



Volume 63, No. 1

“And Ye Shall Know The Truth...”

August 12, 2020

The 2020 Cotillion Debutantes ~ A Celebration of Emerging Leaders



Arianna Smith is a Springfield High School graduate who will be attending The Ohio State University as a Morrill Scholar. She will be a double major in communications and journalism on a pre law track. Arianna was accepted into all 17 schools she applied to with over \$970,662 in scholarship money. She participated in many activities throughout her high school career including competitive dance, Springfield dance team, cheer, swim team, band, Detroit Tap Repertory, American Tap Company, USA National Tap Team, National Honors Society, Mentor program, and Students in Action. She has also competed in the World Tap Dance Championships in Riesa, Germany where her team took 5th in the world. Arianna has received awards such as the Youth Jefferson Award, MVP for dance team, Rotary student of the month, and the leadership award for cheerleading.

Amari Iman Wilson graduated with honors from St. Ursula Academy. While at St. Ursula, Amari served as: Vice President of the African American Club; LABRE Outreach. She was a mentor with the Ella P. Stewart School for Girls; was a JV & Varsity Cheerleader for St. Francis de Sales HS; was on the Ohio State Bible Bowl Team, the Praise Dance Team and the STEPP Team at Glass City Church.

Amari was a National Academy of Future Physicians Delegate, a University of Toledo Excel Graduate, a Top Teens of America Graduate, on the Tahyah's Dance Studio Competitive Dance Team, a UT STARZ Pre-Med Program Graduate and a member of Pretty Brown Girls - Toledo Chapter

Amari was accepted to 22 universities including Baylor, Howard, U of M and Spelman and received over \$797,000 in merit awards. Amari selected The Ohio State University where she received the John Morrill Scholarship Award of Distinction. This full ride scholarship will cover the entire cost of attending Ohio State for the next four years.

Brooklynn Gregory is a graduate of St. Ursula Academy. During her time at SUA, Brooklynn earned a cumulative GPA of 3.3. She was a four year Fine and Performing Arts member, an Honors Spanish and Bela Voce student. She was President of the Afro Club, a spirit club participant as well as a student ambassador and a varsity cheerleader for St. Francis de Sales. She mentored the students of Ella P Stewart Academy for girls, helping them to prepare for the next stages of life as middle school students. She ended her high school journey with over 400 hours of volunteer work and earned over \$75,000 in scholarships, including being a 2020 recipient of the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc Toledo Alumnae Chapter scholarship.

Brooklynn will be attending Kent State University where she will be studying Psychology with a minor in music. Her career goals include opening her own medical practice and being a music therapist.

Nyla Nicole Brown graduated from Notre Dame Academy and will attend Howard University to major in biology with a goal to be an OB/GYN

Activities include: National Sorority of Phi Delta Kappa Xinos Youth Club; Speech and Debate Team; African American Club; ProMedica Summer Youth Employment Program; Thy Loyal Daughters Club; College Credit Plus; STARZ program; Reach program; Upward Bound; Link Crew Leader; Student Ambassador; Old West End Academy volunteer; True Light Pentecostal Holiness Church member and volunteer. She was offered scholarship to Howard University, Loyola University Chicago, Spelman College, University of Toledo, Xavier University of Louisiana- Xavier.

Jada Collins graduated from Bowsler High School and the TPS Medical Technology Program with a 3.55 GPA. During her years at Bowsler, Jada participated in the YMCA Youth Opportunities Program, was a member of HOSA Future Health-Care Professionals, volunteered with Hospice of Northwest Ohio, completed the Mercy Health Explorers Program, and successfully completed Ohio Nurse Aide Training. She also served as the Vice President of the NANB-PWC Toledo Youth Club and participated in several community service projects in Toledo and across the United States.



Malaikah Davis graduated from Toledo Early College High School with 72 college credits. Her academic performance has allowed her to graduate ranked third in my class. She received an associates from UT with a focus in Psychology. She will be entering UT as a junior and will be completing the second half of my undergrad with a major in Psychology

A Celebration of the 2020 Debutantes

Presentation of a Debutante is a long-standing tradition and a defining rite of passage in our society. In the early years, a Debutante was selected and introduced to society as a candidate ready for marriage. However, breaking away from the outdated practice, the current Debutantes are well-rounded and highly educated young ladies. They are noteworthy because of their academics, scholarship merit awards, community service and involvement, etiquette and their preparedness for higher education.

Each year, the local organization prepares each participant with special etiquette and training sessions which includes their escorts. The process culminates

at a grand ball where each Debutante is presented to society with a roster of their achievements and ends the evening with a performance of a highly technical waltz.

Unfortunately, the opportunity for presentation was removed from each of the accomplished young ladies due to COVID-19.

Therefore we at the Sojourner Truth felt the young ladies deserve special notification. We cannot replace the Ball and all of it's finery, but we are pleased to introduce them in a literary fashion to society.

and minor in Counseling (chemical dependency counseling concentration), with the intent to become a clinical psychologist. She has participated in several school's club organizations (Women for Change, Dance Team, and Leadership Toledo being some) and numerous service projects such as the Down Syndrome Association's Buddy Walk, Girls On the Run, Food for Thought and the Beach House. She received several scholarships towards my tuition and educational materials including the Regents Scholarship, President's Community Award, Black Alumni Affiliate Scholarship, Dr. M. Moore Scholarship, and the Arthur and Maxine Schrader Scholarship.

Roses and Blood

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

The Truth Contributor



When I made that decision, I knew I had the strength of my ancestors with me.

- Rosa Parks

A meditation by Rev. Susan K. Smith:

When the horse-drawn wagon carrying the body of Rep. John Lewis began to make its way up the Edmund Pettus Bridge, it felt like there was a stirring of the ancestors, those in that "great cloud of witnesses" whose spirits are ever with us and who were with a young John Lewis the day police officers nearly killed him for daring to march across the bridge as part of the work to get black people the right to vote.

Many, myself included, broke down as that wagon moved slowly across the bridge strewn with red rose petals to remind everyone of the blood that was shed by many on that day, especially and including the man in the casket.

The journey from Brown Chapel AME Church to the bridge is not a long one. Those who left that building on that day in 1965 knew that they faced harm and danger as they began to move out, after praying and singing. I don't know how many in that group had been trained in nonviolent direct action, but Lewis had. He knew that in that movement, he had to be ready to be beaten, be arrested, and/or to be killed. Rev. Jim Lawson had taught him well.

