



Volume 97 No. 4

"And Ye Shall Know The Truth..."

September 23, 2026



La'Shardae Scott, DSW, and her family: son Eric Scott II; husband Eric Scott; son Evan Scott

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Meetings Are Free

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

The Truth Contributor

It's not that they don't hear you. It's that hearing you costs them nothing.



Toledo City Council spent three hours last week listening to folks practically beg for basic answers about a camera system that's been watching us since 2022.

I've had this exact conversation before — with the Lucas County Sheriff, and separately with the Lucas County Board of Commissioners, over a year ago—the same fight in a different layer of government.

Ten Years Before Flock

In 2015, I stood next to then-Sheriff John Tharp when he rolled out the county's first body cameras. I approached him worried about the number of unarmed Black folks dying at police hands nationally — Freddie Gray had just died in Baltimore.

Tharp listened and quickly responded by putting 17 cameras on his deputies. He said plainly: "We're not going to be covering up anything." Toledo followed his lead not long after. So, this community knows how to get ahead of an issue before it becomes a crisis. We've done it before.

I sat across from Sheriff Mike Navarre over a year ago and discussed maps where law enforcement typically places Flock automatic license plate reading cameras (ALPRs) to help solve crimes. It's always where law enforcement already watches most closely.

I told him 30 days was long enough to hold footage not needed for a case, and that specific secure protocols be established for accessing the files. He also could establish a citizen review board to provide real oversight.

I made the same case to the Lucas County Board of Commissioners not long after. Both times, I got a lot of nodding and seeming agreement followed by draft policies that fall way short of what is expected.

That was Lucas County's perhaps "good faith effort."

However, last week's fight belonged to a different governmental entity — the City of Toledo, its own council, and its own separate Flock program. Yet, the same technology, same questions, and nothing, that I am aware of, suggesting the city ever asked the county what it already knows.

County Commissioner Pete Gerken's own staff found over 900,000

searches on the county's camera data in one month, run by more than 3,200 outside agencies — most of them nobody elected, and half of them nobody's heard of.

And that's after Brandon Upchurch got bit by a police K-9 after Flock misidentified his vehicle. That's only one instance of a myriad of mistakes our call for public error reporting was built to catch. Not to mention opportunities for misuse and abuse.

I'm not saying the technology is no good — it has helped push Toledo's homicide solve rate from 59 percent to 86, and that matters. But technology with this much reach obviously needs guardrails before the damage lands in a courtroom, a hospital bill, or worse.

Meetings Are Free

This is what I know. Municipal government doesn't resist a good idea — it just never lets a conversation become a commitment until it has no other choice.

I sat with Navarre. I sat with the Commissioners. I've met with City of Toledo officials dozens of times on dozens of issues. Every time, the response is the same: nodding, real interest, but very seldom anything binding.

That's not their failure. It's the strategy: to wait you out. They know that we holler loud, but not long. So, they stall until it is quiet again by holding meeting after meeting and meeting you to death, never intending to produce results, thinking you will just move on. Why? Because a meeting costs them nothing. A policy costs something.

It took three hours of residents packing a chamber this week to make the city treat the Flock camera issue as more than talk. That's apparently what it takes to turn a conversation into a decision.

But now it is time for Toledo to — not only talk the talk — but walk the walk. Adopt the framework itself that the county has had a year's head start on the problem areas: equitable placement, real data limits, public reporting, real citizen oversight, written into the ordinance, not studied to death.

Toledo doesn't need another meeting. It needs a signature.

Contact Rev. Donald Perryman, PhD, at drdlperryman@centerofhope-baptist.org

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The Lone Ranger Rides Again!...Alone

By Lafe Tolliver, Esq

Guest Column

The story goes that when the Lone Ranger and his faithful Indian companion, Tonto, were being fiercely attacked by a band of renegade Indians, The Lone Ranger, sensing the desperation of the critical moment, told Tonto, "Well, Tonto,

I guess it is just you and me...", to which Tonto sarcastically replied, "What is this 'we'-stuff, palface?"

That story is applicable today to the overwhelming debacle that Donald Trump, posing as a five-year old president who throws tantrums at a moment's notice, has embroiled the US into a war with Iran.

For a person who boasts about being a stable genius and knowing more than all of the generals, his abysmal ignorance of foreign policy, diplomacy and a rudimentary understanding of the cultures of the Middle East is on full display for the world to see that Trump has been outplayed, outgunned and outmatched.

Coming off a seemingly grand victory in Venezuela, Trump created the delusion in his head that surely he could do the same thing with the hearty encouragement of his ace buddy, Bibi Netanyahu, to win the day in Iran.

Little did our convicted felon president understand that not everyone is mesmerized by the prowess of the US military (ask the North Vietnamese NLF Forces) and their determination is not blunted by acts of repeated bravado from Trump who changes his story every five minutes.

One day, it is victory is complete and the next day, the enemy is "begging" for a deal. Then, another day is that we have sufficient munitions to win both in the Middle East and in the Pacific and still give tepid support to Ukraine against their fight with Putin, one of Trump's best buds.

With Trump, entertaining us with outrageous and bogus lies is simply his persona. I believe that if he could not lie and grift, he would self-implode because being a bearer of falsehoods and pettiness and being repugnant to acts of kindness or civility is his stock in trade.

Now, with his latest whopper of a lie, he giving each adult American \$5,000.00 if the GOP retains both the House and the Senate, not only does it keep the gullible public attention off of the Epstein Files but also ensures that the media conversations are always about him and his P.T. Barnum antics.



You know and I know that Trump, who has never kept his prior promise of using tariff refunds to dole out checks to anxious Americans about their fears of not making ends meet, will skip out on that promise because many know that it is originating from a mind that is high oatmeal mush.

If the Iranians continue to play cat and mouse with Trump and the mouse runs circles around Trump and his cabinet of clowns, America will face a dismal future for the next two years when they go to the grocery checkout counter or the gas pump.

But hey, what's to worry! Trump and his billionaires buds will gaslight the American people in believing that after the midterms, gas prices will plummet and there will be ribeye steaks simply for the asking!

What never needs to be forgotten is that a plurality of Americans, knowing the nonsense of Trump's first administration, nonetheless chose to have four more years of Trump as their demi-god.

Rather than vote for an eminently qualified woman (Clinton or Harris), a slight voting majority chose the chaos kid with his 34 felony convictions and his status as an adjudged sexual abuser as their preferred choice.

It is not spoken enough, but the glaring reason (to me) that Trump tore up the working JPCOA agreement with Iran is because a Black man, Obama, did it. Obama did it in cooperation with allies and with input from experts in foreign relations who possessed years of diplomatic experience.

Obama, with his intelligence, manners, wit and imposing presence crafted such a deal that Trump hated because Obama epitomizes everything that Trump wishes he was but could or would never achieve.

