Prices, Period®



With Refloor, you get:

- ✓ Free In-Home Design
- ✓ Free Furniture Moving
- ✓ Free Next Day Installation
- ✓ Free Lifetime Guarantee

Special Offer

**FREE**  
INSTALLATION

Plus!

**0%**  
FINANCING

Call Now!  
**877-519-7762**

**REFLOOR®**  
THE LAST FLOOR YOU'LL EVER BUY®

## Community Calendar

**April 18**

"The Kids Hair in Care Program:" A haircare resource fair; 2800 Bancroft; 11 am to 2 pm; Hair care professionals, activities for youth, foster care parent panels, community vendors, free hair care kits, door prizes, food and more; Contact Maumee Bay Club – 419-699-3716 – 419-345-1505 – MaumeeBayClub@gmail.com

The Bible Way Toledo Hosts Free Community Event Focused on Health Advocacy, Dental Education, and Family Fellowship; Toledo Library West, Sylvania Avenue, 2 pm: 419-984-8717

**April 19**

Toledo NAACP Youth Council meeting; @3:00 pm at Sanger Branch Library; Lynnishia Foster President

**April 21**

Toledo NAACP Membership and General Public meeting to be held: at Mott Branch Library

**May 2**

Warren AME Spring Tea: Bloom Where You Are Planted; 11:30 - 2:30 pm. Speaker, First Lady Sabrina Prince - The Cross Church. Vendor Tables Welcomed. Rsvp to: [darlenesawyer2751@gmail.com](mailto:darlenesawyer2751@gmail.com)

# Captain Bone Spurs...Lost In Space!

By Lafe Tolliver, Esq'

Guest Column

If you have not heard by now, Donald Trump is also contemptuously known as, "Captain Bone Spurs" allegedly due to his rich father getting a favor from a doctor friend to exempt him from the draft in the 1960s. Purportedly, Trump received five exemptions and jocularly proclaimed to The New York media outlets that his biggest fear was catching an STD.

Is it not enough that Trump, according to General John Kelly, degraded dead soldiers while visiting a military cemetery as, "suckers and losers" for their ultimate sacrifice?

This is the same president who cannot seem to extol enough the virtues of former KGB agent, Vladimir Putin (now president of Russia). When it comes to choosing sides as to who to believe...our intelligence agencies or the word of Putin, Trump chooses Putin.

And now, this is the same lame brain who is playing hopscotch over all over the calendar as to when the war he started (along with Israel) will conclude. Trump, with recognizable signs of dementia, has said that the war was won in one day. He then changed that to a two to four week timetable and now it appears that it could be months before the war is concluded.

However, the glaring problem is that no one told the Iranian leadership of Trump's mandated timetable and, as such, the Iranians are fighting on and have publicly stated that they have offered no peace plan nor are they begging to end the fighting.

Yes, the American public is still being gas lighted by a woefully incompetent president who now wants to berate the EU allies for not coming to his military aid in the war that he started while not informing them!

And the status of the feckless GOP? They are still searching their closets for a semblance of a backbone by which to call this amok president to heel and stand down. They, or course, will not do this because Trump will call them names and "sic" his MAGA base on them and the last thing these cowards want is to lose their financial perks and privileges and have to seek a job in the private sector.

And about those crazy ever rising gas prices! Be forewarned, the worse is yet to come if this futile war goes on through the fall because great damage will be done (has been done already) to transport, food prices, airline seats, heating oil and farmers needing chemicals and fertilizers that come via the Strait of Hormuz.

And here is the icing on the cake to the madness of Trump. He wants another



\$200B to fund his war and he has issued dire threats that we do not need such federal benefits such as daycare, Medicaid and Medicare because that is where the cuts will come from in order to fuel his folly.

Trump, due to limited brain wave space, can only focus on one item at a time so if you raise the issue of the Epstein Files, affordability, the grim housing market, the volatile stock market and his anger issues with anyone who does not fall down and worship him, he goes off on a tantrum.

The short term hope is for the cabinet to utilize the 25th amendment and get Trump out of office or a congressional impeachment but both are long shots since the hypnotized GOP would never consider packing Trump away in a straight jacket for his own good and for the good of the country.

No, my friends, we are left with the midterms to try to somewhat right this sinking ship called democracy and especially since, if the Democrats win the House, they would have the power of the purse and could, like a scalpel, refuse to fund some of his madness.

It is my considered opinion, that due to Trump giving the heave-ho to both Kristi Noem and Pam Bondi, the new cult members for those positions will be on a campaign to show Dear Leader how tough and ruthless they can be in order to get his continued blessings.

And now with the current Pope throwing cold water on warlord Pete Hegseth's diatribe that God is a god of war, we will now have the Catholics and the Protestants fighting with both swords and crosses.

Already, Hegseth has said that his monthly prayer meetings (including for Easter) will be for Protestants only and NO CATHOLICS NEED TO ATTEND! Imagine how that will go down with the people of the Catholic faith who work in the Pentagon or in government now being ostracized from prayer meetings because Hegseth is a member of a far right wing Protestant group that is not kindly to those of the Catholic persuasion!

You could not make these things up! Unless of course if you lived in Trump's Alice In Wonderland brain where he daily creates his own delusions of omnipotence.

Every news day is an adventure in deciphering nonsense from sense, realizing that Trump & Company thinks that they are playing three dimensional chess while the rest of us, his gullible public, are stuck on checkers.

Mental illness can be a cruel taskmaster.

Contact Lafe Tolliver at [Lafe5x@gmail.com](mailto:Lafe5x@gmail.com)

## Health Department Announces Minority Health Month

The Health Department's Local Office on Minority Health is proud to present the lineup of events for the 39th Annual Minority Health Month, taking place throughout April.

**Walk and Talk April 11, 10:00 a.m.-11:30 a.m. Glass City Metro Park (Market Hall) 1505 Front Street, Toledo, Ohio**  
Join us for a wellness walk all about health, connection, and community. Walk alongside physicians, community members, and local organizations while having real conversations about health and wellness. Hosted by the Health Department and the Black Physicians Group in partnership with Toledo Metroparks, this is a great chance to ask questions, learn more about your health, and connect with helpful local resources—all while enjoying a walk together.

**Mental Health Matters April 18, 3:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m. Kent Branch Library 3101 Collingwood Blvd, Toledo, OH**  
Take part in a meaningful conversation on mental health and the importance of caring for your well-being. Hear from experts and community voices as they share insights, resources, and practical ways to support your mental health. Be part of the discussion and take a step toward a healthier you.

**Happy Healthy Kids Day April 25, 1:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m. Wayman Palmer YMCA 200 E Bancroft St, Toledo, OH**  
Bring the whole family out for a fun-filled day of health, excitement, and community! Enjoy free asthma screenings, mobile health clinics, a bouncy house, food, raffles, games, and plenty of activities for all ages.

**From Soil to Soul: Community Health Fair & Empowerment Through Urban Agriculture—Cultivating Health Equity April 26, 2026 1:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m. Sonia Organics/Urban Wholistic 619 Woodland Avenue, Toledo, Ohio**

You're invited to the 7th Annual Community Health Fair, hosted by the To-

ledo-Lucas County Health Department and Urban Wholistic. Discover how healthy soil, nutritious food, and strong communities come together to support overall well-being. Connect with local organizations, explore valuable resources, and learn simple ways to support a healthier lifestyle for you and your family. Come be part of a day of connection, learning, and growth—we look forward to seeing you there!