So when Lewis and Hosea Williams led the trek across the bridge and the police began assaulting the peaceful assembly with batons and tear gas, they were prepared. Blood fell on the bridge as marchers were beaten, sprayed with tear gas, and nearly trampled by horses proof of the disrespect that was being shown to God and to the fight for justice.

That John Lewis practiced nonviolence, in the most violent of situations, bound him to the ancestors throughout life as he was often beaten to try to shut him down. It was as though the ancestors looked down upon him and encouraged him, perhaps making him hum the song to himself, "I don't feel nowadays tired" although he had to have been exhausted.

So when he crossed that bridge for the last time, the wheels of the wagon

rolling over those rose petals, even as the wagon-driver stood up and took his hat off to honor Lewis' sacrifice and physical pain he endured on March 5, 1965, it was not difficult to feel the respect for this man and difficult not to think of how blood shed for worthy causes has a different scent, one which lasts forever. Droplets of Lewis' blood will forever sprinkle on that bridge, sweetened, perhaps, with the scent of crushed rose petals.

W.E.B. DuBois once said that the religious life of Americans "did not begin in America because it was built...on the religious heritage of Africa." DuBois said that the Black Christian church which came to be in this country was not Christian, but African, placing a "vener of Christianity upon the ongoing adaptation of indigenous African and beliefs under slavery."

The ancestors kept us all connected, the "earth family" to the "cloud family." The Yoruba of Africa "believed in God [and] made that divinity the foundation of organized political belief and state building." Throughout the history of black people in this country, the ancestors shared their very breath with those who fought against hatred and bigotry, their breath giving the children on the ground the strength they needed to carry on. The ancestors reminded the children on the ground that over their heads there was a God. They let them know that the scent of their blood had reached the nostrils of God and that God was with them.

The ancestors let the children know ...that they were not alone.

The rose petals on the Edmund Pettus Bridge were a reminder that blood had been spilled, and that their scent would forever reach the nostrils of God. The scent of the blood spilled by all of us ever reaches God. On Sunday, the wheels of the wagon carrying Rep John Lewis' body crushed some of the petals, but neither the wheels nor the wagon were able to crush the scent of suffering; it cannot be erased or diluted. God is and has been the foundation of our organized political belief, as DuBois noted, and God will not only always see our suffering but will also smell it and in response, send the Holy Spirit to strengthen us for the work.

Amen and amen.

Rev. Dr. Susan K Smith is an ordained minister who is also an author, writer, and speaker, who concentrates on the intersectionality of race, politics and religion. Currently working on a biography of Rev. C.T. Vivian, she is the author of several books including "Rest for the Justice-Seeking Soul." She is the communications consultant for the Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference, Inc., and also co-chair of the Minority Outreach subcommittee for the Nonpartisan Ohio Voter Outreach Committee (NOVOC). Smith is available for speaking, and can be reached at revsuekim@sbeglobal.net.

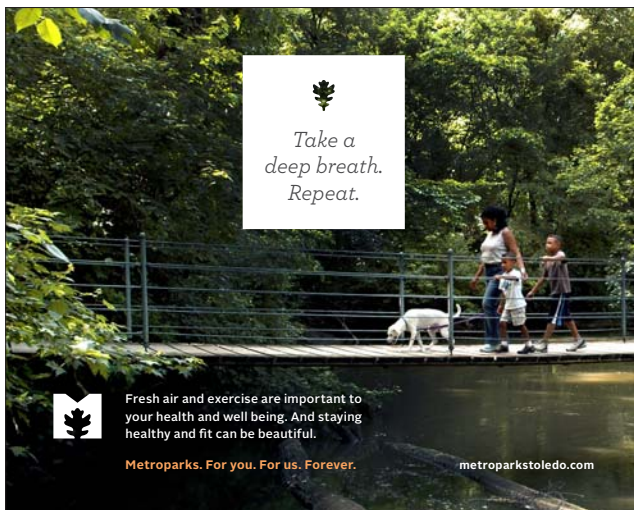
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Makes Me Wanna Holler!

By Lafe Tolliver, Esq

Guest Column

If you need any more proof that this upcoming presidential election is going to become the proverbial, "barn burner," look no further than recent news headlines indicating that Kanye West, yeah, THAT Kanye, is running to be president of the US of A.

Now, let that thought sink in for a moment or two. Kanye West, musical genius (?) provocateur, wants you to vote for him to have access to the nuclear codes and for him to craft deals with China and Russia.

Kanye wants to be the chief executive officer of the US of A and appoint nominees to the Supreme Court and be in a position of power to issue pardons!

If you believe that you are in an Alice in Wonderland tale, you are!

Kanye wants you to allow him to debate on national television his opponents in matters of serious import that pertain to life and death and which decisions, if he is elected, would have grave impact on the national economy.

Now, if you have been watching the news lately, you have seen this presidential aspirant, devolve into a mess of public tearings (aka: crying jags); and shoutouts to his wife regarding abortion and iffy divorce issues.

Let your fertile imagination run wild and visualize Kanye giving State of the Union addresses and traveling on Air Force One to conduct meetings with other heads of state.

Or, Kanye using the Oval Office as a staging arena for an impromptu rap concert with Taylor Swift on back-up vocals! Yeah, you now are getting the drift of such a presidency.

And yet, you must ask, what is the sinister plot behind such an undertaking. What is going on and who is up to no good?

Well, for starters, understand that Kanye is in no mental state of mind to engineer such an undertaking because we are now finding out that it is GOP political operatives who are the malefactors behind this galling operation.

The story is that the GOP is concerned that Herr Trump, behind in the polls, needs all the help he can get, be it from China, Vladimir Putin of Russia or even exploiting a black rock star.

The gist of the story is that if the GOP can use Kanye in certain key battleground states to siphon off clueless black voters or those who do not care about electing Joe Biden, their votes for Kanye, in a tight race, could be difference in Trump winning or losing that state.

Do not be gullible in thinking that black voters will not go for the, "Okey-Doke" and would vote for Kanye. When you understand that Herr Trump thrives on chaos and disruption, throwing a Kanye wrench into the election pool would serve that purpose.

In the 2016 elections, in some key battleground states, it was only a matter of several thousand of votes that caused Hillary Clinton to lose

and for a mentally-addled Herr Trump to win the White House.

The GOP has no moral scruples in a calculating exploitation of anyone or anything if that means that their candidate can win a second term as president.

Kanye, according to recent family reports, is allegedly suffering from mental health issues and is possibly bi-polar and as such, is susceptible to being pranked, harmed, exploited, used, appropriated or conned into believing that his voice is needed on the national political stage.