Now, because of that race-tinged decision, Americans, Canadians, Japanese, Brits our Middle East "allies"(?) and a host of other countries are suffering economically due to the bitterness and stupidity of one person.

Of course, Trump will never admit to his errors in that momentous foreign policy debacle because he can never admit that he is wrong, about anyone or anything. It is always someone else's fault. Always.

So, Trump being our present day Lone Ranger is seeking solace or help from a Tonto but, Tonto, much to his credit, realizes that being aligned with a crackpot President demands that he must part ways to save himself.

Ride on Lone Ranger....ride on.

Contact Lafe Tolliver at lafe5x@gmail.com

Community Calendar

September 30

Calvary MBC Roses of Calvary Flower Ministry Anniversary Celebration: 4 pm; Speaker Pastor Melvin Barnes of Greater Faith Fellowship Church

October 3

First Church of God Installation Service: For Bishop Robert S. Davis, Jr. and First Lady Robin Davis; Noon: 419-255-0097, ext 204 or fcoginstallation@fcogtoledo.com

October 5

Early Voting Starts

October 18

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

October 20

Toledo NAACP report of the Nominating Committee and election of the Supervisory Committee; 5:00 pm; 3450 W. Central Ave, Suite 374

November 17

Toledo NAACP election of officers and at-large members of the Executive Committee will be administered using our election voting platform. Voting from 3 pm to 7 pm.

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Troy Davis's Ghost Still Speaks After All These Years

By Ben Jealous

Guest Column

I woke up Monday thinking about Troy Davis. Fifteen years ago, Georgia executed him. He was innocent. I was outside the prison that night. As the old song goes, that's the night the lights went out in Georgia.

No physical evidence tied Troy to the killing of Officer Mark MacPhail. The case rested on eyewitnesses. Seven of the nine later recanted or changed their accounts. Several swore the police had pressured them. They pointed instead to another man at the scene, the man who first gave police Troy's name.

A witness testified he saw that man fire the shots. Good people spoke up. William Sessions, who ran the FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation) under three presidents, wrote that the case was permeated in doubt. Bob Barr, a Republican who supports the death penalty, wrote that condemning a man on the skimpiest of evidence does not serve justice.

I am grateful to them. But they did not have what I had. I worked that case for 15 years. I read the affidavits myself. I did not come away with doubt. I came away certain. Georgia killed the wrong man.

Troy saw what we could not. He kept telling us the only way to break the killing machine was to make the country watch it work. So we built our campaign around a hashtag, #TooMuchDoubt.

His execution became the second most tweeted event on earth that year.



Weeks later, Gallup found support for the death penalty at a 39-year low. The next spring, Connecticut abolished the death penalty with a horrific murder case still in the headlines. Troy made that possible.

A year later, Maryland became the first state south of the Mason-Dixon Line to abolish. I watched that vote from the Senate balcony in Annapolis, beside Kirk Bloodsworth. Maryland had sent Kirk, a waterman and former Marine, to death row for a murder he did not commit. DNA freed him.



Troy Davis

Virginia followed in 2021, the first state of the old Confederacy to abolish.

Then we stopped. No state has abolished the death penalty since Washington struck it from its books in 2023. The machine kept running. Since 1973, at least 203 people have been exonerated from death row. For every eight people executed, one has been exonerated.

Two years ago Missouri executed Marcellus Williams, after the very prosecutor's office that convicted him asked a court to throw out the conviction.

The death penalty preys on the poor. About 95 percent of the people on death row could not afford a lawyer. Lynching still haunts us. At least 10 Black people have been found hanging this year. Most have been ruled suicides. Their families want independent reviews. This month Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley and 59 colleagues asked the Justice Department and the FBI to investigate every one.

Frederick Douglass is often called the father of the civil rights movement. He was the first civil rights leader to call publicly for abolishing the death penalty. He said its roots were intertwined with the roots of the lynching tree. Both had to be cut down.

I learned the path 30 years ago at the National Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty. The Eighth Amendment bans cruel and unusual punishment. The Supreme Court judges what is unusual by looking at the states. In 2005, once most states had barred executing children, the Court ended the practice.

The threshold for ending the death penalty is 26 states. We have 23. We need three. Ohio is closest. Its Republican governor, Mike DeWine, has not carried out a single execution. In June he called for abolition. Pennsylvania's governor, Josh Shapiro, refuses to sign death warrants. North Carolina has not executed anyone in 20 years.

Much of the country is moving the other way. States executed 47 people last year, the most since 2009. Florida alone killed 19. In January 2025 the president signed an order pressing states to seek more death sentences.

These are hard times. We carry many fights. We cannot set this one down. Two weeks before he died, Troy asked me to be an uncle to his nephew, De'Jaun. I said yes. I had known him since he was three. Today he is an engineer, helping build a dental school in Savannah, his uncle's hometown. Troy should have lived to see it.

Three states. Call your governor. Call your legislators. Douglass told us to cut down both trees. One is still standing. And it is time for the lights to stay on in Georgia.

Ben Jealous is a Professor of Practice at the University of Pennsylvania and a former national president of the NAACP. He is the author of "Never Forget Our People Were Always Free: A Parable of American Healing."

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Toledo Public Schools 2025-2026 Report Card

By Dawn Scotland

The Truth Reporter

The Ohio Department of Education rated Toledo Public Schools at two out of five stars for the 2025-2026 school year. While this is the second consecutive year that the district has received this rating, that is below state standards. TPS leadership, however, is encouraged by current trends and optimistic about future performance under the Transformation 2.0 Plan.

Ohio School Report Cards are required by law to provide parents, caregivers, community members, educators and policymakers information about district and school performance — to celebrate successes and identify areas for improvement.

The information provides transparent reporting to drive local conversations on continuous improvement and identify schools that need intensive support. The report cards establish high expectations for the education community while showing progress toward positive outcomes for all Ohio students. (source: <https://reportcard.education.ohio.gov/>)

Ohio Department of Education Metrics

The Ohio Department of Education rates districts annually based off of six criteria from one to five stars in ½ star increments. The metrics are described on the department's website as:

- **Achievement** – how well students performed on state tests.
- **Progress** – the growth students are making based on their past performance.
- **Gap Closing** – the reduction in educational gaps for student groups.
- **Graduation Rate** – the percentage of students that graduate within 4 or 5 years.
- **Early Literacy** – reading improvement and proficiency for students in kindergarten through third grade.
- **CCWM Readiness (Career, College, Workforce and Military Readiness)** – how prepared Ohio's students are for future opportunities.

The **overall rating** a district receives is comprised of these six rated components.

