

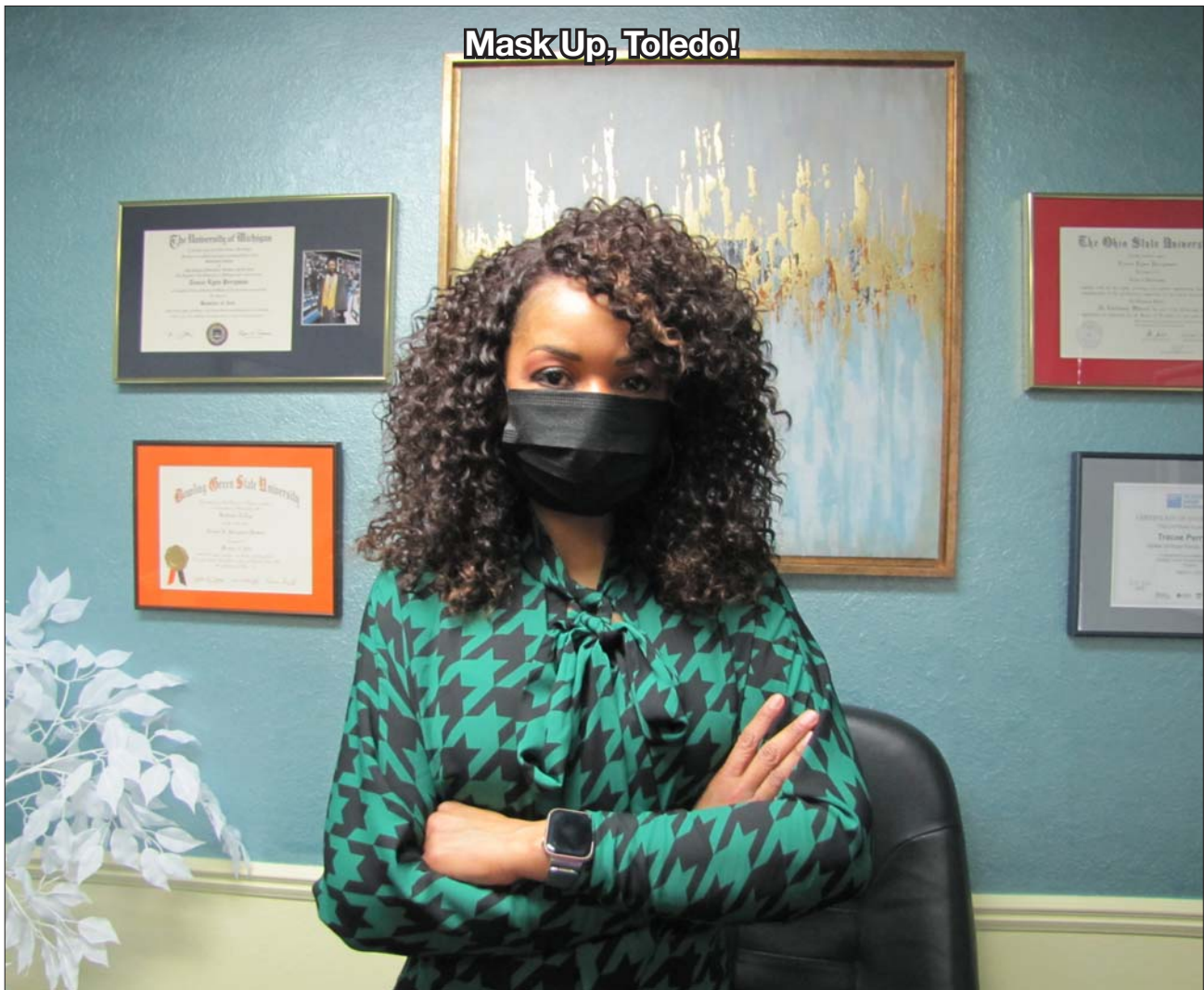
The Sojourner's Truth

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Volume 64 No. 8

“And Ye Shall Know The Truth...”