### 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).

# The Affordable Care Act and What It Means

By Tracci Johnson  
Guest Column

**\$284.00**

It is my monthly health care premium. It doesn't even include the \$100 out-of-pocket costs for doctor visits, prescriptions or emergencies or my \$7,500 deductible. Donald Trump and congressional Republicans hiked health care premiums for thousands of Ohioans like me. Ohioans can't simply budget around cost hikes like this.

Last summer, congressional Republicans, including Ohio's Senator John Husted, pushed through massive health care cuts, slashing more than \$1 trillion from Medicaid and the ACA to bankroll tax breaks for billionaires and big corporations. As a result, health care costs are becoming unaffordable for everyone, and Republicans are throwing millions off their coverage.

Across Ohio, hospitals and clinics are folding, and 1 in 10 rural hospitals that remain open in Ohio are already at risk of closure. Now, 14 Ohio hospitals and clinics are at-risk, four have announced cuts, three wards have closed, and eight have closed their doors altogether.

Republicans went even further and ripped away the ACA tax credits that helped more than 22 million Americans, including over 500,000 Ohioans, like me, afford coverage — causing monthly premiums to rise by hundreds and even thousands of dollars.

By attacking and undermining the ACA, Senator Husted is forcing working people to pay more for less: higher premiums, higher deductibles, and fewer options.

When the ACA was signed into law by President Obama 16 years ago, it finally felt like affordable care was possible. People often forget what health care was like back then. Where you lived determined how much insurance



Tracci Johnson

companies could charge you for coverage. Being a woman was treated as a pre-existing condition. And if you are one of the 129 million Americans like me with a pre-existing condition, like diabetes, high blood pressure, and even cancer, insurance companies could deny coverage or overcharge us for care.

Today, as a direct result of policies passed by Trump and GOP lawmakers, one in three Americans skip meals or other needs to afford health care. One in three Americans who rely on the ACA say they'll have to downgrade to skimpier, riskier plans that could leave them in crippling medical debt if they get sick. Nearly one in ten Americans are postponing retirement because of skyrocketing health care costs. And nearly half of U.S. adults say it's difficult to afford health care costs. No one should have to choose between staying healthy and risking financial ruin.

But instead of focusing on lowering costs, Senator Husted is making health care unaffordable.

There is a lot of uncertainty and chaos in the world today. Gas prices are way too high, and wars are unfolding abroad. But this ACA anniversary, we need to raise the alarm on the attacks happening in our own backyard — the attacks on the ACA.

*Tracci Johnson is the Executive Director of Monroe Street Neighborhood Center and buys insurance under the ACA and takes advantage of the tax credits. The Affordable Care Act tax credits have been a lifeline for her. They allowed her to take a job without health insurance, knowing she could afford coverage on the marketplace.*

## No Kings Rally Attended by Hundreds of Toledoans

The Truth Staff

Organizers of the third No Kings rally estimated that world-wide about eight million people turned out for the protest on March 28 to announce "we don't do kings in America."

In Toledo, hundreds of local residents joined the gathering in Promenade Park and adjoining streets



The Future Of Television  
**INFUSE NETWORK**  
Now Streaming Free On **Roku**

**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**

# Delivering More Than Babies: The Legacy of Dr. Karen Adams-Ferguson

By Asia Nail

The Truth Reporter

## A Calling That Started in Second Grade

Some people find their purpose later in life. Others seem to be born with it already written on their hearts.

For **Dr. Karen Adams-Ferguson, MD**, that purpose showed up early...really early.

"I told my mom in second grade that I wanted to have babies and deliver babies," she says with a smile you could almost hear through the phone.

Her mother, Dr. Samantha Adams, had a different idea. She hoped her daughter would become a teacher, like her older sisters. Teaching felt safer and more predictable. Summers off. Time with family. Less chaotic.

Being a doctor? That meant long hours, late nights and sacrifice.

Still, purpose has a voice of its own.

And Dr. Adams-Ferguson listened.

## Following her Path

It would have been so easy to let that dream slip away, most people do. Life has a way of getting loud until your dreams are just a whisper.

But she didn't. She leaned in.

And her mother, despite every worry she held, gave her the one thing that changed the course of her life: she said yes.

"If this is your calling," her mother told her, "then don't look back." Sometimes, that's the only permission you need.

Just one "yes." One person who believes in you enough to let you try.

That kind of support? It's like wind at your back. Not pushing you hard... just steady, gentle... lifting you when you need it most.

Dr. Karen Adams-Ferguson took that and ran with it. She didn't just walk the path laid in front of her. She stretched it. Made it longer. Wider. Possible for someone else to follow behind her.

"You don't have to blaze a trail," she says. "You can simply follow your path and take it as far as you can go."

And that's exactly what she did...for more than 40 years.

## Becoming Part of the Family

After 43 years in obstetrics and gynecology, Dr. Adams-Ferguson has done more than deliver babies.

She has earned a permanent place in the hearts of those she's helped.

"The most rewarding part," she says, "is becoming an honorary member of so many families."

Imagine planting a seed and watching it grow into a tree... and then watching that tree grow its own branches.

That's what her career has looked like.

Whether at a football or basketball game, she's constantly greeted by former patients. Mothers she once cared for now lead their children to her with a smile: "This is your baby."

And sometimes, those babies grow up and she marries them.

Yes, she marries them.

Because beyond being a physician, she is also a minister. Her work didn't stop in the hospital. It followed her into the community, into churches and into life's biggest moments.

That's not just a career.

That's a legacy in motion.

## The Hard Truth About Women's Health

However, not everything in her journey has been joyful.

When asked how healthcare has changed, her answer was honest, and heavy.

"Not in ways that I'm happy with."

She spoke about rising challenges, especially for Black women. High blood pressure. Diabetes. Poor nutrition. Lack of access.

And one of the most serious concerns: maternal health.

In the wealthiest country in the world, women are still struggling to survive pregnancy and childbirth at alarming rates.

"It's disheartening," she says.

Like a cracked foundation in a beautiful house, the system looks strong on the outside, but inside, it needs repair.

For communities of color, those cracks often run deepest.

## Food, Health, and the Everyday Fight

Dr. Adams-Ferguson makes something very clear: health doesn't start in the hospital.

It starts at the dinner table.

"Diet and nutrition are vital," she warns.

If the body is like a car, then food is the fuel. Too often, people are running on empty.

Fast food. Processed meals. Limited access to fresh options.

Over time, that leads to bigger problems: obesity, high blood pressure, diabetes and more.

She also stresses the importance of routine care. Breast exams. Screenings. Regular checkups.

"Small steps today can prevent big problems tomorrow," she says.

## The Reality of Motherhood

When it comes to pregnancy, Dr. Adams-Ferguson keeps it real.

Motherhood is beautiful but it's also a lot.

She sees women every day who are the glue of their families, balancing a 9-to-5 with the endless mental load of home life.