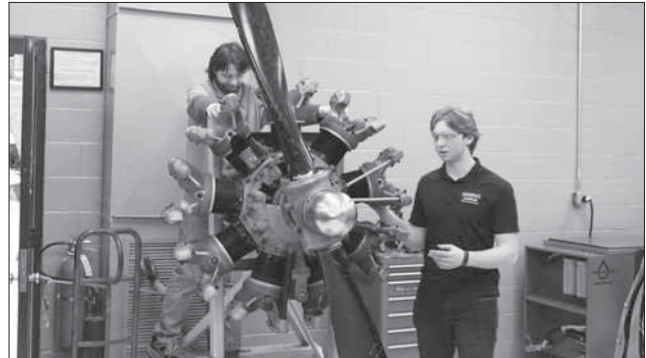
Toledo Public Schools 25-26 Rating

Toledo Public Schools received a two-star rating which is the lowest star rating received for districts this school year. Six school districts out of 607 across the state received this rating, which falls into the "needs support" category and deemed below state standards. Dayton Public Schools and Lima City School District both received two-star ratings alongside TPS.

Comparatively, surrounding school districts Ottawa Hills and Perrysburg received the highest rating at 5 stars; Sylvania, Anthony Wayne and Bowling Green received 4.5; Springfield Local and Rossford 3.5 ratings; Maumee and Oregon both saw .5 decreases this year and are now also at 3.5 star ratings and Washington Local received three stars.

Toledo Public Schools ratings across the six criteria this year are:

- **Achievement** – TPS Rating: 2 Stars "Needs support to meet state standards in academic achievement."
- **Progress** – TPS Rating: 2 Stars - "Significant evidence that the district fell short of student growth expectations."
- **Gap Closing** – TPS Rating: 2 Stars "Needs support to meet state stan-



dards in closing educational gaps."

- **Graduation Rate** – TPS Rating: 1 Star "Needs significant support to meet state standards in graduation rates."
- **Early Literacy** - TPS Rating: 1 Star "Needs significant support to meet state standards in early literacy (K-3)."
- **CCWM Readiness** – TPS Rating: 2 Stars "Needs support to meet state standards in college, career, workforce, and military readiness."

Currently TPS has an enrollment of **20,506** across **56 schools**. The 4-Year Graduation Rate is **80.7%** while Chronic Absenteeism Rate is **39.8%**. (source: reportcard.education.ohio.gov/)

TPS Current Trends and Future Goals

While the district overall received a 2.0 star rating, Toledo Public School leadership is optimistic about current trends within the district that they believe will translate into future overall successes. Superintendent Romules Durant, EdD, highlights improvements in graduation rates and College, Career, Workforce and Military Readiness that he says are attributed to an in-

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Toledo Museum of Art to Award Jason Daniels the Key to the Museum at Annual Block Party

Community Leader has relationship with TMA dating back to childhood

TOLEDO, Ohio — The Toledo Museum of Art (TMA) will present Jason Daniels with the Key to the Museum during its annual Block Party on Saturday, Sept. 26, honoring his many years of leadership and service to the Toledo community.

The presentation will take place at 5:15 p.m. The public is welcome to attend and celebrate Daniels' recognition.

The Key to the Museum is awarded annually to a community leader who embodies TMA's core values of community, diversity, innovation and trust.

A native of Toledo, Daniels grew up in the city's historic Junction neighborhood, where early visits to the Toledo Museum of Art and Mott Branch Library shaped a lifelong appreciation for cultural institutions and their role in strong communities. A graduate of the University of Toledo, he now lives in Perrysburg with his wife, Kelli, and daughter, Elise.

Daniels is President and CEO of JAYRAMON, a consulting firm he leads alongside Kelli, and spent more than a decade in executive leadership with

United Way in Toledo and Cleveland. Today he advises nonprofit, civic, cultural, higher education, public, and philanthropic organizations. He has a longstanding relationship with TMA as a consultant supporting the museum's work around belonging, organizational culture, and engagement, and is a passionate advocate for the institution and admirer of Toledo's glass art legacy.

"It is truly an honor to present the Key to the Museum to Jason Daniels," said Jennifer McCary, Chief Culture and Brand Experience Officer at the Toledo Museum of Art. "His connection to this institution goes back to childhood, and for years he has poured that same care into helping us build a stronger culture of belonging. Jason's leadership — authentic, principled, and community-centered — is exactly what this honor is meant to celebrate."

Block Party runs from 3 to 8:30 p.m. on the museum's 37-acre campus, with artmaking activities, food trucks, and family-friendly entertainment throughout. Admission and parking are free.

Toledo Public Schools... continued from page 5

crease in career tech programs.

This year, Toledo Public Schools has the highest graduation rate in the school system's history according to Durant. The senior class of 2026 had a graduation rate of 83.6%.

Additionally, the graduation rate is also the highest historically for African Americans. Black students are the largest demographic in Toledo Public Schools. African American students in TPS have displayed the highest 4-Year graduation rate growth of all demographic groups since Durant's administration. This year black students graduated at a rate of 86.4 percent. That number has climbed from a 59.7 percent graduation rate when Durant first became superintendent in the 2013/14 school year representing a 26.7 per-

cent increase.

He says that this success is partly because of career technical training programs that engage students in their fields of interest. Students enrolled in a career tech program graduate at 94.4 percent rate which is higher than the overall graduation average.

"Keeping kids engaged into a career opportunity gets them across the finish line in four years," Durant stated. Non-career tech students graduate at a 74.2 percent rate compared to their counterparts that are in career tech representing a difference of about 20 percent.

Toledo Public Schools currently boast over 30 technical programs across various schools from aviation technology to cosmetology, animal science and even AI. A full list of career technical programs can be found on the TPS website. The trajectory for career tech starts in the fifth grade.

TPS is undergoing its Transformation 2.0 Plan that converts area schools into career tech schools. This year among other changes the former Bowsher High School includes seventh and eighth grades and is now The Bowsher Arts and Science Academy. The goal is to have all students tied to a career tech program at TPS and have a 100 percent graduation rate. Within the class of 2026 over half of the seniors were in career tech programs.

College, Career, Workforce and Military Readiness has also seen an increase. In the 2021/22 school year the number of CCWM Readiness was 218. This year that number is 784. The number of students has more than tripled in three years.

"We're seeing a large number of kids now who are graduating, prepared either to go to college, either by having college credits or ACT/SAT remediation free, or have industry credentials that go directly into the workforce," said James Gault, chief of Educational Development. "So those are numbers that we are moving up within that category. We're still at two stars in that category. But we are getting close to three stars, and as we continue to move in this direction, we're going to see our stars increase," he added. He notes that changes may take some years to materialize into ratings.

Specialized magnet schools Toledo Early College and Toledo Technology Academy of Engineering both earned top 5-star rating. Toledo Pre-Medical and Health Science Academy and Toledo Aerospace and Natural Science Academy earned a 4.5-star ratings. Area high schools including Scott, Rogers and Waite and others received two stars.