What is a more pressing question is why either Kanye or his "loving" family are allowing this clownish political charade to happen with their knowledge?

It has been reported that GOP operatives are really in charge of this ruse and they are the ones making sure that Kanye gets on the ballot in certain key states to hopefully siphon off votes from Joe Biden.

Does this regrettable behavior by Kanye or his family make Kanye an, "Uncle Tom?" No...because if you read the story of Uncle Tom's Cabin, you will realize that Uncle Tom was a hero and did acts of bravery to save his people from exploitation. but rather, it was the book's character, Sambo, who did the damage.

Shame on Kanye and double shame on his family members who are not protesting this charade and triple shame on the GOP for this political outrage.

My take on this? Simple. Kanye should immediately change his name to that of Sambo West.

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It Is Time!

By June Boyd
Guest Editorial

The murder of George Floyd and a number of African Americans recently in this new decade 2020 has caused a major uproar in the United States and worldwide.

I can only reflect on what else must be done. Black Lives Matter, but so does the history of African Americans. It is time for educators nationwide to introduce the study of Black History as part of the curriculum into the classroom.

As a junior at St. Ursula Academy in 1952, our class project required writing an essay. The most important person I could introduce to my class was George Washington Carver, one of two African Americans I was familiar with. The other person was Madam C.J. Walker. My parents had told me of this great man who had much success with a peanut. The travesty is that at that time, I had not heard of the hundreds of inventions and successes having come from African Americans.

When my eight-year-old granddaughter came home with a Black History quiz from St. Ann School, in 1991, I did not know the answers to the questions and had to take her to the public library. How embarrassing.

As an adult, I have made a strong effort to see that my grandchildren are familiar with our rich history and legacy.

The one month that is set aside is not enough. This history must be introduced to classrooms as is American History, World History and Ancient History, which I studied in high school.

To give a sample of my thoughts as to why we must have Black History in the classroom: we remember Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, however, Sojourner Truth was there also, and delivered a most powerful speech reflecting the times of women suffrage and the right to vote.

There was Chief Justice Earl Warren, but we had Thurgood Marshall; there was General Douglas McArthur, but we have four-star General, Colin Powell. There was Abraham Lincoln; we had Barack Obama; There was Larry Bird, then came LeBron James; there was Arnold Palmer, then came Tiger Woods. Nadia Comaneci was an outstanding gymnast, but the new

kid on the block is Symone Biles; Babe Ruth was a champion home run hitter, Hank Aaron broke his record.

This column does not have enough space for the hundreds of famous African Americans who made their mark on America.

During this national protest, my 11-year-old Goddaughter asked me; "Granma June, are we going back to slavery?"

I responded: "no, but we are in a revolution."

She asked "what is a revolution?" I responded, "a rebellion and uprising, fighting for our rights to eliminate the injustices our people are faced with."

The reality is that Black Lives Do Matter, and the world needs to know it. The introduction to Black History as a part of curriculum in the school system, public and parochial, will be the beginning of something that should have been available many years ago.

Educators, take notice, we need this as part of a solution to the rich history that has been set aside.



June Boyd

Rep. Hicks-Hudson Responds to Postal Service Friday Night Shake-up

Calls on U.S. Postmaster General to address postal delays in Lucas County and across country

State Representative Paula Hicks-Hudson (D-Toledo) this week responded to disturbing news of mail delays, hiring freezes, and questionable management changes at the U.S. Postal Service. She recently sent a letter to Postmaster General Louis DeJoy urging the United States Postal Service (USPS) to address postal delays in Lucas County. Nearly 100 Lucas County residents expressed to Hicks-Hudson that they had been experiencing postal delays that result in late bill payments and other disruptions to their lives.

Said Rep. Hicks-Hudson: "I am fighting for people to have continued, timely access to essential postal services. It is a lifeline to everything from their medication to their

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Ethnic Studies at BGSU Marks 50 Years

By Ravi Perry, PhD
Guest Column

2020 marks the 50th year of Ethnic Studies at Bowling Green State University. (BGSU). After student protest, the tragedy at Kent State and pressure from the community, BGSU established a committee chaired by John Scott, PhD, to seek a director of a newly formed Ethnic Studies Center.

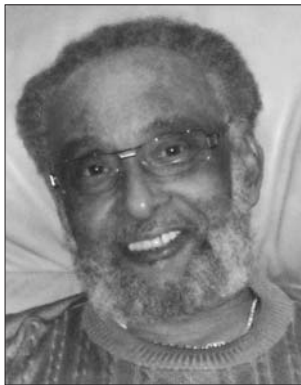
Scott recommended that my dad, Robert L. Perry, PhD, be hired for the job. A 1959 and 1965 BGSU BA and MA graduate, Dad, in July 1970, was a PhD candidate in the Department of Sociology at Wayne State University and was teaching part time at the Detroit Institute of Technology. Without an interview, Dad was hired. Everyone, including Dad, initially thought the appointment would last a couple of years.

Students made sure that did not happen. Throughout the 1970s, BGSU became the region's ground zero for the study and discussion of race and ethnic issues in America. What was first a center with no budget, Dad, John Scott and others worked passionately, creatively, and with intention to turn that Center into an academic program that offered students courses for credit toward their degrees.

While students demanded a Black Studies curriculum, Ethnic Studies was a compromise at BGSU as it was at the University of California at Berkeley and San Francisco State University which each were the first to establish ethnic studies in the country just two and three years before BGSU.

Ethnic Studies is the interdisciplinary study of race, ethnicity and indigeneity with a focus on the experiences and perspectives of people of color within and beyond the United States.

By 1978, the ethnic studies program at BGSU became its own academic department, the first in Ohio and among the top five in the



Robert Perry

world. Department status is huge in higher education because that most often means you have an undergraduate major and you can hire faculty members and tenure them within the department. This helps to control the time faculty have with students and to the department, strengthening it for years to come.

As a result, Ethnic Studies at BGSU continues today and now features dynamic faculty producing significant scholarship on many of the contemporary issues facing our global world today.

This past month of July marked

50 years of this accomplishment for BGSU and I emailed the president of the university to inquire about their planned activities. Initially I was concerned that we as a family had not heard of any planned activities commemorating the 50th anniversary.

To this day, what my Dad started, remains the ONLY singular focus (i.e. not merged or altered) Department of Ethnic

Studies east of the Mississippi River. Daddy created the FIRST EVER university-wide requirement to take a class on race and ethnicity in the country. He invited world-renowned scholars, including having hosted James Baldwin on campus, throughout northwest Ohio and who for a time lived in our Westmoreland home between 1978-1981.