... continued on page 11



Dr. Karen Adams-Ferguson

**Join Us!**  
**Worship EXPERIENCE**  
 Every Sundays at 5:30 p.m.  
 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.drjwwilliams.org

*Dr. John W. Williams, Pastor*

**Experience the Glass City Difference!**

- Easy to Join Online
- Full Service Banking
- Exclusive Member Benefits
- Loans for Every Need

**GLASS CITY FEDERAL CREDIT UNION**

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

Loans subject to credit approval & membership eligibility. NMLS ID #445858

**We're working for you!** [glasscityfcu.com](http://glasscityfcu.com)

# We Don't Lack Unity: We're Solving Different Problems

By Carla Thomas

The Truth Contributor

We keep asking the same question: Why can't Black people unify? Why are we so divided on politics, strategy or even on what progress looks like? But that question in and of itself is the problem.

Black people don't lack unity because we disagree. We lack unity because we are not fighting the same battle. We're not even naming the same enemy. Until we really understand what we each believe the problem is, we're going to keep talking around each other instead of to each other. What we keep calling division is something deeper than that. In my opinion, it's different views of our reality.

Within our community, there are at least four different ways we see the problem. And depending on which one you believe, it shapes how you think, what you support, and what you're willing to fight for.

## 1. The "Fix Us" Mindset - When Behavior Gets Mistaken for the Problem

Some of us have been taught that the issue is us. Our behavior, our choices, our discipline and our families. This mindset centers accountability but fails to consider context.

They'll tell you we need more discipline, better parenting, stronger values, less blaming the system. They're the ones who say, "How can you expect them to stop killing us if we don't stop killing us?" "Why don't we have the same outrage when one of us kills us as we do when the police kills us?"



So their solution is always internal correction:

"Stop making excuses."

"Make better choices."

"Get your life together."

And while personal responsibility matters, this mindset becomes dangerous when it ignores the conditions that shaped those behaviors in the first place.

When centuries of systemic pressure, over-policing, economic deprivation and psychological warfare are removed from the conversation, accountability turns into blaming us instead of actually addressing what we've been up against.

## 2. The "Seat at the Table" Mindset - When Access Gets Confused with Power

Others believe the problem is exclusion. So the solution becomes proximity: more representation, more visibility, more Black faces in powerful spaces. And yes, representation matters. But proximity to power is not power itself.

They're in the photos. In the meetings. Getting the titles and the recognition. But when it's time to actually use that access, to speak up or push back, to actually advocate for Black people, they go silent. Why? Because saying something might cost them the very access they worked to get.

And at that point, it's no longer about opening doors. It's about keeping their seat and protecting the very systems they claimed they were trying to change.

## 3. The "Build Power" Mindset - When We Start Asking the Right Questions

Then there are those who look beyond individuals and optics and ask who controls the resources, who writes the rules and who benefits no matter who's in the room.

This is a structural mindset. It understands that systems are not broken, they are functioning exactly as designed. So the work becomes about building power, not borrowing it. Ownership, collective economics, institutional strategy and long-term vision become the focus.

This is the tradition of movements that understood liberation requires infrastructure, not just inclusion. It's not about getting a seat. It's about building your own table.

## 4. The "Free the Mind" Mindset - The Battlefield You Can't See

And then there are those who understand that the deepest form of control is internal. Because if the mind is colonized, everything else follows.

This mindset asks what have we been taught to believe about ourselves, what have we normalized that was never normal, and what parts of us were erased and what replaced them?

You can have all the access, all of the resources, you can even have power and still operate from limitation, fear, and disconnection.

So the work here is spiritual, psychological, and cultural. It is the work of remembering who we were before we were told who to be.

### Stop Forcing Unity: Start Building Alignment

These aren't minor disagreements. These are completely different ways of understanding the problem. And you cannot build true unity on top of conflicting realities.

What looks like the problem isn't really the problem. We're measuring success differently, fighting for different outcomes and speaking from different truths. So of course it feels like we can't come together.

### The Shift: From Unity to Coherence

Maybe our focus shouldn't be on unity, at least not the way we've been taught to think about it. This pressure to be unified creates frustration. How are we expected to move in one accord when we haven't even identified the problem.

What we actually need is coherence. Not everybody thinking the same. Not everybody moving the same. But everybody being honest about where they stand.

When you understand and are confident in your own perspective, you stop expecting agreement from everyone and start building with people who are on the same page. That's where real movement begins.

### The Real Question

The real question is no longer why can't we unify. The real question is what do we actually believe is being done to us, and what are we prepared to do about it? Once that answer becomes clear, everything changes.

And from there, we get something stronger than unity: direction, power and real movement.

# DeFlame

C A N D L E S

TOLEDO MADE

SOY CANDLES

INCENSE

BODY OILS

ROOM SPRAYS

REED DIFFUSERS & MORE

*Crafted with premium  
fragrance and essential oil blends.*

*Now Located at  
3 E. Bancroft Street*

DeFlame Candles

deflamecandle.com

419-973-3263

# Reentry Coalition's Going Home to Stay Resource Program

*The Truth Staff*

Individuals returning home from incarceration had the opportunity last week to receive information from speakers and numerous community groups in an event hosted by the Reentry Coalition of Northwest Ohio last Wednesday, April 1, at the Lucas County Shared Services Building.

The Reentry Coalition of Northwest Ohio (RCNWO) is a coalition of agencies and service providers whose mission is to provide leadership, build partnerships and promote shared accountability for successful community reentry. The goals of the RCNWO are to eliminate barriers to successful reentry, reduce recidivism, and promote public safety.

The event, held in honor of Second Chance Month, has been held every year since 2007. This year's event featured guest speakers Tashauna L. Isaac, MAC, LPCC and Keary Sarabia, followed by a resource fair in the building's atrium staffed by local employers who are hiring, as well as community partners with resources available to those returning home from incarceration.

Then followed a proclamation from the Lucas County Commissioners to the Reentry Coalition recognizing April as Second Chance Month.

Lisa Sobecki, president of the Lucas County Board of Elections, presented the proclamation, which read in part:

"Due to the efforts of the Reentry Coalition of Northwest Ohio, the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council's Reentry Committee, and dedicated reentry agencies and volunteers, Lucas County's recidivism rate is 23.2 percent, which is lower than the statewide average of 32.7 percent and the nationwide average of 46 percent."

One of the leaders in that effort is Stan Smith, who had previously experienced the lack of resources available for those reentering society. However, when he was released in 2000, he was already involved in programming. Ten years ago, he became an employee of the Lucas County Family and Children First Council and has been part of the reentry effort for so many citizens returning to the area.

Going Home to Stay is hosted by the Reentry Coalition of Northwest Ohio and has been held monthly since 2007, on the first Wednesday of each month. April is recognized annually as Second Chance Month to raise awareness and promote initiatives that support the successful reentry of individuals returning from incarceration, focusing on providing opportunities and resources for a second chance.



*LC Commissioner Lisa Sobecki presents proclamation to members of the Reentry Coalition*



*Stan Smith explains the impact the Lucas County programs have had on him*

**The Truth Colours Gallery**  
**ART & CRAFT WORKSHOP**  
 Painting, Crafting and Drawing!

check out the Gallery studio

STAY COO

LOVE YOUR ART

7 East Bancroft St  
 Franklin n Bancroft

Facebook  
 The Truth Colours Gallery

Nikolacolours  
 347-286-9227

# The New Kids on the Block Take Office

By Amy Voigt, City of Toledo

Special to The Truth

Mayor Wade Kapszukiewicz introduced the 2026 Kid Mayor, Jamie Howard, and the new Kid City Council during a press conference on April 1, 2026. Jamie, a student at Ella P. Stewart Academy, earned the role after an interview process that highlighted her leadership, creativity and dedication to her school and community.