To view Toledo Public Schools' report card visit the Ohio Department of Education website.



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First Tuesday at the AALP Is All About TPS

By Fletcher Word

The Truth Editor

The African American Legacy Project held the summer season's final First Tuesday gathering on September 15 (postponed from September 1 because of the weather) as about several dozen guests had the opportunity to hear Romules Durant, EdD, superintendent of Toledo Public Schools, discuss the variety of opportunities the district now offers to its students and the positive impact such choices have made to their educational attainment.

The First Tuesday session occurred just after the Ohio Department of Education released its district report cards and while Toledo Public Schools continues to have a two-star rating (out of a possible five stars), the graduation rate continues to improve, noted Durant, reaching an "historic high graduation rate" of 83.6 percent for the 2025-2026 academic year.

Durant's address was focused on the district's goal of not only graduating students at a high rate but also ensuring that when they do graduate, they have opportunities awaiting them because of what they have accomplished on the secondary school level.

The superintendent described the choices that TPS has developed in recent years, such as the Jones Leadership Academy, the Aerospace and Natural Science Academy, Toledo Technology Academy, Toledo Early College and Toledo Pre-Med and Health Sciences Academy.

In the Aviation Center of the Aerospace and Natural Science Academy, said Durant, students have the chance to learn how to build airplanes, fly airplanes and enter the world after graduation with the opportunity to immediately earn a financially rewarding living in the aviation field.

"They need to graduate with industry credentials that make them viable to what's in this community," said Durant of the goals TPS has set for its graduates. "We've created opportunities for kids to connect to the opportunities in this region ... that is the only way you revitalize cities so that your talent does not continue to leave. that is how you grow the wealth of the community."

Durant explained how intentional such new programs are in giving instruction to students on the wide range of knowledge in the discipline.

"We have five of our own airplanes," he said of the Aviation Center. The location at the airport and the access to actual planes enables students to learn how to fly them even before they have obtained drivers' licenses.

"How do kids get prepared if they are not exposed?" asked Durant of an audience that included a number of present and former educators. TPS is ensuring that kids who are willing can obtain credentials to make them "industry credentialed and immediately employable."

And not just at the Aviation Center, he added, but also at the Botanical Garden, in the Pre-Med Academy and the Natural Science Academy with its addition of, strangely enough, crocodiles from the Toledo Zoo.

Indeed, those schools, the ones Durant spoke of on First Tuesday night, have stood out for their students' achievements on the recent Ohio Report Card. The Aerospace and Natural Science Academy had an overall rating of 4.5 – out of five. Overall ratings for the latter two were five stars as well and a graduation rate of five stars; Jones Leadership Academy also had a graduation rate of five as did Toledo Early College High School and Toledo Technology Academy of Engineering.

However, these accomplishments stand in stark contrast to the achievements of students in the traditional high schools – Bowsher, Rogers, Scott, Waite and Woodward. Scott High School's graduation rating was two stars, the other four schools had only a one-star rating. The overall ratings were one (Scott) and two stars (the other four) as well.



Robert Smith, AALP founder, opens the First Tuesday event



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Romules Durant, EdD

Top Ladies of Distinction, Toledo Chapter, "Level Up For Literary"

Special to The Truth

The Toledo Chapter of Top Ladies of Distinction, Inc. participated in a National Literacy Program for "Back to School" this summer called "Let's Get Loose: 2026 Summer Challenge "LEVEL UP FOR LITERACY" where each member dropped loose change into a jar in support of our students at Ella P. Stewart Academy for Girls. The coins that were collected over the months at the summer retreat from the members of the Toledo Chapter was presented to Principal Shannon L T. Carter.



Lady Pamela Effinger; Lady Denise Black-Poon - Literary Chair; Principal Shannon L. T. Carter Lady Wanda Terrell-Galloway- Toledo TLOD Chapter President; Lady Dianne Johnson; Lady DeLise Simmons

Ella P. Stewart Academy for Girls is a public, single magnet elementary school in Toledo serving students from Pre K through sixth grade and is a part of the Toledo Public School District. Stewart was established in 1961 and made history in 2003 by becoming Ohio's first all-girl public school. The school is named after Dr. Ella Nora Phillips Stewart, one of the

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The Social Butterfly Hosts Sixth Annual Sundresses & Big Hats Party to Support Unruly Arts

Special to The Truth

Donnetta Carter, also known throughout the Toledo community as The Social Butterfly, has built a reputation around her platform for supporting organizations and causes. Sunday September 13, her signature fundraiser event, 6th Annual Sundresses & Big Hats Party, raised support for Unruly Arts.

Unruly Arts originally formed at Toledo Botanical Garden by Joan Browne Kose and Lori Shoen provides art materials, instruction and skill-building opportunities to adult artists with disabilities. The studio struc-

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Donnetta Carter, the Social Butterfly, and Joan Browne Kose, Unruly Arts founder



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Media Contact

LaVera Scott; Timothy Monaco | 419-213-4001

Lucas County Board of Elections is in need of Election Workers

The Board of Elections has need of Seasonal workers, Precinct Election Officials (PEOs), and Election Day workers, for the November 3, 2026, General Election.

Seasonal workers work assignments may begin on Monday, September 14, 2026, through Election Day, dependent upon work assignment. Starting pay is \$16.15 an hour, increasing to \$16.90 an hour after working 140 hours.

Precinct Election Officials (PEOs) begin Election Day at 5:30 a.m., continue through the close of polls at 7:30 p.m., and are released once all post-election duties are completed that evening. PEOs are paid \$25 to attend a training class, \$50 for Monday night set-up/training and \$133 base pay for working Election Day, for a total of \$208.

Election Day Work Schedule and hours worked are dependent upon job specifications. Shifts available are between two and 15 hours, and Election Day workers are paid between \$16.50 and \$22.00 per hour. Some jobs require mandatory training, which is paid at \$20.00 to \$30.00 per class. Examples of Election Day workers are rovers, riders, and hospital workers. Positions are also available within our tabulation area and within any of our seven county substations, where shifts generally begin at 7:30 p.m.

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

If you are interested in becoming a PEO, please contact:

Booth Official—Recruitment Department 419.213.2643 or email lucas@ohiosos.gov

If you are interested in any Election Day positions, please contact:

Main Office 419-213-4001 or email lucas@ohiosos.gov

For employment applications, go to Lucas County Board of Elections website:

https://www.lucascountyohiovotes.gov/job_postings/index.php



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City's Prosecutor's Office Launches Public Data Dashboard to Increase Transparency

Special to The Truth

The City of Toledo Prosecutor's Office has launched its new Prosecutor's Office Dashboard (<https://toledo.prosecutiondata.org/>), offering greater transparency into nearly 90,000 criminal and traffic cases prosecuted in Toledo Municipal Court and highlighting the impact of the office's Domestic Violence Prosecution Unit, which was implemented in 2023.