December 9, 2020



Tracee Perryman, PhD, and Center of Hope Family Services Urge Caution

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Police Response to Black Trauma

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

The Truth Contributor

Even the mere presence of police may bewilder or provoke the suspect, which may ultimately result in serious danger to the officer as well as the complainant.

- Joongyeup Lee, Jr.



The relationship is complicated.

Domestic violence is a primary social concern in the African-American community and throughout the United States. Concurrently, domestic disputes are among the deadliest calls that police are required to put their lives on the line to respond. In that same vein, Black men and women expect their encounters with law enforcement to end with lethal force at the hands of the police.

Those three scenarios came together in an almost perfect storm last week when a troubled and emotionally distraught Kwamaine O'Neal was shot 19 times by four officers from the Toledo Police Department during a dispute with the mother of his child.

Three white and one black male officers, responded to a 911 call from an East Toledo housing project where a young lady, complaining of being physically assaulted and verbally threatened, locked herself in an upstairs bathroom.

Listening to the 911 emergency call, it became apparent that O'Neal was seeking to free himself from the internal prison that struggled to contain his conflicting emotions about life, his child and the child's mother.

The young police officers (two, aged 26 and two, aged 31), "responding to O'Neal's homicidal and suicidal language and threats," forced their way into the apartment and shot him as he allegedly pointed a gun at them.

The incident was the second officer-involved shooting that has taken place during Mayor Wade Kapszukiewicz's tenure. The mayor has recently declared "Racism as a Public Health Crisis" while proclaiming transparency and lauding safety forces that "Toledo can be proud of."

Yet Toledo remains one imprudent trigger-squeeze away from becoming another poster-child for police use of excessive force despite reluctance to admit systematic racism exists here locally.

How should the community perceive the Toledo Police Department's decision to use lethal force during last week's domestic violence incident?

A Few Questions:

Here are a few answers that the community should demand to determine whether or not TPD actions are justified.

1. What attempts at de-escalation did the officers use before deciding to use lethal force?
2. What, specifically, was the deciding factor in forcing entry into the occupied residence?
3. Were there attempts to use less lethal or other than lethal options in this

incident?

4. How was it that TPD or the dispatcher assigned these four relatively inexperienced officers to respond?

5. Were the responding officers trained to force entry in situations of domestic violence? Were these officers highly trained or equipped with the negotiation skills to handle the incident? If so, were these exhausted? If not, did the department or emergency dispatcher reach out to request more experienced or better trained officers?

6. Can the administration or Chief of Police assure the community that the officers involved followed all department policies and guidelines?

7. Was the bodycam footage of all of the responding officers made available to the public?

The Importance of Black Voices:

When diverse officers are involved in critical incidents, lethal outcomes improve as cultural barriers are removed, reducing the chance that suspects' actions and words are misinterpreted. Toledo currently does an excellent job of masking its lack of diversity. Many current black police officers are funneled into community engagement divisions. Very few, if any, work in vice, gangs, or SWAT. Besides, there are close to zero blacks currently serving as command officers – deputy chief, captain, or lieutenant.

However, an up-to-date list of officers qualified for promotions is likely to reveal the presence of outstanding minority officers such as Marquitta Bey, an exemplary employee. Bey has been passed over for advance at least three or four times in recent years.

Transparency Matters:

Finally, in identifying and eliminating structural racism where it may exist, Toledo is inclined to allow evaluation only of specific departments or programs while prohibiting inspection of others. That is shady.

Suppose a self-proclaimed "transparent" Toledo truly believes that racism is a public health crisis and wants the community's buy-in. In that case, it should seek an independent, high quality evaluation of its police department practices.

The Free International Solutions Group is a national organization with a reputation for performing blue ribbon race, culture, and operational audits in police departments and other organizations.