Jamie, 10, has attended Ella P. Stewart since preschool and is known by teachers as a natural leader. She helps younger students get to their buses, serves as a teacher's helper and participates in extracurricular activities including Girl Scouts, New Concepts, Choir, Basketball and, formerly, cheerleading. She enjoys dance, puzzles, crafting beaded bracelets and outdoor activities. Jamie even created "Panther Pens" for a school marketing project, which were a hit with staff.

As Kid Mayor, Jamie will lead the 2026 Kid Council, made up of students from Washington Local and Toledo Public Schools. Council members will represent their schools, learn about city operations, and prepare for a Mock City Council meeting in January.

\*\* This year's Kid Council includes:



Photos courtesy Amy Voigt

- Washington Local  
Niamh Bagley, Monac Elementary
- Reese Hawes, Greenwood Elementary
- Marlee Marx, McGregor Elementary
- Lia Mendoza, Meadowvale Elementary
- Larkin Thompson, Hi-

- awatha Elementary
- Bristol Wojtowicz, Shoreland Elementary
- Toledo Public
- Lucy Adams-Brewer, Beverly Elementary

... continued on page 12



Kid Mayor Jamie Howard



Trying out the new office and desk



Mayor Kapszukiewicz introduces the new Kid Council

## The Sound of Awakening

CSCC's 49th Annual Spring Concert Celebration

featuring



The Clarence Smith Community Chorus  
Established in 1976

Clarence R. Smith,  
Director/Founder

Dorcel Dowdell, President  
Mercy Olson, Collaborative Pianist



WITH SPECIAL GUESTS  
The Voices of Harmony

Sunday, April 26, 2026 | 4:00pm

Epworth United Methodist Church  
4855 Central Ave, Toledo, OH 43615

### Ticket Information

For tickets call 419.283.1434  
purchase online at [cscchorus.com](http://cscchorus.com)  
or from any CSCC Member

Adult \$20

Student 11-18 \$15

Children 10 & under FREE

GROUP PRICING AVAILABLE -  
Call 419.944.3648 for Info

Visit Us  
Online



brought to you by



# Are You Registered to Vote?

*The Truth Staff*

“Are you registered to vote?” asked state Senator Paula Hicks-Hudson as she summed up the voter engagement an education event she organized on Tuesday evening, April 1, at the Kent Branch Library.

Hicks-Hudson, however, was not just asking the overflow audience members that question, she was echoing the night’s theme of suggesting to those present how they should be addressing their family members and friends in order to help overcome the rather dismal voter turnout figures in Lucas County as the midterm primary elections approach.

Lucas County, one of the speakers recalled, had the second lowest voter turnout, among the 88 Ohio counties, in last year’s off-year election.

“Your vote is your voice and your voice is so very important,” said Hicks-Hudson as she opened the night’s event.

Last week’s voter engagement event was moderated by Christopher Scott, founder of Reach to Teach National and former executive director of the Ohio Legislative Black Caucus, who set the tone for the evening’s discussion by noting that there are a lot of obstacles in Lucas County to improving the turnout of eligible voters to the polls – not just among young voters but among those of all ages.

The principal speaker was LaVera Scott, director of the Lucas County Board of Elections. “We are much stronger together than we are apart,” said Scott as she spoke about the issues voters should be aware of as the May 5 primary election day approaches.

LaVera Scott’s message involved a recount of what has not changed for voters as the election approaches – such as ID requirements – and what voters must be aware of , particularly if there have been any changes to their status – address or name change for example.

LaVera Scott also addressed some of the issues that are so important for honest and fair elections in which any voter who wishes to exercise her right to vote can do so without any impediments. Access to the polls is crucial, said Scott, as well as transparency in the process and a fair and accurate counting of the votes.

April 6 is the deadline for registration for the May 5 election day, or to make such changes, at the Board of Elections, she noted.

What voters should be aware of, if they plan to mail in their ballots, is the change in the mail system over the past few years. There is no longer a processing center in Toledo, so mail for Lucas County destinations, actually has to go to Michigan and back. It is taking longer than it did several years ago.

“I don’t trust the mail,” said Hicks-Hudson, bluntly. “Don’t be mailing in ballots. Vote early or wait until Election Day [and go to your polling place] with the proper ID.”

LaVera Scott stressed the importance of voters checking the Lucas County Board of Elections website. The site provides not only up to date information on voting issues and requirements but also the status on each registered voter, so issues and discrepancies can be checked ahead of time.

Also speaking at the event were Tina Butts, of The Movement, and Anita Madison, of Ohio Unity Coalition.

“We have to shake up this neighborhood,” said Butts. “We have to take back our power. Shame on us if we don’t get out here and get people to vote.”

“My question is, who are you going to engage and develop a relationship with because this whole voting thing is relational, y’all,” said Madison, as she acknowledged that those present were already committed voters.

“It’s important to call them out,” said Hicks-Hudson, as she concluded

the event, and referring to friends, neighbors of those present. “Besides asking ‘how are you doing?’ you should ask ‘are you registered to vote?’”

To find out if you are registered to vote and where you should vote, go to the Lucas County board of Elections website and click “Am I Registered to Vote.”



Tina Butts



State Sen. Paula Hicks-Hudson and Whitmer HS students



Anita Madison



LaVera Scott



## Accurate Elections Ohio Can Trust

Ohio consistently achieves **a 99.9% accuracy rate** in post-election audits following each election.

*Make a plan to vote at*  
**VoteOhio.gov**



# Money Study Reveals Consumers are Redefining the American Dream

Special to The Truth

Sponsored Advertising Content. A new study exploring the relationship between Americans and their money, reveals how emerging technologies and shifting attitudes are changing money habits.

The 2026 Wells Fargo Money Study, now in its third year, explores how Americans are thinking, feeling and taking action with their money. The findings reveal consumers are adopting new strategies, looking to have greater confidence when making financial decisions, and being more thoughtful about their spending. Here are some of the report's top findings:

## Defining the American Dream

Americans, especially younger generations, view entrepreneurship as a pathway to autonomy. The majority of adults polled, 61%, say owning a business is part of the American Dream. Even more, 69% of Gen Z adults, share that belief.

Of those who don't own a business, 74% of Gen Z adults and 58% of Millennials want to someday, with the majority saying that doing so would allow them to control their own destiny. That control though comes with some downside. A majority of business owners report using personal savings, personal credit or home equity to fund their business.

"The desire to own a business reflects a growing belief that success is defined on one's own terms. While entrepreneurship can offer freedom and flexibility, it also comes with financial risk, which is why preparation, resilience, and informed decision-making matter more than ever," said Emily Irwin, head of Private Wealth Planning at Wealth & Investment Management.

## Gen Z Faces Financial Pressure

Forty-six percent of Gen Z respondents describe their financial lives as messy, and many say they are postponing plans such as relocating, getting married, education and career changes. This financial pressure extends beyond young adults themselves, with 64% of parents of the 18-28 set saying their children rely on them financially, whether for money, housing or other support. At the same time, Gen Z is increasingly turning to nontraditional sources for financial information, such as YouTube, Instagram, TikTok and online communities.