The dashboard includes case data dating back to 2018 and allows the public to explore information by demographics, including gender, race and age, as well as offense level and type. It also provides information about how long cases take to reach disposition after they are filed.

"This data dashboard makes information about the work we do, the cases we handle, and the public we serve more transparent and understandable for all," Rebecca Facey, chief prosecutor for the City of Toledo, said. "We want the community to have access to this information and a better understanding of the work we do in the Prosecutor's Office."

"Transparency and accountability are essential to maintaining public trust in the criminal legal system. Our work with the City Prosecutor's Office demonstrates how even a small team can drive meaningful change by prioritizing accountability, both internally and within the community, and how stronger data capacity can inform policy, improve practice, and support sound decision-making to strengthen operations," Jennifer Ferone, Deputy Research Director at CUNY ISLG, said.

The dashboard also includes a data story focused on the Prosecutor's Office's Domestic Violence Prosecution Unit. The unit in its current form was implemented in 2023 with a focus on improving the effectiveness of domestic violence prosecutions while supporting survivors. The dashboard provides information about the unit's work, including convictions, how quickly cases are resolved and service to victims of domestic violence.

The dashboard was developed in partnership with the Institute for State & Local Governance at the City University of New York (CUNY ISLG) (<https://islg.cuny.edu/>) and the Prosecutorial Performance Indicators team

at the Loyola University Chicago Center for Criminal Justice Research (<https://loyolaccj.org/>). Toledo is one of three Great Lakes Prosecutorial Data Collaborative sites working to improve transparency and efficiency through stronger data collection and analysis.

The dashboard can be accessed here (<https://toledo.prosecutiondata.org/>) or on the City's website (<https://toledo.prosecutiondata.org/>).

The project was supported by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and the Microsoft Justice Reform Initiative.

Learn more about the work to prevent domestic violence and join the conversation at the Breaking the Cycle of Violence Summit from 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Friday, Oct. 2, at ProMedica Toledo Hospital. Register for the free summit today.

Top Ladies of Distinction...continued from page 8

nation's first African female pharmacist and noted civic leader. The school motto is "Where Girls of Integrity Become Ladies of Prestige."

The Top Ladies of Distinction (TLOD) Toledo Chapter President Lady Wanda Terrell-Galloway and the chapter members support Stewart Academy and its educational programs for young women. The members were participants in the Back to School "Bows and Toes" program where hair bows and socks were donated as they joined many Toledo Women Leaders in the community and the Superintendent Romulus Durant.

Toledo TLOD Literary Chair Denise Black-Poon is also the Area Five District Literary Chair. The members are currently doing reading programs, participating in Book Clubs, presenting Authors of books, doing workshops on how to write a book and so much more through collaborations and networking with other community organizations.

The Top Teens of America (TTA) is a national co-ed youth organization for young people aged 13-19 and is sponsored by the Top Ladies of Distinction, Inc. The Top Teens focus is on leadership training, character development, academic excellence and community service. Toledo Top Teen Advisor Sherese Norwood and assistant DeLise Simons lead the youth in the Toledo Chapter of Top Teens.

The TLOD members thanked the community for all the support given throughout the years for their programs and activities.

Social Butterfly...continued from page 8

ture gives artists the opportunity to create, build relationships, exhibit their work and sell it. The artists have work available for purchase in the gallery held at Toledo Botanical Gardens while the current artists are working out of the Toledo Zoo.

"At the Zoo we are all under one roof and able to serve more artists," shared Joan about the move. A signature event of Unruly Arts is their exhibition held annually in partnership with Taylor Automotive Group. The Unruly Arts expects 20 studio artists to exhibit in this year's show, planned to take place November 5 at Taylor Hyundai in Perrysburg.

The Taylor Automotive Family has made community philanthropy a cornerstone of its Taylor Cares program alongside community organizers such as Donnetta Carter. The Social Butterfly's fundraiser for Unruly Arts displayed the commitment Donnetta carries to filling the needs of the community.

The Social Butterfly will continue to provide upcoming opportunities to party with the purpose for connecting and giving back. For organizations like Unruly Arts, that support helps bring greater visibility to the talents of artists with disabilities. To learn more about Unruly Arts, upcoming exhibitions, and ways to support, visit unrulyarts.org.

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OHIO UNITY COALITION

Ohio Unity Coalition's National Voter Registration Day Rally

By Dawn Scotland

The Truth Reporter

On Tuesday, September 15, the Ohio Unity Coalition hosted a National Voter Registration Day Rally and Grand Opening of their new location at 1565 S. Byrne Rd. from 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM. The day featured food, music, giveaways, vendors, tours of their new location and, most importantly, an opportunity to register to vote!

The day served as more than a rally but an opportunity to register, educate, empower and elevate.

Speakers for the event included Anita Madison, Toledo coordinator for Ohio Unity; Petee Talley, CEO Ohio Unity; Tony Totty, president UAW Local 14; Linnie Willis, former executive director LMH; LaVera Scott, director Lucas County Board of Directors; Davion Williams, president, Toledo NAACP Youth Council and Pastor Marquis Horton of Corinth Baptist Church. Music

was provided by DJ Empress and food by Big Tone Food Truck.

"The purpose of this whole event is to get our community vote-ready," said Madison, "For individuals to come out, check their voting status, make sure their ID and their voter file match and make sure they don't need to change their address." Madison also expressed the need for voters to know where their polling location is which may have changed since the last election.

The OUC has an online tool where you can learn all about your voting information including your voter registration status, polling location and more. To access the tool visit ohiounity.org

The 2026 Midterm Election is Tuesday, November 3. Early in-person voting and absentee by mail voting begins Tuesday, October 6. **The deadline to register to vote is Monday, October 5.**

Ohio Unity Coalition is a state affiliate of the National Coalition on Black Civic Participation in Washington DC. OUC is incorporated as a 501c-3 organization in Ohio. The chief aim is to increase political literacy and civic engagement in black and under-served communities while building capacity in the OUC's member organizations and communities they serve. The variety of voter contact /voter service mechanisms the organization utilizes range from registration, education, mobilization, and protection to issue advocacy around issues specific to black Ohioans.

The organization is currently recruiting canvassers to go door to door to talk to voters in the neighborhoods. For information or to get involved visit their website and social media pages or contact the organization at 419-820-1831 or info@ohiounity.org.



DJ Moni Featchurs



Linnie Willis and Anita Madison



Tony Totty



Ladies of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc



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Toledo Urban Federal Credit Union
Building Better Futures

Dear Family, Friends and Neighbors,

I have a tale to tell.

I recently had an experience with identity theft that I thought was worth sharing because I discovered a hole in my own financial security that I did not know existed.