If Toledo wants to address racism and gain credibility and legitimacy from our community, let them provide independent confirmation of the reality it now merely ballyhoos. It won't be cheap.

The good news is that we can get it for Free!

Contact Rev. Donald Perryman, D.Min, at drldperryman@centerofhope-baptist.org

The Sojourner's Truth

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An Interview with Both ‘ME’ and ‘ME’ME’

By Lafe Tolliver, Esq

Guest Column

It is rare as hen's teeth that a journalist can snag an interview with the now famous Donald Trump's last two remaining twin brain cells, "ME" and "ME-ME".

My name was placed in a lottery with over 380 other news junkies who would sell both of their kidneys (at the same time, no less!) to get such an interview with those two media darlings.

I think that I won the lotto due to the stars seeing that I always made my bed up in the mornings and I never drank caffeinated tea after 8 PM. Who else could claim such a record!

In case you are a newbie to the media sensations of "ME" and "ME-ME", they are the last two intact brain cells of Herr Trump and, boy, do they got a lot to say about memories of rambling around in an empty head and living off of fumes of greasy fast food and quarts of warm Diet Coke.

If you are stumped about how one person can be so consumed with his own presence and has no space or room for anyone or anything other than anything Trump, you need to read the following and incredible interview with these two remaining brain cells:

ME: No matter what you have heard, America loves me because I epitomize America!

ME-ME: Hey, what about me! When I saw how easy it was to con people into believing that I was one of them (ugh!), everything was downhill from there on. People love to believe a lie that suits their idea of how things should work and I was more than happy to oblige them.

ME: Hey, what about me! When you were slipping fast ones past those gullible GOP fat cats (of course, giving them tax breaks and keeping them quiet was like a shot of meth to an addict), they will take the money and run!

ME-ME: Hey, I got one even better! The best way to run a con on my deplorable voters is to use the code words of states' rights or law and order, which means: I am watching out for those black folks who want to overrun your manicured suburbs with their blasting boom boxes! Ain't nothing scares better than telling a white voter that unless you vote for me, "your" America is running out like a toilet paper scare in a pandemic!

ME: I got one better than that old tried and true chestnut! I tell my boss that if he spooks folks with tales of hordes of dirty brown skinned people invading their cities and ripping off their city services, that will throw them into an outright panic. I know from when we ran that scam about the Central Park Five being guilty, is that If you mix black and brown people with crime and show images of big, burly black men dressed in hooded sweats and scowling at the camera on the Five O'clock news, Bingo! You win!

ME-ME: (long and loud laugh) ...Ain't that the truth! Remember when we told Donald that unless he put a blockade on Muslims entering the country, he would lose the suburbs! Well, he did it and Wow...did his poll numbers among his base shoot to the moon!

ME: Hey, we taught Donald a lot about America. Even his slogan, "Make America Great Again," was recycled from the early years when the Klu Klux Klan marched in D.C.! Some things never change!

ME-ME: You know, what I will miss the most when we get kicked out of the White House is whispering into Donald's

ear that he is the victim. He loves the victim scenarios we prep for him. He feels oppressed by any negative media talk and that makes us have to work overtime to give him ideas as to how to counter when they say he lies all the time!

ME: He does lie all the time! How does anyone think that we could pull off these cons and grifts unless we feed the base some red meat that they are being belittled by the media and that their government is holding out on them? If people only knew how hard we work to have Donald appear as a Darth Vader to those cringing old GOP senators.

ME-ME: Yeah, but we got to be careful. Some of them are wising up to us and the fear of The Donald may be losing its effect and especially since he lost the election. You and I tried to keep him on track, but some "others" got to him and he threw the COVID-19 crisis under the bus and did not throw some more stimulus bucks to his base. That would have kept them quiet and would have silenced those spoiled suburban soccer moms!

ME: Hey, I told you to work with me and if you would have agreed to throw some bucks to those white middle class businesses, we would not be in this election mess! And I also told you to make a big show of giving monies to the black colleges, but you said no. Why?