"As young adults lean on both family and nontraditional sources for support, open communication, clear expectations, and shared planning can help families navigate this stage together," said Irwin.

## Using AI for Good, but With Caution

A growing number of Americans are eager to try out new technology, like Artificial Intelligence, when managing finances, however experts wonder if respondents know enough to use AI to their advantage.

Nineteen percent of U.S. adults say they have used artificial intelligence in the past year for ideas or education about their money. Among Gen Z adults, that percentage doubles.

Most consumers using AI say they turn to it to better understand potential financial moves, identify new ideas, and weigh risks and rewards. Two-thirds have acted on suggestions generated by AI, and of that subset, 90% say those ideas were profitable or worthwhile.

"Technology can spark ideas and build awareness, but it works best when paired with a solid financial foundation, trusted guidance, and an understanding of how those insights apply to real-life goals," said Irwin.

Other study findings include a reported increase in savings and investments over the past year, increased intentionality about spending, continued employment concerns, and a widespread appreciation for banking apps and rewards programs.

For more information, visit <https://www.wellsfargo.com>.

Wealth & Investment Management offers financial products and services through bank and brokerage affiliates of Wells Fargo & Company.

Courtesy StatePoint

## Community Block Watch Meeting

The Kwanzaa Park Neighbors are pleased to welcome Deborah Barnett to the monthly Block Watch Meeting.

Through her consulting company N-SYNC, LLC, Deborah Barnett has been instrumental in collaborating in a variety of programs with City of Toledo – Department of Neighborhoods, Toledo Public Schools, Promedica, University of Toledo, Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance and Toledo African American Chamber of Commerce.

After serving for 36 years with The Huntington National Bank, she has set her sights on operating her small business, but continues to be sought after as a resource, a consultant, speaker, motivator, and an event consultant. Deborah is a respected voice among community leaders.

Recently Deborah has been offering workshops: "Getting your Affairs in Order" to a variety of audiences. Always a great resource and a delightful presenter she fills the room with her knowledge and humor. Deborah Barnett will be presenting at the Kwanzaa Park meeting about how we can be Ready for Life Changes – a will is not always the way.

This monthly Black Watch meeting will be Thursday, April 9 from 6 to 7 p.m. at 1416 Bebraska Avenue.

Prior to her presentation the Toledo Police Safety Officer will give the crime statistics for the area. Also, following the presentation there will be refreshments where neighbors can sit together and ask questions, discuss concerns or just visit with one another. The meeting is free and open to the public.

The Padua Center 1416 Nebraska Ave. is handicap accessible when entering from

Nebraska Ave. Additional parking in the rear off the Junction Street alley. Because of construction and renovation at St. Anthony Church Nebraska Street parking is encouraged. There is also a parking area to the west of the Center.

For more information please contact the office at (419) 241-6465 or Sr. Virginia Welsh at (419) 460-3071.



Deborah Barnett



**Getting Your Affairs in Order 2026**

**A WILL IS NOT ALWAYS THE WAY**

In Partnership with  
The Area Office on Aging

Join us for a Workshop on How to be  
Ready for Life Changes  
**Saturday, April 11, 2026**  
at Rogers High School  
222 McTigue Dr., Toledo, Ohio 43615  
Registration begins February 6, 2026

Check in 9:30 a.m.  
Program 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. -  
Lunch Provided

**Topic Discussions:**  
Living Wills & Advance Directives  
Power of Attorney  
Bank Accounts & Fraud Prevention  
Transfer of Assets  
Life & Homeowners Insurance  
Talking with Loved Ones

**PARTNERSHIP SPONSORS**  
Lucas County Auditor -  
Katie Molina  
Lucas County Recorder -  
Michael Ashford

**SUPPORTING SPONSORS**  
Black & Brown Unity Coalition  
City of Toledo- Dept. of  
Public Utilities  
First Church of God  
Legal Shield  
Lucas County Treasurer -  
Lindsay Webb  
State Farm -  
Sara Rosa, Agent  
Taylor Automotive Family

This event is a courtesy program and subject to availability. An informational presentation. This does not constitute an offer. Registration is required. Registration is required.

**For registration information, contact  
Deborah Barnett at 419 297-4232.**

# The Tipped Wage Is a Legacy of Slavery; Chicago Is Right to End it

By Ben Jealous  
Guest Column

The subminimum wage for tipped workers is a legacy of slavery. After the Civil War, many employers in hospitality and rail service hired newly freed Black workers into jobs where tips often replaced wages. Tips became, for too many workers, the wage itself.



That injustice still lives on today in the form of a lower minimum wage for tipped workers. We should call that system what it is: an old injustice that never ended. Today, it does not just hurt Black workers. It hurts tipped workers of every race. It leaves millions of people with unstable incomes. Too many workers finish a shift without knowing whether they earned enough to cover rent, groceries or childcare.

It also leaves workers more vulnerable to harassment. When your livelihood depends on pleasing the customer in front of you, even when that customer is drunk, crude or predatory, the power imbalance is obvious. No worker should have to put up with humiliation to earn enough to live. No decent society should accept that as normal.

Yet for decades, the corporate restaurant lobby has fought to preserve exactly that arrangement. Its argument is always the same: pay workers fairly and the industry will suffer. But what it is really defending is a business model built on paying some workers less and making customers close the gap

Chicago is right to reject that model. Today, tipped workers in Chicago can still be paid \$12.62 an hour before tips, while the full city minimum wage is \$16.60. The city's 2023 law was designed to close that gap over time, ending the tip credit by July 1, 2028. And when the City Council moved last month to

freeze that progress, Mayor Brandon Johnson vetoed the measure and fought to keep the phaseout in place. He deserves credit for that.

Because this fight is bigger than restaurants. We are living through twin crises of affordability and democracy. The first shows up at the kitchen table. Rent is too high. Groceries are too high. Child care is too high. Too many families work hard and still cannot get ahead.

The second shows up in the growing number of working people who no longer believe democracy can improve their lives. Those crises are connected. When government moves quickly to protect loopholes for powerful interests and slowly to raise wages for working people, faith in democracy erodes. People start to believe the system is rigged because too often it is.

But when leaders stand up to lobbyists and fight for the people who do the work, democracy starts to feel real again. That is why this matters. The issue here is dignity. It is whether a woman serving your dinner should have to tolerate harassment to make enough to buy groceries. It is whether a man working a late shift should have to wonder if a weak night in tips means his child goes without. It is whether labor will be respected in this country or merely used.

A tip should be what it was always supposed to be: extra. It should not be an employer's excuse not to pay a real wage. And the principle should not stop with tipped workers. In a country as rich as ours, the minimum wage should be a living wage, with no carveouts, no loopholes and no second-class categories of worker.

Chicago has a chance to say something to the nation: work has dignity, and every worker deserves a full wage. Mayor Johnson is right to keep fighting. Now the city should finish the job.

*Jealous is a professor of practice at the University of Pennsylvania and former National President & CEO of the NAACP.*

**Dr. Karen... continued from page 5**

'It's a massive juggle,' she admits. For her, helping a woman plan her pregnancy isn't just about health; it's about giving her a solid floor to stand on when life gets loud.

That's why planning matters. She encourages women to think ahead. To understand their bodies. To make informed choices about when and how they want to grow their families.

Love gets you started, but readiness and support are what keep you going. Motherhood asks for everything, and no woman should have to find that strength all on her own.