Like many of you, I have had security freezes in place for years at the three major credit bureaus: Equifax, Experian and TransUnion. I assumed that made it pretty difficult for someone to open a new financial account in my name.

What I didn't realize is that bank accounts are a different matter.

Someone recently attempted to open bank accounts using my identity. Fortunately, I received correspondence from the bank and responded before the accounts were actually opened.

That brings me to the first lesson: open correspondence you receive from banks and financial institutions, even if you don't recognize the bank.

We all receive so many credit card solicitations and banking offers that it is easy to glance at an envelope and throw it away. I almost did exactly that. Had I tossed this one without opening it, the fraudulent accounts likely would have been opened. In this case, they operate on a negative confirmation basis. If you don't respond, they open the accounts.

Think about the potential mess. Months later, a bank could send you a 1099 reporting interest on an account you never knew existed. Or you get a notice from the IRS informing you that you did not include income on your tax return. Now you have to explain to the bank and tell the IRS that you never opened the account in the first place, and the income is not yours. And that is just one of the things that could happen.

What I learned is that banks often use consumer reporting services outside the traditional three credit bureaus when deciding whether to open deposit



accounts. Two important ones are ChexSystems and LexisNexis Risk Solutions.

LexisNexis Risk Solutions is the real sleeper. Information here can be used in areas such as insurance, banking and financial services, government benefits and services, utilities, telecom, and background-type information. Order this report and carefully review it! A security freeze at LexisNexis Risk does not shut down every LexisNexis product or every possible use of LexisNexis data as there are some permissible uses that return information such as existing account reviews.

Both allow consumers to place security freezes on their files. I have now done that, and I think it is worth considering even if you already have freezes at Equifax, Experian and TransUnion.

Here are the official sites:

ChexSystems

<https://www.chexsystems.com> Choose Security Freeze from their consumer options.

LexisNexis Risk Solutions

<https://consumer.risk.lexisnexis.com/freeze>

The freezes can later be lifted if you actually want to open a new account. LexisNexis specifically states that its freeze is intended to prevent information from being released for certain credit, loan and service applications without your authorization. ChexSystems likewise provides consumers with the ability to place a security freeze on their consumer file. And while you're at it, ask them to send you reports of the information they have on file about you.

I'm not trying to alarm anyone. I'm writing this because I stumbled across an exposure I didn't know I had, and it seems likely that a lot of other people don't know about it either. And with so many data breaches occurring that we find out about months or years later your information, like mine, is available, or may be in the future, on the dark web for sale.

What surprised me most is that this isn't obscure because I've ignored security advice; most of the security advice I've seen tells you to freeze the three major credit bureaus but says little or nothing about freezing the systems banks use when opening deposit accounts. A quick review of government guidance shows the same gap. IdentityTheft.gov tells victims of fraudulent checking accounts to obtain and review their ChexSystems report but does not recommend placing a ChexSystems security freeze. The CFPB does explain that ChexSystems offers a freeze, but you have to dig into its specialty consumer-reporting information to find it.

Those who know me know that when I find a pothole, I tend to put up a sign, so the next person doesn't drive into it.

So, my suggestions are:

1. Don't automatically throw away mail from a bank just because you don't do business with that bank. Open it and make sure someone isn't trying to do business with them in your name.

2. Consider putting security freezes on your ChexSystems and LexisNexis files in addition to the freezes you may already have at the three major credit bureaus.

3. Request and review the ChexSystems and LexisNexis reports themselves.

4. Consider checking a few other specialty systems if you want to go further, particularly Early Warning Services for bank-account activity, especially because it does not provide a security freeze; Innovis as another credit/identity reporting service; NCTUE for telecom and utility accounts; and other areas that may matter depending on your circumstances, such as employment information.

It takes a little effort now but could save an enormous amount of aggravation later.

Take care,
Steven Flagg



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Mazywood by Tananarive Due

By Terri Schlichenmeyer
The Truth Contributor

The brochure made it look so relaxing.

Roomy accommodations, gourmet meals, personalized service, ample staff, and your every wish fulfilled. Who wouldn't want a vacation at a place like that? It almost sounds too good to be true, doesn't it? In the new novel, *Mazywood* by Tananarive Due, it is.

Johnny Washington needed a vacation.

As a Hollywood screenwriter, his life was one long string of stresses and the latest problem was the last straw. His daughters, Sharise and Imani,

c. 2026
Saga Press
\$32.00
512 pages

were teenagers now – Sharise would leave for college soon – but Johnny's wife, Tasha, just learned that she was pregnant again.

Was that welcome news? They weren't quite sure yet. Then Tasha suggested a weekend getaway at Big Bear, to the lodge he'd inherited from his grandmother, Mazelle, putting Johnny even more on-edge.

The daughter of vaudeville entertainers, Mazelle Washington had big dreams. One of them came true after she wished for a "best friend forever," and she found a

dirty stray dog on her way home, a dog that turned out to have a strange mental connection with her. Scout would do anything Mazelle wanted. Anything at all.

A trained dog and a cute kid were Hollywood catnip and Mazelle and Scout became famous movie stars in racist roles that embarrassed Mazelle, but her contract kept the family afloat. Later, after being phased out of kiddie movies because of puberty, she took a brief hiatus before returning to Hollywood where, encouraged by the likes of Hattie McDaniel and Clark Gable, she hoped to revive her career. Instead, she was contracted for a movie series in which she played a shiftless Jim-Crow-era maid the producer called "Lazy Mazy."

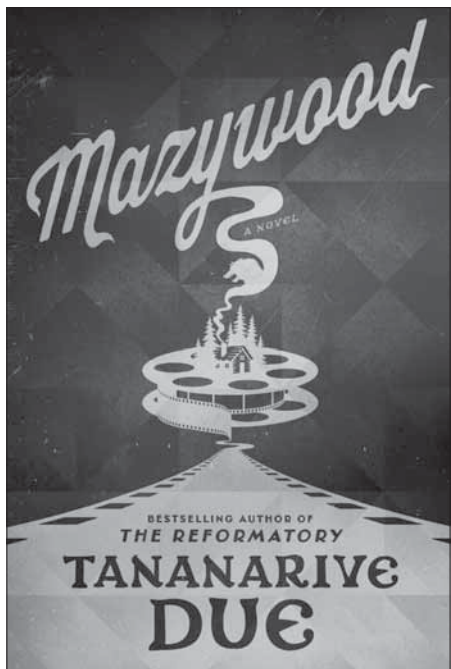
When Mazelle learned that she'd been tricked, she angrily fled, purchasing a compound in the mountains, creating a retreat where Black entertainers were welcome.

But Johnny was never welcome there. As a child, Mazelle had terrified and abused him, and he couldn't forget. Nor could he forget seeing things scurrying beneath the snow outside his grandmother's cabin...