These are all significant events our family is glad to help BGSU celebrate and that is what precipitated my email to the administration in mid-July. After not receiving a reply by the end of the month, I was miffed. So, I did what most millennials do, I went to social media. I made this decision – Dad had no idea - because I love my Daddy and I am so proud of him each and every day.

Gratefully, the university's Chief Diversity and Belonging Officer (CDBO) graciously responded to me forthwith and that was followed up by a very warm note from President Rogers. Both have expressed a steadfast commitment to recognizing the historic achievement. As of this writing, I understand the provost at BGSU, a brilliant Black scholar, is working with the president, the CDBO, and department chair to determine future planning.

In my letter to President Rogers, I recommended:

- 1). President Rogers engage in a public dialogue with my Dad about where BGSU was in 1970 and where we are today as a society.
- 2). BGSU can interview current Ethnic Studies faculty and student majors in a digital project throughout the upcoming academic year and discuss race and ethnic issues in our world online

... continued on page 6



Robert and Ravi Perry when Ravi earned his doctorate from Brown University

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Rep Hicks-Hudson... continued from page 4

ballots. There is more disturbing news every day of attacks on the United State Postal Service. It started with rumors that mail was stacking up at local distribution centers. Next, I heard from over 100 constituents and neighbors that their mail was delayed. Now, the President and his million-dollar donor and new Postmaster General Louis DeJoy are removing experienced postal operations employees from their posts while the Postal Service faces an enormous challenge with the upcoming election and an expected record number of absentee ballots. We must not let the Postal

Service be sabotaged from within.”

In her letter, Hicks-Hudson also noted her concern that these postal delays may hamper vote-by-mail efforts for the November election, especially if ballots do not arrive to voters in a timely fashion or are not returned to the Boards of Election in time to be counted.

The letter asks the Postmaster General to reevaluate current mail services and to adequately staff and equip mail distribution centers to allow postal carriers to effectively complete their routes.

Ethnic Studies... continued from page 5

3). BGSU can establish a 50th Commemoration Committee in the Office of the President - and include my Dad and Dr. John Scott as honorary co-chairs.

4). Ethnic Studies at BGSU needs to have a graduate program. There is not one PhD in Ethnic Studies at any school east of the Mississippi - and obviously that includes the state of Ohio - so the need is there.

5). Funds can be raised to endow two professorships. One should be named for my Dad, the “Robert L. Perry Distinguished Professor of Ethnic Studies” ought to be a senior Full Professor social science scholar in the Department of Ethnic Studies whose work engages improving the lived conditions of marginalized people. The same should be created in honor of Dr. John Scott, and that scholar ought to be an expert in cultural arts, theatre and performance. We should also honor the first woman department chair.

6). BGSU can host the next annual meeting of the Association for Ethnic Studies, bringing international scholars to NW Ohio once again

7). BGSU can convene an international conference on James Baldwin - one that is not narrowly focused on his literature, but that also engages with his activism and his life while working at BGSU. In 1978-1981, BGSU was the first place Baldwin went to - the first school he ever taught at after his self-exile to France after the civil rights movement.

8). I recommend BGSU re-name Shatzel Hall, “Perry Hall” to honor the achievements that my Dad and his colleagues accomplished together. Built originally in 1924 as a women’s residence hall, Shatzel Hall is named after J. E. Shatzel, a relatively obscure white man that was a member of the Board of Trustees from 1914 to 1924. Shatzel gave 10 years of service to BGSU and has had a building named after him for 96 years. Dad gave 27 years of service and there’s nothing to date that honors his years of dedication and the success of Ethnic Studies.

This is not about my Dad. This is not about celebrating the past. This is for current BGSU students and the generations that will follow and is important because of what it says about the perseverance of ethnic studies as a field of academic study developed out of the spirit of student activism - and now has lasted 50 years.

Ethnic Studies Matters! Especially in Ohio and particularly at a rural, predominantly white university like BGSU. We are interested in the opportunity the 50th year of ethnic studies at BGSU brings to sustain its future. The most appropriate honor begins with a commitment to endowed sustainability. Together we can ensure generations of Falcons will come to know the diverse histories, activisms, and migration patterns that make up the study of ethnic studies (and related fields).

The Perry Family loves BGSU and always will. My Dad devoted decades of his life to that institution in ways that changed it forever. Dad first got to BGSU in 1957, then 25 years of age and fresh out of the military. He earned two degrees. Mom (LaRouth Perry) earned two degrees. And my brother earned his B.A.

My sister and I learned how to swim there; she went on to be a stand-out swimmer at St. Ursula and captain of the nation’s only HBCU sailing team while in college at Hampton. I learned how to swim at the recreation center and I ran cross country there during summer training camps. Mom also taught part time at BGSU. My siblings and I literally grew up on BG’s campus. Our memories are fond.

It is important that we sustain the ethnic studies legacy started by my Dad and colleagues in July 1970 at BGSU. Sustainability requires institutional commitment. We hope you can join us in this effort to sustain ethnic studies at BGSU

Ravi K. Perry, a native of Toledo, is Professor and Chair of the Department of Political Science at Howard University. Perry is former president of the Association for Ethnic Studies. Forever loving his hometown, Perry currently resides in Washington, D.C.

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Getting on the Right Track: Meet Malik Coleman

By Mariah Hicks, Brothers United Coach
Special to The Truth

"I was 20 years old when I became a father. I was going down in the struggle of being a co-parent."

Malik Coleman was trying to balance school, budgeting and going to court at the same time. Him and his co-parent weren't able to see eye to eye on a lot of things, which caused a strain in their relationship.

Coleman first heard about BU during an event at Scott High School. BU staff were giving out baby items and one of them asked if he was interested in joining the program.

"I wasn't sure at first, so they gave me the number. A day or two later, I called and joined the program. Ever since, I have been doing better."

While in the program, Brothers United taught Coleman how to provide for someone else and put his son first. The program helped him accomplish his goals and get connected to resources he needed.

He learned how to diffuse arguments with his co-parent and control his reactions. BU gave him someone to talk to, not just while he was in the program, but after he completed as well.

"BU taught me that fatherhood is a serious thing to take on. It is just a different feeling. You have to provide for your child before everyone else. It taught me to step up and be a father."

Today, Mr. Coleman is getting better at co-parenting. Even though they still don't always see eye to eye, they work through it for the sake of their son. He's signed up for classes at Glass City to get his high school degree, and is dedicated to getting his life back on the right track.