**Why Representation Matters**  
One of the most powerful parts of Dr. Adams-Ferguson's story is what she represents.

In a field where there have been very few Black OB-GYNs, especially when she started, her presence mattered.

And it still does. "When you see someone who looks like you," she says, "you realize you can do it too."

Representation is like a mirror. It shows you what's possible. It also shapes how care is given, how research is done, and whose voices are heard.

Still, the problem goes deeper than a doctor's visit. It's baked into the research we do and the voices we choose to listen to. For too long, communities of color have been left out of important medical research and decisions.

"As a doctor I've always fought to make sure all people were represented at

the head of the table," she shares proudly.

**A Legacy That Lives On**  
Now retired, Dr. Adams-Ferguson hasn't slowed down.

She continues her work in ministry, serving the AME Zion church and community with the same passion she brought to medicine.

Because for her, purpose didn't end with retirement. It simply shifted.

When asked what legacy she hopes to leave, her answer is simple, but powerful.

"You are not defined by what someone else tells you that you should be."

Read that again.

That's not just advice. That's a blueprint.

Her life proves that dreams don't have to shrink to fit expectations. They can grow, stretch, and reach further than anyone imagined.

And sometimes, they start with a second-grade girl who simply said: "I want to deliver babies."

And did.



**DIXIE** Auto Leasing  
Toledo, OH  
5880 N. Detroit  
**Month to Month Leasing**  
419-476-8674  
WE ARE A FULL SERVICE BUSINESS

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

Bernadette Joy Graham, LPCC, LLC  
Licensed Professional Clinical Counselor  
419.409.4929  
Mental Health...Get Your Mind Right  
www.bigrahamcounseling.com  
2525 W. Bancroft  
Toledo, OH 43606  
graham.bernadette@gmail.com

# Strategic Ways to Reduce Your Taxable Income

Special to The Truth

Have you ever lamented how much of your earnings go to taxes? One way to ensure that more of your money benefits you and your future is by making strategic contributions to tax-advantaged savings accounts.

By opening and contributing to a Health Savings Account (HSA) and Individual Retirement Account (IRA), you can substantially reduce your taxable income. Not sure if these accounts are right for you? Consider these insights from Fidelity:

### HSAs

An HSA is an account that can be used to pay for qualified medical expenses, including copays, prescriptions, dental care, contacts and eyeglasses, bandages, X-rays, and a lot more. It's "tax-advantaged" because your contributions reduce your taxable income; the money isn't taxed while it's in the account, even if it earns interest or investment returns; and as long as you use your HSA funds for qualified medical expenses, you won't owe taxes when you take money out of the account. This triple-tax advantage is powerful, but it's not the only reason why HSAs are so popular. Unlike a flexible spending account, an HSA is not "use-it-or-lose-it," meaning it doesn't need to be spent within a certain timeframe. If you don't need the money in your HSA for current medical expenses, you can save and invest it until you do, and even take the account with you when you leave an employer. Just keep in mind that to open and contribute to an HSA, you'll need to be enrolled in an HSA-eligible health plan.

### IRAs

An IRA refers to a tax-advantaged account designed to help you save for retirement on your own, independent of an employer. There are several types of IRAs, but when people say "IRA" alone, they often mean a traditional IRA. That's a type anyone with earned income can open and contribute to. Traditional IRAs allow you to save on income taxes now and pay them later in retirement, when you could be in a lower tax bracket and therefore owe less in taxes. Fidelity estimates that you may need 55% to 80% of your pre-retirement income in retirement. Because an employer-sponsored savings plan might not be enough to accumulate the savings you need due to annual contribution lim-

its, investing through an IRA could help you save more for the future.

Before opening an IRA, check out a few different firms that offer them. Find out whether they offer helpful support and a user-friendly experience, plus whether they charge any fees or minimums. Then, once the account is open, decide how much you want to contribute and how often.

"Setting up automated contributions can make saving for retirement into a habit that requires very little effort," said Rita Assaf, vice president, Retirement at Fidelity. "It's also a good idea to regularly check your asset mix to see if it is still a good fit for your goals, risk tolerance and time horizon."

For additional financial resources and insights, visit <https://www.fidelity.com/learning-center>.

With a smart strategy that involves directing your income into tax-advantaged accounts, you can build more wealth for future needs and wants.

Courtesy StatePoint

### New Kids on the Block...continued from page 8

- Eleanor Ehrick, DeVeaux Elementary
- Alex Obu, Navarre Elementary
- Ty' Shaun Peppers, Sherman Elementary
- Maya Ramos, Burroughs Elementary
- Ashtyn Snow, Marshall STEMM Academy
- Jamie Howard, Ella P. Stewart Academy

Throughout the year, Jamie and the Kid Council will take part in hands-on activities, including meeting with city officials, presenting ideas to improve the community, and attending events such as a downtown scavenger hunt, a tour of the wood lot with the Department of Public Services, and a visit to Firehouse #6. They will also serve as role models through community projects, including joining the Litter League to help keep Toledo clean.

"This program continues to empower young leaders and gives them the opportunity to make a real difference in their community," Caryn Maloney, Commissioner of Civic Engagement, said. "We are excited to see Jamie and the Kid Council put their ideas into action and inspire their peers throughout the city."

This is the fifth year of the Kid Mayor program, which continues to inspire young leaders in Toledo. Previous Kid Mayors include Evelyn Bush, Gabrielle Mukiira, Lillian Joseph, and most recently Dashiell "Dash" Harden.

**MITCHELL MD**  
DERMATOLOGY

## Uneven Skin Tone Doesn't Have to Be Permanent

Physician directed treatments to safely correct hyperpigmentation and acne related dark spots in melanin rich skin.




Before                      After

Hyperpigmentation • Acne • Dark Spots  
• Melasma • Uneven Skin Tone

**Dr. Hope Mitchell, MD**  
Board Certified Dermatologist with  
Over 25 Years of Experience!



Schedule with me today! **419.872.HOPE (4673)**

815 Commerce Drive, Perrysburg    [mitchellderm.com](http://mitchellderm.com)



## Our Time To Break Silence A Community Call to Action

We invite you to join over 50 NW Ohio organizations--elders, adults, young people-- supporting Dr. King's mission and message of nonviolence and peace, and breaking the silence on all types of violence.

**Sunday, April 19, 2026**  
**2:30pm Youth Art Show**  
**3:00pm Program and Organization Fair**

**Monroe Street Church**  
**3613 Monroe Street, Toledo**

PLAN TO ATTEND, OR REGISTER BY MARCH 31 TO PARTICIPATE AS A READER OR RESERVE A TABLE IN THE ORGANIZATION FAIR! CONTACT TOLEDOMLKTIME@BREAKSILENCE@GMAIL.COM OR 419-283-9288 OR FB

SPONSORED BY THE TOLEDO COMMUNITY CLUB  
TIME TO BREAK SILENCE COMMITTEE CO-ORGANIZED BY




# ‘Black Out Loud: The Revolutionary History of Black Comedy from Vaudeville to ‘90s Sitcoms’ by Geoff Bennett

By Terri Schlichenmeyer  
The Truth Contributor

Wait. Did you hear that right? Yes, you did – and it was so funny that you just now caught your breath. What the guy onstage said was so unexpected, so dead-on, so real that you couldn't stop laughing. And as you'll see in the new book **“Black Out Loud”** by **Geoff Bennett**, his routine reaches back more than a hundred years.

c. 2026  
Harper  
\$32.99  
336 pages

On April 15, 1990, ten-year-old Geoff Bennett was watching TV in his family living room when his world was shaken. He'd stumbled on the debut of *In Living Color*, the irreverent, hilariously funny sketch show that featured mostly Black entertainers.