If you're looking for a good scary novel for your fall enjoyment, you really can't expect it from *Mazywood*. This isn't a slasher kind of story, and there is no maniac to blame. Nothing will jump out at you here, and there's minimal blood. Instead, author Tananarive Due tells a good story while also making readers want to turn on all the lights and double-check the locks against an evil hides in a slyly-implied, barely-specified something, an unknown entity that could be lurking silently behind you right now, waiting for you to let down your guard. Then, keeping you wrapped in that tale, Due makes you understand that those cautions won't help, that monsters know no boundaries. That makes readers squirm with a deliciously foreboding sense, starting at page one.

Oh, and there's authenticity and history inside this novel, like icing on the cake.

Kick off your front-of-the-fireplace, dark-of-night reading season with this nice, hefty book. Take *Mazywood*, lock the doors, head to your easy chair, and never mind about relaxing.





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What's Happening This Week in Toledo

Tuesday, September 22

Pickleball Clinic: Trilby Park

Trilby Park, 3125 Shawnee Rd. | 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.

Each two-week session is \$20 per person. Classes are Tuesdays and Thursdays, 6-8 p.m. Must be 18 or older to register. (<https://secure.rec1.com/OH/toledo-oh/catalog?filter=c2VhcmNoPTQzMDE5Mzk=>)

Thursday, September 24

Let's Get Moving: Line Dance

Wilson Park, 3251 Otto Rd. (Indoor Shelter) | 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.

Pickleball Clinic: Trilby Park

Trilby Park, 3125 Shawnee Rd. | 6 p.m. - 8 p.m.

Each two-week session is \$20 per person. Classes are Tuesdays and Thursdays, 6-8 p.m. Must be 18 or older to register.

Saturday, September 26

Urban Wholistics Pop-Up Produce Market: 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Swayne Field Pop-Up Produce Market: Saturday Market

Swayne Field, 3030 Monroe St. | 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

The Swayne Field Pop-up Produce Market, in partnership with Al Peake & Sons Food Service, is bringing fresh, healthy, and affordable produce directly to the community! Be sure to check out the Halloween Harvest on October 24.

More to Explore

Explore More Pass (<https://explore.toledo.oh.gov/checkout/1063/city-of-toledo-oh/4881/explore-toledo>)

This mobile exclusive passport is a collection of curated parks, special events and more for you to explore this year in Toledo.

Pickleball Clinics (<https://toledo.oh.gov/summer/pickleball-clinics>)

Limited spots will fill up fast! Each two-week session is \$20. Must be 18 or older to register.

Kayak at Cullen Park (<https://toledo.oh.gov/residents/parks/kayaking>)

Self-serve rental lockers are stocked with equipment for your kayak adventure!

Golf Muni Courses (<https://www.toledocitygolf.com/>)

Schedule your tee time at one of our three public courses.

Sickle Cell Warriors...continued from page 16

fects of sickle cell which she led a moment of silence for, honoring her late son, Jordan.

The severity of sickle cell complications was shared by the Winged Warrior Tribute, Judge Myron Duhart. The judge graciously shared the legacy of family members who have departed due to sickle cell. Duhart honored the achievements of his mother, Patricia Maddox-Duhart, as well as her siblings Donald Maddox and Constance Maddox.

In spite of their early life transition, Duhart emphasized the acquired higher education, community involvement, and commitment to service his family carried, even in the face of crisis. Judge Duhart has previously rarely spoken about the details of his family's loss because the grief was too painful, but chose to share more with platforms advocating for better care for those living with sickle cell.

La'Shardae Scott has tirelessly built her platform from navigating her own experience of her two sons who live with sickle cell. Through education, advocacy, outreach and supportive programming, S.C.O.T.T. seeks to help others navigate health-related challenges and life transitions while strengthening resource connections. Scott has developed programs focused on helping patients transition from pediatric to adult care. Her work has included partnerships with Ohio hospitals and collaboration with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Scott previously served as Sickle Cell Director for the Neighborhood Health Sickle Cell Project of Northwest Ohio and has continued expanding community awareness through events, educational programs and advocacy. Scott has positioned the S.C.O.T.T. 's presence at the intersection of health-care, advocacy, and community leadership.

Just before the walk began on Saturday, she was recognized by State Rep. Erika White and Senator Paula Hick-Hudson for her work as well as support of legislative progression. Connect and get involved with the center at scottcenteroh.org.



Getting Your Affairs in Order 2026

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In Partnership with
The Area Office on Aging & Toledo Area UAW CAP Council

Join us for a Workshop on How to be Ready for Life Changes



Saturday, October 17, 2026

at UAW Local 12, 2300 Ashland Ave., Toledo, OH

Registration begins September 1st.

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

Topic Discussions:

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- Power of Attorney
- Bank Accounts & Fraud Prevention
- Transfer of Assets
- Life & Homeowners Insurance
- Talking with Loved Ones
- Trusts

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Deborah Barnett at 419-297-4232

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- Taylor Automotive Family
- Toledo Community Coalition



Generational Differences

IN THE WORKPLACE

CONFERENCE 2026

CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR WORKING CROSS-CULTURALLY TO IMPROVE BOTTOM-LINE PERFORMANCE

October 30, 2026
 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
 Hilton Garden Inn, Perrysburg, OH

Keynote Speaker:
Dr. Tim Elmore
 Founder
 Growing Leaders

Panel & Discussion Topics:

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- What Leaders Can do TODAY to Create Harmony
- Understanding Generational Communication Styles
- Real Strategies for Improved Bottom-Line Performance
- Networking Opportunities and more!

Presented By:
Dr. Willie McKether
 President
 WLM Cultural Communications

Who should attend:

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- Nonprofit & Government Administrators
- Labor Leaders
- Belonging & Engagement Officers
- Multi-Generational Workplace Teams
- Employee Engagement Professionals
- Senior-Level & Emerging Professionals
- Business Owners & Community Partners

More info: generationaldifferencesconference.com
gdwc.square.site

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CLASSIFIEDS

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September 23, 2026

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 2:00 P.M. (local time), September 15, 2026 and opened immediately thereafter for **#2184-Request for Proposals for Centralized Record Storage** for the Lucas County Clerk of Courts Records Center, 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&_afFS=16&_afMT=screen&_afMFW=1920&_afMFH=932&_af-rMFDW=1920&_afMFDH=1080&_afMFC=8&_afMFCI=0&_afMFM=0&_afMFR=96&_afMFG=0&_afMFS=0&_afMFO=0

Prior to 2:00 P.M. (local time), September 15, 2026 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

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS SNOW REMOVAL SERVICES – ALL AMPS COMMUNITIES AND SCATTERED SITES RFP26-R007

Lucas Metropolitan Housing (LMH) will receive proposals for **Snow Removal Services – All AMPs Communities and Scattered Sites in accordance with RFP26-R007**. Received in accordance with law until **October 16, 2026, at 3:00 PM EST**. For documents: www.lucasmha.org; 424 Jackson Street., Toledo, OH 43604; or 419-259-9452 (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.