If you are interested in joining The Brothers United Program or have someone you want to refer : Call us at (419) 279-6297 or www.pathwaytoledo.org



Mr. Coleman

Finding a Brotherhood: Meet Mr. Larena

By Mariah Hicks, Brothers United Coach
Special to The Truth

"I didn't have too much knowledge of fatherhood and relationships. I struggled in my relationship; me and my girl argued a lot, and I didn't know how to express myself."

Mr. Larena didn't have much guidance or support before joining Brothers United. He was 20 years old when he had his first child.

"It woke me up and put different life goals in front of me. It

made me look at life differently and made me want to accomplish my goals faster."

Mr. Larena heard about Brothers United through a flyer that was left on his apartment door. The name stuck out to him, so he decided to look into the program and give it a try.

"I didn't have anyone else out here. I felt like I was gonna be a part of something good."

Mr. Larena joined BU in hopes of making better life decisions and finding other fathers who he could talk to and learn from. He expressed that he felt like his coach was designed just for him because he could relate to him.

Mr. Larena graduated from the program this year. He feels like BU gave him more understanding, especially when it came to setting realistic goals for his life.

"I felt blessed at all times. Y'all came and got me, and I felt comfortable. I felt like I was at home. I got structure through the rules. I came home positive and motivated. It made me wake up and not wanna leave my family. I was thinking about just being alone, but BU made me see that my family was the most important thing in the world."

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Mr. Larena

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Neighborhood Beautification Continues

Sojourner's Truth Staff

Five years ago, Montrice Terry's Citypark League initiated a Neighborhood Beautification Project titled "Clean Yo Block," bringing together students from around the city to spend a weekend day cleaning up a neighborhood's streets and parks.

During the summer of 2020, such efforts have continued, in spite of the restrictions imposed by COVID-19, by avoiding gatherings.

"The Citypark League (CPL) has continued its efforts for the last several weeks to provide social outlets, education, and service learning utilizing a recreational and leisure approach for youth and families. The CPL's 'Clean Yo Block' Neighborhood Beautification Project has provided such a rewarding experience in the midst of following recommended social distancing guidelines," wrote Terry just before this past Saturday's group cleanup at the Wilson Park Shelter in north Toledo.

About 25 students joined in the cleanup and were rewarded for their efforts with a lunch provided by the Old Newsboys. The students were assisted by staff members of the Zepf Center.

"As we know 2020 has been a life changing experience for the world. The pandemic, the protest, and on-going violence that has created additional burdens in many of the black communities," said Terry. "Toledo is no exception to these issues and concerns. Nonetheless, many individuals and organizations are finding creative ways to reduce the mental and behavioral struggles youth and families are experiencing during these trying times."

Terry started the cleanup effort five years ago by self-funding the project which pays youth by the quantity of trash picked up. Recently the project has received funding assistance from Old Newsboys and Fifth Third Bank



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Anti-Racism Teach-Ins Continue

Anti-Racism Teach-Ins, hosted by the Toledo-Lucas County Public Library and supported by The Sojourner's Truth, are taking place on Zoom twice weekly through Labor Day. The teach-ins are open to the public with a special invitation to teachers, administrators and parents who want a safe space to work together to learn about, challenge and change white supremacy in schools.

Join in Zoom meetings, 5-6 pm Mondays and Wednesdays at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87347454267>, meeting ID: 873 4745 4267. On Facebook, follow Anti-Racism Teach-Ins at <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=10005397857767> for the schedule and links to materials shared in teach-ins. When the coronavirus is under control and limitations on gatherings are lifted, sessions will take place at the Mott Branch Library and continue to be accessible via Zoom.

Here we print synopses of the first to presentations, by Shingi Mavima, PhD, and Dale Snauwaert, PhD. Materials from presentations are available on the *Truth's* website at thetruthtoledo.com

Why Afrocentricity? The Importance of an African-Centered Approach in Anti-Racism

By Shingi Mavima, Ph.D., The University of Toledo



Shingi Mavima

Special to The Truth

In this teach-in I argued the merits of culturally-relevant pedagogy, highlighting the deficiencies of the status quo: a Eurocentric paradigm that is often presented as 'universal.' An Afrocentric paradigm provides an alternative in which all people's experiences—not just Africans but inclusive of Europeans and others—are valued.

The idea of Afrocentricity comes from Civil Rights literature. C. T. Keto described an *African-Centered Paradigm* as providing a framework for the centering of knowledge about Africans, at home and abroad, on the experience of Africans as **subjects** of history. M. Asante defined *Afrocentricity* as placing African ideals at the center of any analysis that involves African culture and behavior.

The universalizing approach of the Eurocentric paradigm has throughout Western history denigrated Africans and African Americans. Most basically, this approach has treated African communities as objects in knowledge. The need is for a shift from Africans and Africans being objects to being subjects, voicing their own experiences and being heard as authoritative. This is what it means to center on African experience.

The ultimate goal, instead of a universal approach to education and understanding society, is to achieve a pluriversal orientation that allows



Dale Snauwaert

... continued on page 11

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Afrocentricity... continued from page 10

different experiences and voices to be understood and valued through their specific lens and not as inferior to the predetermined standard situated in another's experience.

Dr. Mavima's full presentation and references for further study can be accessed in the Anti-Racism Teach-Ins archive, on the Sojourner's Truth website at thetruthtoledo.com.

Pedagogy of Reflective Inquiry: Racial Inequity, Racist Policy and Anti-Racist Teaching

*By Dale Snauwaert, Ph.D., The University of Toledo
Special to The Truth*

The aim of this teach-in was to explore the theory and practice of a pedagogy of reflective inquiry as a form of anti-racist teaching. The teach-in engaged participants in the process of three forms of reflective inquiry pertaining to racial inequity, racist policy, and racism: critical, ethical, and contemplative reflective inquiry.

The idea of a pedagogy of reflective inquiry is derived from the work of peace educator Betty Reardon. Her conception of teaching is grounded in the educational theories of John Dewey and Paulo Freire. Dewey conceived education as a process of the reconstruction of experience leading to the development of the capacities of students. The key to learning and development for Dewey was reflective inquiry into lived experience or what he called reflective experience.