Entertainers, in other words, who looked like him. That show was a first for Bennett. But it wasn't the only first, by any means. In the late 1800s, there was minstrelsy, the cast of which were usually mostly white people with burnt-cork-blackened faces - until African American entertainer Billy Kersands came along and performed song-and-dance comedy acts in blackface. Audiences loved him, and he “became the first Black entertainer in America to achieve national celebrity.”

Hot on Kersands' heels, Bert Williams and George Walker became vaudeville stars in the early 1900s, followed by Stepin Fetchit and his controversial, but very successful, career. Then Hattie McDaniel, who lampooned stereotypes with over-exaggeration in movie roles, became the first Black actor to land an Oscar.

As others made the transition from movies and radio to TV, Rochester (*The*

*Jack Benny Show*) eased the roles of Black characters into that of friends, rather than domestic workers. Black comedians began recording their acts on LPs, as they moved from live stage to small screen. Some landed their own TV shows, changed popular sketch programming, and made fun of white America right under white America's noses.



Black Out Loud author  
courtesy Johnny Shryock

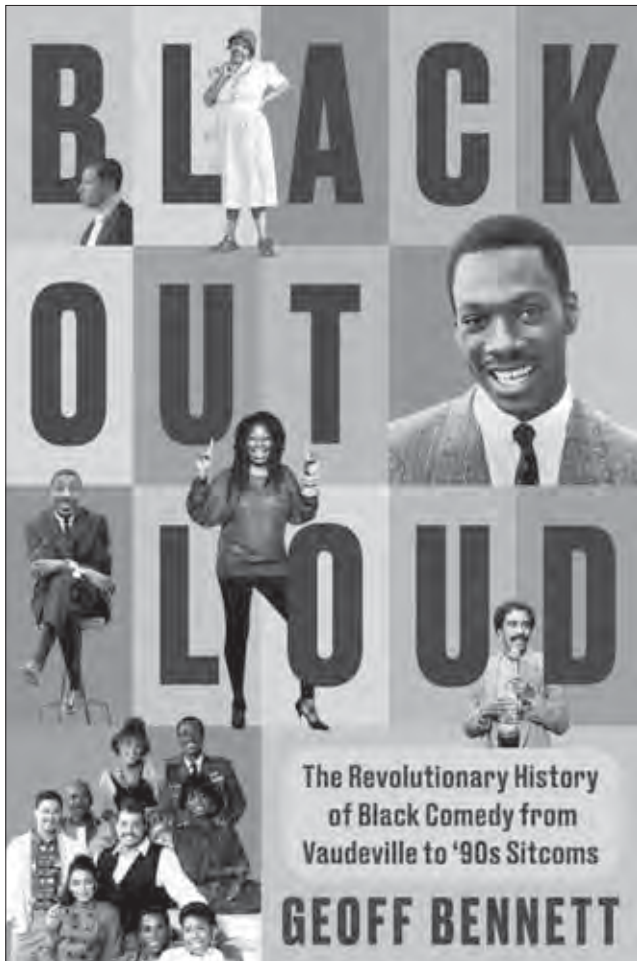
And they made us laugh at ourselves. “For more than a century,” says Bennett, “Black comedians have been witnesses... And when the world was finally ready to hear the real story of America, it knew exactly where to turn – to America's conscience: the Black comedian.”

LOL. That was you every Monday-Thursday-Friday-Saturday-Sunday night, or whenever you caught your favorite comedy show.

Everybody talked about it the next day. Now, read about it. Yes, you may have a few favorites that aren't inside this book, but author Geoff Bennett's work here is pretty comprehensive: he includes today's hottest Black comedians and some who were once famous but are unremembered today. You'll have a chance to know them and, while you get acquainted or you read about superstars you love now, Bennett also surprises readers with biographies, little-known facts, and notable accomplishments those stars worked hard for – all in a narrative that's casual, sometimes profane, but very highly enjoyable. Bonus: read some of the stars' comedy bits here, and LOL while you enjoy this excellent book.

“Black Out Loud” is a great collection for anyone who devours pop-culture entertainment or who just loves to laugh. It's one of those books you won't want to let go, so don't miss it. No, you shouldn't hear of that.

\* \* \*  
Want more? Then look for **“Darkology: Blackface and the American Way of Entertainment”** by **Rhae Lynn Barnes** (Liveright, \$39.99), a book that dives deep into two centuries of racism in American entertainment. It's unsettling, but a must-read if you love Black performance history.



TOLEDO AREA BLACK BUSINESS OWNERS & PROFESSIONALS

**SPRING INTO SPIRITS THIS APRIL AND POUR INTO OUR COMMUNITY!**

FRESH SEASON, FRESH FLAVORS, AND THE PERFECT TIME TO EXPLORE TOLEDO'S MUST-VISIT RESTAURANTS.

**FEATURED RESTAURANT:**

- 1st SUNDAY: **SOUL CRUB**  
2224 Nebraska Ave. Toledo, Ohio 43607
- 2nd SUNDAY: **CROX**  
1776 Arlington Ave. Toledo, Ohio 43609
- 3rd SUNDAY: **THE LINK RESTAURANT & LOUNGE**  
2637 W. Bancroft St. Toledo, Ohio 43607
- 4th SUNDAY: **408 R&B CRAFT COCKTAIL LOUNGE**  
406 Westwood Ave. Toledo, Ohio 43607

EXPLORE • DINE • ENJOY TOLEDO

Thank you to the people! Let the community support and decide for themselves. Join and follow us on Instagram.

Toledo Area Black Business Owners and Professionals

# Mt. Nebo's Good Friday Service

The Truth Staff

Numerous area pastors joined Rev. Cedric Brock, pastor of Mt. Nebo Baptist Church, for a Good Friday noon service on April 3.

This year's Good Friday Service began with Praise & Worship led by Pastor Alvin Dawson, citing Luke 23:34 ("Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do") followed by a presentation by the Music Ministry.

Pastor Darran Overton spoke next using Luke 23:43 ("You will be with Me in Paradise") as the basis for his address. Pastor Marquisa Horton continued the Easter theme with John 19:26, 27 ("Woman, behold Your son").

The Mt. Nebo Music Ministry performed a selection, after which Pastor Damon Horton addressed Matthew 27:46 ("My God, My God, why have Thou forsaken Me?").



Pastor Cedric Brock and Pastor Darran Overton

After the Offering, Pastor Woody Lewis, Jr. spoke on John 19:28 ("I thirst"), followed by another presentation by the Music Ministry; Bishop Michael Carter on John 19:30 ("It is finished") and Bishop Chaz Boes on Luke 23:46 and the final words of Jesus Christ on the cross, "Father, into Thy hands I com-



Front Row: Pastors Robert Birt, Damon Horton, Marquisa Horton and Christopher McBrayer  
Back Row: Pastor Woody Lewis, Pastor Cedric Brock, Bishop John Williams, Pastor Alvin Dawson

mend My spirit."