ME-ME: You know why! Those black voters are squirrely. One day, it is Black Lives Matter and then the next day they are talking about defunding the police. Simply could not get a handle on them. They are all over the map!

ME: So, tell me little brother, where do we go from here? Donald, as you know is not the brightest bulb in the pack and he chases whatever whisper he hears in the closets and under bridges....so what happens to us?

ME-ME: Well, we will go with the flow. Once the Donald is out on his own and if he can avoid New York state jail time for what you and I know he did with the foreign money and his taxes; you and I can start yammering in his ears that his base is still intact and are awaiting their marching orders from him for the 2024 election cycle.

ME: Aughh!!!! Not another campaign. You and I barely made it out alive from that fateful trip down that stupid gold elevator in Trump Towers and now we gotta regroup and pull off another con?

ME-ME: Ahhhh, is life not good? P.T. Barnum eat your heart out! "We got this one covered."

Contact Lafe Tolliver at tolliver@juno.com

Mayor Wade Kapszukiewicz Holds Bi-weekly Community Virtual Call

By Tricia Hall

Sojourner's Truth Reporter

Mayor Wade Kapszukiewicz's community call provided local and state announcements through a virtual format on December 1.

The call provided information on health, education, unemployment and other relevant issues during the 45-minute conversation. The mayor opened the conversation by providing recent COVID-19 updates and explained that road repair is a priority for the 2021 city budget.

"In the last week or so, COVID isn't going away but getting worse. The problem is as bad as ever, but the good news is that there are three vaccines applying for FDA approval. We believe Ohioans will receive the vaccine either in a month or by January 2021. It is definitely the case that doctors, nurses, paramedics and frontline workers will receive the vaccine before the rest of us will receive it. I get a sense that by June or July 2021, we will get closer to normal, no masks and no social distancing so there is a light at the end of the tunnel. As we end the year, we did pretty well as a city, this was a pretty tough year. There are still too many shootings, homicides and distrust between some Toledoans and law enforcement. Our balanced budget was sent to City Council and they are taking a deep dive into it, we anticipate that within a month the budget will pass and explain our values. We're going to fix five times the number of roads and we're excited about that."



Rev. Charles Allen

Catherine Crosby, the City of Toledo Chief of Staff, continued the meeting by explaining the city's plan to focus on equity and gun violence.

"We're looking for a program coordinator with a public health, social work or criminal justice background with strong program management experience. We're using a public health approach to focus on gun violence. We're also having discussions about police data with the Community Relations Task Force, the Center for Police Equity and International City Managers Association. We're also doing a disparities study in both the public and private local market, we've engaged a firm to come in and do an analysis of our market. The firm will look at access to capital, lending opportunities, counseling and small business systems, and contracting environment. We've received questions about why the city has committed a large amount of money to having this study done. The reason why this is important to have this disparities study done, is legally you cannot have a program that is race and gender conscious without having data to support the need for those programs."



Catherine Crosby

The virtual meeting continued with a brief educational update from Washington Local Schools.

"We have served over a million meals since the start of the pandemic, and we plan to continue serving meals. However, we weren't sure if in-person learning for K-6 graders would continue, it's a staffing issues and we will remain remote until January 2021," explained Superintendent Katee Anstandt.

The Toledo-Lucas County Health Department reported an increase in COVID-19 cases and announced the date they anticipate receiving the first shipment of the COVID-19 vaccine.