Freire advocated a pedagogy of dialogue and critical analysis of power and oppression in order to liberate and empower students. Reardon builds on these conceptions in the form of three forms of reflective inquiry: critical, ethical, and contemplative. Critical reflection pertains to the discernment of power, an understanding and critique of social institutions, analysis of the structural dimensions of social life, and a critical consciousness (in a Freireian sense) of the political-economic origins of violence. Ethical reflection addresses normative questions of justice, and thereby the ethical validity of structural and cultural violence, guided by the principles of justice and a human rights framework. Contemplative reflection is the self-examination of internal moral motivation and commitment. It pertains to a reflection on what is meaningful and valuable. It also involves the exercise of imagination to envision alternative realities necessary for transformative action.

The purpose of the teach-in was to apply these pedagogical methods of reflective inquiry to the phenomenon of racism. Following Ibram X. Kendi, racial discrimination was defined as a function of equity—If racial discrimination creates inequity, then it is racist. A racist


policy is that which produces and/or sustains racial inequity defined as generating inequality in the standing, benefits, and burdens of racial groups. Based upon these conceptions, racism is defined as the collection of racist policies that produce racial inequity, which is in turn sustained by racist ideas, that is, ideas of inferiority and superiority among racial groups. Racism is both structurally and culturally violence. As such, it is an urgent matter of justice.

A just society, what Martin Luther King referred to as the “beloved community” is grounded in a form of “love” expressed by the ancient Greek word agape. Agape is the moral disposition to respond to others with unconditional respect and good will. Its exercise does not discriminate among persons but responds to their equal inherent dignity. In doing so it bestows membership in an inclusive moral community. Justice requires equal respect for persons. As Cornel West suggests: “Justice is what love looks like in public.” Anything short of mutual respect is dehumanizing, and the essence of injustice is dehumanization; as Dr. King stated in his Letter from the Birmingham City Jail: “Any law that uplifts human personality is just. Any law that degrades human personality is unjust.” The idea of a beloved community is related to the African concept of Ubuntu, which constitutes a relational, communal conception of personhood and ethics—affirming and pursuing communal relationships grounded in mutual dignity and respect. From this perspective, injustice is the degradation of communal relations causing dehumanization. Through deliberation in small group discussion, the participants engaged in the process of reflective inquiry pertaining to racial inequity, racist policy, and racism.

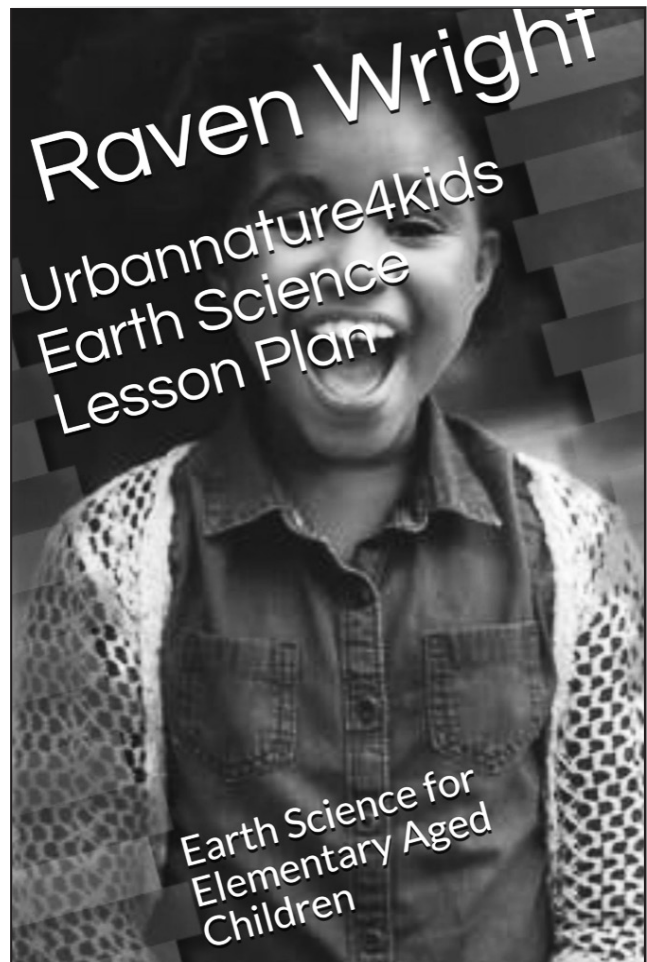
Dr. Snauwaert's full presentation and references for further study can be accessed in the Anti-Racism Teach-Ins archive, on the Sojourner's Truth website at thetruthtoledo.com.

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Ohio Democratic Party Statement on Trump Threatening Social Security

The Ohio Democratic Party released the following statement from Chairman David Pepper in response to Donald Trump's executive action that threatens Social Security: "Nearly 85 years after President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Social Security Act into law, Donald Trump is jeopardizing the Medicare and Social Security trust funds with a desperate stunt that won't boost the economy won't help workers or small businesses and could hurt seniors.

"When he was on the campaign trail, Trump claimed he wouldn't cut Medicare and Social Security. But over the past three years, Trump has proposed and supported cutting both programs. In January, Trump suggested cutting Social Security and Medicare was 'the easiest of all things -- as if these programs aren't benefits that Americans have earned over decades of work. Senate Republicans who have discussed it with the president say he calls it a 'second-term project' That makes it clear what's at stake in 2020 -- if Trump wins a second term, he will slash Medicare and Social Security.

"The president keeps making promises to the people of Ohio. Time and time again, he keeps breaking those promises, and everyday Ohioans -- like the nearly 2.4 million Ohioans who rely on Social Security -- are paying the price."

In June 2016 at a speech in St. Clairsville, Ohio, Trump said, "We're going to save our Social Security. We're going to save our Medicare. Others want to cut. We're going to save so much."

Since he's been in office, Trump has proposed and supported cutting Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security. Trump's last budget proposal cut Social Security programs by \$26 billion and slashed funding for the Social Security Administration, which helps retirees and people with disabilities get the support they need and have earned.

TARTA Announces Fall Schedule Changes Effective Aug. 16

The Toledo Area Regional Transit Authority (TARTA) is announcing fall schedule changes to its service to take effect Aug. 16, 2020. The following TARTA routes will be discontinued due to low ridership: • #10 Rossford Call-A-Ride • #6 Sylvania Fixed-Route • #29/44X Maumee/Waterville Express.

Low ridership on these routes is attributed to the coronavirus pandemic which is impacting employment and work hours. In addition, local, state and federal health and safety guidelines advising to only use public transit for essential trips is also impacting TARTA's ridership.