Pastor Brock closed the Service with the invitation and benediction.

**The Sojourner's Truth**

**A MOMENT OF TRUTH**

**THE LOCAL THREAD**



A Moment of Truth will explore some of the issues that are so critical in the lives of the residents of Toledo's African American community. The Sojourner's Truth has spent a quarter of a century speaking with and listening to those in our community who make a such a difference in our lives.

Join us now on WGTE 91 FM on Thursday evenings at 7 p.m. as our hosts – Asia Nail, Stacy Fowler, Ricky Tyus and Alexandria Leatherberry – hold conversations with community members and examine how all of us can learn and benefit from those who are blazing paths for us in a number of critical areas such as community activism, business, health and travel.



Asia Nail, The Truth Reporter

Ricky Tyus of Tyus Tours and Travel

Stayce Fowler, Publisher, Pursuit Magazine

Alexandria Leatherberry, The Truth Reporter

# CLASSIFIEDS

April 8, 2026

Page 15

## MORTGAGE LOAN ASSISTANT

### Position Summary:

The Mortgage Lending Assistant supports the loan officer in processing mortgage applications, ensuring smooth transactions, and providing excellent customer service throughout the loan process

### Essential Duties and Responsibilities:

- Support Mortgage Loan Officer by gathering and verifying necessary financial documentation, including proof of income, credit reports, and property and title evaluations
- Act as a liaison between members, real estate agents, and escrow companies, updating all parties on the status of loan applications and ensuring a smooth transaction
- Handle administrative tasks such as answering phone calls, scheduling appointments and maintaining organized loan files and documentation
- Help complete loan applications and submit them to underwriting for approval, ensuring all applications are thorough and accurate
- Stay updated on industry regulations and best practices to ensure compliance throughout the loan process

### Minimum Qualifications:

- A high school diploma or equivalent
- At least one (1) year of Mortgage Loan Processing, Underwriting, Origination experience with desired, but not required
- Strong attention to detail and excellent organizational abilities to manage multiple loan applications efficiently
- Ability to communicate complex financial information clearly and effectively to members
- Proficiency in Microsoft Office products to include Word, Excel, and Outlook

### Skills, Abilities & Expectations:

- Ability to work in a fast-paced team environment, manage multiple tasks, and prioritize work
- Ability to apply general accounting knowledge processes (debits, credits, balancing)
- Assuring customer service is top priority whether internally or externally, treating members and employees professionally, with courtesy and respect
- Detail oriented and organized with excellent interpersonal and communication skills
- Stay abreast of regulatory requirements and complete annual compliance training applicable to the position

## MISS SARAH'S PITZER PATER CHILDCARE, LLC

419-534-2466; Openings for children 1½ - 3 years-old, 8am-5pm; Monday -Friday; State- Licensed Program; Home Cooked Meals

## JOB ANNOUNCEMENT



**Pathway, Inc.**  
505 Hamilton Street  
Toledo, Ohio 43604  
[www.pathwaytoledo.org](http://www.pathwaytoledo.org)

### **Project Director**

On-site | Full-Time | Mission-Driven Work

Pathway, Inc., the Community Action Agency serving Lucas County, is seeking a dynamic and mission-driven Project Director to lead the implementation of the FORGE Fatherhood Program in Toledo, Ohio. This federally funded initiative aims to strengthen families, support fathers, and improve outcomes for children through comprehensive services, case management, and community partnerships.

The Project Director will provide strategic leadership, oversee daily operations, and ensure compliance with federal grant requirements while driving measurable outcomes. This role serves as the primary liaison to federal partners and local stakeholders and plays a key role in advancing Pathway's commitment to family stability and economic mobility.

As part of the Community Action Agency network, which serves communities across more than 1,000 agencies across the country, this position offers the opportunity to contribute to and learn from a broader movement focused on reducing poverty and strengthening families nationwide.

**Apply @ <https://pathwaytoledo.org/employment> no later than Monday, April 13, 2026**

## INVITATION FOR BIDS RENOVATIONS AT BIRMINGHAM LEAD HAZARD ELIMINATION – PHASE V IFB26-B004

Lucas Metropolitan Housing (LMH) will receive bids for **Birmingham Lead Hazard Elimination – Phase V in accordance with IFB26-B004**. Received in accordance with law until **April 06, 2026, at 3:00 PM ET**. For documents: [www.lucasmha.org](http://www.lucasmha.org); 424 Jackson Street., Toledo, OH 43604; or 419-259-9438 (TRS: Dial 711). Bidders are required to meet Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity requirements as described in Executive Order #11246. This contract opportunity is a Section 3 Covered Contract, and any Section 3 Business Concerns are encouraged to apply.



## DIRECTOR OF SUMMER CAMPS

The Padua Center is seeking a Director of Summer Camps. The Director is primarily responsible for the overall development of and implementation of the Padua Summer Programs. The general outline of the six weeks of camp is awaiting a creative director to complete the plans. The director will supervise the various volunteers, work with the Padua Staff in arranging particulars of the camps and executing a successful Summer Recreation and Learning experience for 25 to 30 elementary school age youth. This is a seven-week summer employment at 35 hours a week. The ideal candidate will have a bachelor degree and some educational experience. The Padua Center is an EOE. For more information contact The Padua Center. Please submit resume by April 15, 2026 to The Padua Center at [thepaduacenter@gmail.com](mailto:thepaduacenter@gmail.com). 419 241 6465

# Mount Nebo Baptist Church Honors Women's History Month at Celebration of Silent Soldiers

By Alexandria Leatherberry  
The Truth Reporter

The 2026 Silent Soldier Awards Banquet filled the banquet room of the Premier Banquet Hall, Sunday, March 29. Attendees gathered in support of 14 honorees who were selected for their work in the community.

The event opened with a welcome from Toledo City Councilwoman Cerssandra McPherson and a performance from the Mt. Nebo Baptist Church Praise Team led by First Lady Debra Brock.

Following words of affirmation from the guests of the honorees, the banquet commenced with the presentations of the awards led by Master of Ceremonies Larry Jones. The first being the Champion Award to Linnie Willis for her contributions through her work as executive director for Lucas Metropolitan Housing Authority and chair of Board of Directors for Mercy Hospitals.

Amongst the celebration and highlight of Women's History Month in honor of the work of Linnie Willis, the other honorees – the Silent Soldiers – included: Tom Cole, George Cowell, Albert Easterly, Judge Ian English, Juanita Greene, Doris Greer, Ellena Lee, Rev. Rowena Lee, Luther McKinstry, Sabrina Prince, Leyen Ridi, Idellla Watson, Linnie Willis, Yuseff Woods

Cedric Brock has served as the pastor of Mount Nebo Baptist Church for over 30 years and established the Silent Soldiers initiative early in his term. The banquet is one of several programs run by Mount Nebo's Outreach Ministry that aims to meet community needs with resources. The Silent Soldiers Awards recognizes those that contribute to the resources for their noble devotions.



2026 Silent Soldiers



MC Larry Jones presents award to Linnie Willis



Mt. Nebo Praise Team



Tom Cole, George Cowell, Albert Easterly, Judge Ian English



First Lady Debra Brock

Here **TO DO** more for your health

**The Power To Do.**  
It's what drives us to provide patient-centered care, access to cutting-edge treatments and expert education to the next generation of physicians.

health.utoledo.edu