AFTER SCHOOL TUTORING DIRECTOR

The Padua Center is seeking an After School Tutoring Director, the Nia Program. The successful applicant will have experience in an educational field as either a teacher or classroom aide. The main responsibilities of the Director are to provide tutoring and educational enrichment to about 15 elementary school children from 2:30-5:30 Monday through Thursday, beginning September 8, 2026 and will continue until the end of the school year. Volunteer helpers are available. Transportation and meals are managed by other employees. Pay range is \$17-\$20 an hour. Approximately 12 hours a week.

Please submit resume to thepaduacenter@gmail.com

For more information call: The Padua Center, 419 241 6465

TOLEDO FIRE & RESCUE DEPARTMENT HIRING SOON

Information sessions are being held on September 16, October 7, October 22 and November 3 at 10 am and 7 pm each day!

Goodwill Building – 1120 Madison Avenue – Meeting room in the basement

GET READY TO SHOP TILL YOU DROP

Come out Saturday, September 12, from 10 AM to 6 PM for the Shop Till You Drop Community Garage Sale at Solomon Temple MBC, 573 Nebraska Avenue.

We're looking for vendors, food vendors, local businesses and community sellers to join us. Vendor spaces are available for just a \$40 donation, with proceeds benefiting the Solomon Temple Building Fund,

Come shop for great deals, hidden treasures, food and more while supporting a great cause. For vendor information, contact MZ at 419-514-0203 or Linda Lee at 419-699-0396.

Shop! Sell! Support! And don't miss the fun!!

CSU DAY IN TOLEDO

Central State University will host **CSU Day in Toledo** on **September 26-27, 2026, at Third Baptist Church, 402 Pinewood Ave., Toledo**. Students and families from Northwest Ohio are invited to meet with university representatives, learn about admissions, scholarships, financial aid, academic programs, and student life.

OFFICE SPACES FOR RENT

Several to choose from in the heart of the Warren Sherman area – corner of Franklin and Bancroft and close to the Wayman Palmer YMCA. Contact 419-509-0492 for more information

Call to place your ad:

419-243-0007

www.TheTruthToledo.com

La'Shardae Scott Honors Sick Cell Warriors During Annual 5k Walk/Run

By Alexandria Leatherberry

The Truth Reporter

The Scott Center for Observation, Treatment and Transition held its second 5k walk/run to raise awareness of Sickle Cell Disease and honor those who have navigated living with Sickle Cell Disease. Led by La'Shardae Scott, DSW, S.C.O.T.T. organization hosted the Heal Together: Race for Sickle Cell at Ottawa Park to share, inform and bring forward the accomplishments that have been made for those living with sickle cell.

Prior to runners taking off, Scott centered attention on the organization's honorees for this year. Honorable recognition was given to Councilwoman Brittany Jones, DSW, for Community Impact; Beta Phi Sigma Chapter of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc. and Zeta Xi Zeta Chapter of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc. for Community Partnership.

Tributes for lives that have been impacted by sickle cell disease were held for recognition as well. Recognized as Sickle Cell Warrior of the Year, Ty'Kela Smith, a survivor, shared her personal story of resilience and transforming her diagnosis into a mission now leading Sick Cell Awareness-Toledo as president.

Smith, the Sickle Cell Warrior of the Year, was diagnosed when she was six months old with the disease and doctors did not anticipate her living to adulthood. Sickle cell, a disease primarily limited to the African American community and a few other communities of color, does not have a track record of being widely understood by the medical establishment. When she was born, doctors accused her parents of stealing the child because, unlike them she was so light-skinned as a result of the disease, said Smith.

The doctors certainly didn't expect her to reach adulthood. She did indeed reach childhood but not without a lot of pain and suffering along the way.

She was in and out of hospitals frequently. She participated in activities such as sports but always had to be careful especially in the winter. Cold weather is not a blessing for the sickle cell patient.

She grew up and eventually became pregnant. Her doctor, her hematologist, insisted that she have an abortion. He said that neither she nor a baby could expect to survive and thrive. He also said that if she persisted, he would no longer treat her. She persisted and he walked away.

Smith's daughter, Zy'Naijah, is now 16 years old and although Zy'Naijah carries the trait, she does not have the sickle cell disease.

But Smith's difficulties as a sickle cell warrior have continued into adulthood. Pain is frequent and intense. She is obligated to travel to the Cleveland Clinic once a month for treatment and to Sandusky twice a week. The doctor who had been treating her up until almost three years ago moved to the Cleveland Clinic and his successor at ProMedica here did not believe that Smith was in much pain and declined to continue the treatment previously prescribed and also informed the staff in the emergency room not to treat her as before, said Smith. So, it's to Sandusky and to Cleveland to receive treatment.

Ty'Kela Smith is indeed a warrior.

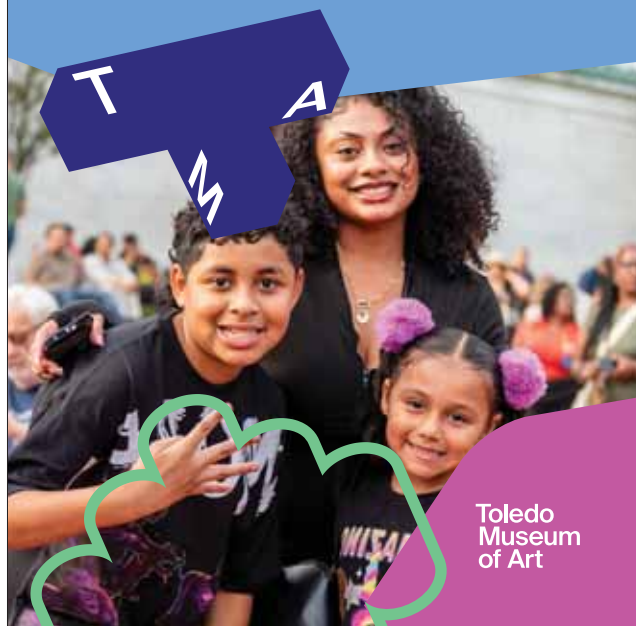
Following Smith's testimony, the Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to Cheryl L. Jones for her work within the Ohio Department of Health and contributions to advancing health care patient experiences. Her accomplishments did not come without her own experience of navigating the ef-

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Block Party

Sept. 26, 2026 • 3 pm

Get the details at toledomuseum.org/blockparty



Toledo
Museum
of Art



Cheryl Jones



Councilwoman Brittany Jones, PhD,
addresses the audience



Judge Myron Duhart



La'Shardae Scott



MCs Ashley Benson and Monique
Myers



Ty'Kela Smith



The walk begins