TARTA schedules are available at tarta.com/routes or by calling 419-243-RIDE (7433). Riders are also encouraged to utilize mobile transit applications like Transit, Passio Go! or Google Maps for other real-time routing options.

There are no schedule changes to TARTA's paratransit service, Toledo Area Regional Paratransit Service (TARPS). TARTA will also continue to follow its COVID-19 Rider Safety Guidelines which include requiring passengers to wear a facial covering and no fare collection. For a complete list of the Rider Safety Guidelines, visit tarta.com/coronavirus.

Congressional Black Caucus Reflects on Voting Rights Act

"August 6, 2020, we celebrate the 55-year anniversary of the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. But 55 years later, our nation is still struggling to ensure voting rights for all Americans. This 1965 law was an historic win for African Americans, but we continue to face ongoing voter suppression efforts, from modern-day poll taxes for formerly incarcerated individuals and needless ID requirements, to closed polling locations and ballot shortages in Black communities, to disinformation campaigns on social media and foreign interference in our elections invited by the highest office in our land.

"The disastrous 2013 Supreme Court decision in *Shelby v. Holder* gutted Section 5 of the VRA and our ability to combat voter suppression and intimidation. The decision unleashed a partisan voter suppression campaign across America that is silencing the Black vote. With a critical election in November, it is imperative that we restore the heart of the VRA by enacting H.R. 4, the John Lewis Voting Rights Act of 2020 (formerly known as the Voting Rights Advancement Act).

ional Black Caucus continues the call for both vote-by-mail and safe in-person voting options. The CBC fought to secure \$25 billion in emergency appropriations in the HEROES Act to support the United States Postal Service and ensure its more than 600,000 employees have the equipment they need to do their job safely. This emergency funding is crucial to ensure Americans nationwide can fulfill their democratic duties to be counted in the 2020 Census and vote in upcoming primary and general elections. The HEROES Act was passed on May 15, 2020, but almost three months later, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell has refused to take up this critical piece of legislation.

"The right to vote is fundamental to our democracy. Yet from the founding of our nation, we have struggled to extend the franchise to all. We have come a long way because of the advancements of civil rights leaders and thoughtful legislators like the late Congressman John Lewis. But progress must be won each day and the Congressional Black Caucus will continue his fight to extend the franchise to all Americans.

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Minority and woman-owned businesses and Section 3 businesses are encouraged to apply. For more information and for a reservation at an upcoming informational meeting about how to do business with LMHA and LHSC, please contact Sherry at 419-259-9446 or stobin@lucasmha.org



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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS TRANSITION AGE YOUTH SUPPORTIVE SERVICES RFP20-LHSC015

Lucas Housing Services Corporation (LHSC) will receive proposals for Transition Age Youth Supportive Services. Received in accordance with law until August 18, 2020 at 3:00 PM ET. See documents: www.lucasmha.org; 201 Belmont Ave., Toledo, OH 43604; or 419-259-9446 (TRS: Dial 711). Affirmative Action and Equal Employment Opportunity requirements (Executive Order #11246). This contract opportunity is a Section 3 Covered Contract and any Section 3 Business Concerns are encouraged to apply.



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Emmanuel Tolano Reynolds
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I Got the School Spirit by Connie Schofield-Morrison, illustrated by Frank Morrison

By Terri Schlichenmeyer
The Truth Contributor

A brand-new, shiny box of crayons. That's just one of the things you're looking forward to when you finally start school. Mom says you can't have them yet, though, you have to be patient. So why not read I Got the School Spirit by Connie Schofield-Morrison, illustrated by Frank Morrison in the meantime?

c.2020
Bloomsbury Children's Books
\$17.99 / \$24.50 Canada
32 pages

Fall arrived, summer was done, and that meant that it was finally here. It was time for her and all the kids in her city to "start the new school year!"

As soon as she got out of bed, she brushed her teeth and fixed her hair. She put on her best clothes and her new shoes that told the world she had "the spirit." Then she ate a good breakfast. Fried eggs make a kid full of the spirit, too.

Everything was in her backpack, including the spirit. And as she waited for the school bus with other kids in her neighborhood, she noticed the spirit come "driving up the street." One of the other kids was crying – she must've been scared about her first day of school – so she hugged her new friend, and shared the spirit.

Inside the school building, she had to admit being nervous. She'd never been to school before, so she breathed deep and counted the spirit. She taught her new friends to do it, too.

And when she reached her classroom, she waited for attendance. That's when the spirit called her name and she spoke up loud and clear: "HERE!"

There's so much to learn at school and pretty soon, it was time for lunch. The spirit was at the table, and she shared. Her friends shared, too. Was the spirit hungry?

Not really but it was at the playground. It was there at story time. It sat on the floor and paid close attention. It was kind and friendly and happy to be learning. And when it was time to go home, the spirit hugged ev-

eryone hard and put them on the bus. Who knew what would happen at school tomorrow?

I Got the School Spirit is cute. And too repetitive. And unfortunate.

If the enthusiasm by author Connie Schofield-Morrison doesn't get a kid in the mood to learn, then the illustrations by Frank Morrison surely will. Even the most reticent, scared-stiff child will clearly see that going to school is something to be excited about but alas, the word "spirit" is a bit a lot on the over-used, tiresome side.

Your child might not mind that so much but you might mind the rest of the story: the kids in this book don't social distance. They hug, sing, and share food, squished on a crowded table in a crowded lunchroom. The last-year-normal of it all may give today's parents pause, with timing that's unfortunate.

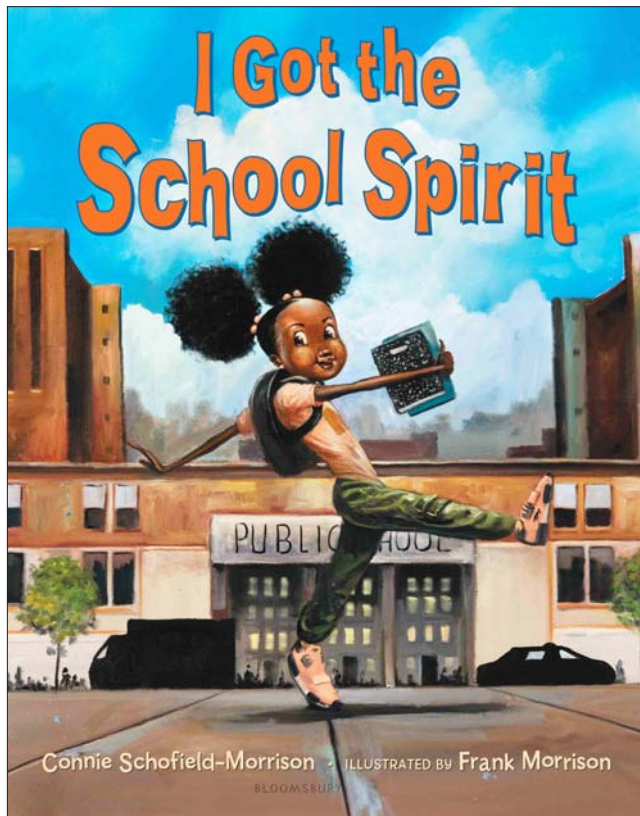
Know your child, and know her school. Bring I Got the School Spirit home, or put it aside with the knowledge that there'll be other First Days of School. At that time, for your little student, this book will shine.



Author Connie Schofield-Morrison



Illustrator Frank Morrison



How to Help Friends Vote Absentee From Anywhere in the World

Special to The Truth

For military members and their families stationed away and U.S. citizens living abroad, family and friends are vital connections to life back home. For the 2020 general election, those friends can be an important source of voting information, especially for young people voting for the first time. And this year it's even more important to register and request an absentee ballot early to avoid potential mail delays or other disruptions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

An easy way to help loved ones in the military or abroad vote absentee is by referring them to the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP), which provides tools and resources to ensure that American citizens can vote from anywhere in the world.

Voters can visit FVAP.gov to find state-by-state official registration and ballot request deadlines, as well as information on completing a Federal Post Card Application (FPCA), which is the registration and ballot request form, and the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB), the backup ballot. Both forms are available at FVAP.gov and can be filled out with the online assistant or by hand. For additional information, visit FVAP.gov, email Vote@FVAP.gov or call 1-800-438-VOTE (8683).

Important things to remember:

1. Submitting your FPCA early is the best way to help ensure the process goes as smoothly as possible.
2. Using the FPCA provides our Service members, their families and overseas citizens with an option to receive balloting materials electronically.
3. Using the FPCA early grants voters the ability to use the FWAB as a backup ballot, if needed.

Courtesy StatePoint

The 2020 Cotillion Debutantes ~ A Celebration of Emerging Leaders



Brooklynn Imani Russell is a graduate of the Toledo School for the Arts, Brooklynn will attend the University of Toledo to study journalism on a Toledo Excel Scholarship,

An Allison Gogel-Reynolds BCSN Scholarship and a President's Community Award Scholarship. Her Activities have included Viola, Dance, Film



Savannah Lyn Ann Banks attended Penta Career Center and her home-school was Springfield High School. Savannah carried a 4.3 GPA throughout her high school years. She was given the Penta award of excellence and was on the honor roll. She was also in the National Tech Honor society and was the secretary. She was an ambassador at Penta. She was in the Small Animal Care Program. Savannah plans to attend Lourdes University where she is majoring in social work and she plan to get a master's degree. Savannah was given over 25 thousand in scholarships from different schools.



Jazlyn Purnell attended Notre Dame Academy and graduated with Third Honors. While at Notre Dame she was a Link Crew Leader, joined Notre Dame's Hip Hop Team, played CYO Volleyball and was a Debutante. In Jazlyn's spare time she loves praise dancing and volunteering at her church with the Family House, the media booth and other service opportunities.

Jazlyn will attend Kentucky State University and study nursing. However, her ultimate goal is to become a Physician Assistant.



Saniyah E Brandon graduated from Maumee Valley Country Day School and will be attending the University of Toledo double majoring in finance and accounting. She was the president of the African-American club, past treasurer of Jack and Jill of America Inc., and past legislative liaison. She played varsity Basketball and Varsity Track and Field for four years and played piano for twelve years. She received the Boldon Memorial Award, Prince Hall Scholarship Foundation, Presidents Community Award, and the Robert W. Gosman Memorial Award.



Dakota Sutton is an Honor Graduate of Notre Dame Academy with 4.2 GPA. She served as vice president of African American Club and four notable years of Notre Dame Academy Musical productions. She was Musical Vocal Captain and Link Crew Leader. Dakota received acceptance from 11 universities and \$530,800 in merit scholarships. Dakota selected Howard University to study biology – Pre-Med.

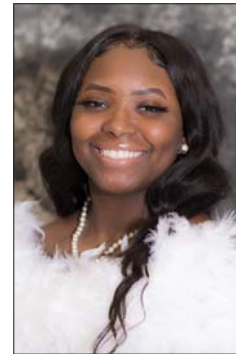


Lydia Myrick is a graduate of the Toledo School for the Arts and is sought after for her leadership qualities and is also very engaged in the community. She volunteers at the Toledo Art Museum at the Family Center. She is the student president for Making a Direct Difference (MADD) where she developed her skill in spoken word. In 2019, she performed for the state leaders at the University of Toledo for the Dr. Martin Luther King Day ceremony.

Lydia is also skilled at designing clothes, playing the piano, guitar, and learning multiple languages. She will be a second-generation student at the University of Toledo with a full ride scholarship.



Joycelynn "Joci" Prater graduated from Bowling Green Senior High School with honors. Joci is an avid golfer and has played since her freshman year. Joci received the Scholar Athlete Award from BG and was a member of the school choir. Joci also volunteers at a local senior center. Joci will further her career at Kent State University to pursue a Nursing Degree.



NaJae Wright graduated from Rogers High School and will attend the University of Toledo to study Nursing Her Activities in high school included the Avid Program, TRIO Program, Owens College Upward Bound, Cello Player, Freshman/Jr. Varsity – Rogers Girl's Basketball. She was on the Honor Roll for four years and is an Athletic Award Recipient.



Kahner Simone Lothery graduated from Toledo Early College High School and will be attending Mercy College of Ohio to study biology/ Pre-PA (Physician Assistant). Her activities and awards included: graduating with honors as well as with an associate's degree in Liberal Arts, was on the President's List Senior year, was a member of the National Honor Society, and was also awarded with a renewable scholarship of 5,000 per year on academic excellence through Mercy.



Tomeisha Evans graduated from Bowsheer High School and will attend Xavier University Louisiana for college to major in Criminal Justice. This course of study will allow Tomeisha to fulfill her career path as a CSI Agent. She was on the Honor Roll for all four years; earned a 3.9 GPA and was a Bowsheer HS Cheerleader.

2020 DEBUTANTES NOT PICTURED: *Shiloh Bass, Keana Byrd, Ebony Cunningham, Ava Harris, Julia Rucker, Jordyn Taylor*