- Toledo-Lucas County Health Department data:
- 16,271 cases, includes confirmed and probable
 - 268 cases per day
 - County zip codes with most cases in last 21 days: 43560, 43637, 43615, and 43613
 - Community site testing takes 3-4 days for county health department to receive results
 - November and December pop-up testing results: positivity rate -16.82 percent
 - Hospital system positivity rate - 18 percent
 - Individuals 20-29 years of age, 18.5 percent of cases

...continued on page 6

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Ohio Secretary of State Takes Post-Election Victory Lap

By Fletcher Word

Sojourner's Truth Editor

"Here in Ohio, elections are trustworthy," said Ohio Secretary of State Frank LaRose last week as he stopped at the Lucas County Board of Elections Early Voting site to observe the last day of the post-election audit being conducted by bipartisan teams of poll workers.

Not that it was easy, according to Lucas County Board of Elections Director LaVera Scott. "I've been here since 2004 and this is definitely the most challenging election I've ever been part of," she said.

As is well documented by now, the challenge of a general election in the midst of a pandemic, along with an extremely controversial incumbent president driving up the turnout on both sides, ensured that the task of conducting an election would be enormous.

"Ohio set an all-time record for voter participation," said LaRose as he noted that in "217 years of Ohio elections, none has been more challenging."

Chief among the challenges was dealing with the immense increase in absentee ballots/early voting. By Election Day, "59 percent of ballots had already been counted," he said. "But Ohio was ready to shine, mainly because the boards of elections did good work."

In Ohio, post-election audits are required to be conducted after each general election using either a Percentage Based Audit or a Risk-Limiting Audit to provide assurance to voters that the results of the election are accurate, according to the Secretary of State's office.

Lucas County uses a Percentage Based Audit, the older of the two, by selecting units to be audited – precincts, polling locations or individual machines – and examining three different contests (top of ticket, a statewide race and a local race). In Lucas County the audit examined the results of the presidential, the Ohio Supreme Court and the County Recorder races.

The audit was finalized the day after LaRose's stop in Toledo.

LaRose's obvious satisfaction with the lack of controversy over the Ohio election results stood in stark contrast to the controversy that surrounded several of his counterparts around the nation – a result of a clear-cut victory by the incumbent in the Buckeye State.

Since the election, several of LaRose's counterparts in other states – Michigan's Jocelyn Benson (D); Arizona's Katie Hobbs (D); Pennsylvania's Kathryn Boockvar (D); Nevada's Barbara Cegavske (R); Wisconsin's Douglas La Follette (D) and particularly Georgia's Brad Raffensperger (R) – have frequently appeared in national headlines as their states' close election results have resulted in court challenges brought by Trump and his Republican allies.

The Republican LaRose has decried these controversies in recent weeks, acknowledging as few in his party have, that the election accurately reflects the will of the American people.

Last week, appearing with Scott, a Democrat, he pointed to the bipartisan audit teams as reflective of the successful election efforts in Ohio. "Republicans and Democrats worked together to run a fair election," he said. "It was a terrific accomplishment and the result of a ton of hard work."



Lucas County BOE Director LaVera Scott and Ohio Secretary of State Frank LaRose



LaVera Scott



Conducting the audit






Dr. John W. Williams, Pastor

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Virtual Call... continued from page 4

- Race, percentage of positive cases: 53.5 percent white, 16 percent black and 25 percent unknown
- First shipment of vaccine, December 15, 2020 for hospitals and first responders
- Second shipment February 2021 for vulnerable populations

"This month has definitely pushed our resources when it comes to tracing, in November we have almost doubled the number of cases compared to the rest of the year. We're bracing for the next couple of weeks, and planning to see a rise in cases. Organizations may apply to become a closed or open vaccine distribution site, once the vaccine is available," explained Brandon Palinski of the Toledo-Lucas County Health Department.

Neighborhood Health Association launched Saving Ourselves Project to provide access to Covid-19 testing to at-risk communities.

"The program provides access to health care services to individual who receive a negative or positive test result. We completed 337 tests combined

in three neighborhoods: Junction, Monroe/Auburn and Mosaic Ministries," explained the community activist working with Neighborhood Health Association, Pastor Charles Allen.

The Work Ready Lucas County reported on jobless claims and how many individuals reported back to work since the start of the pandemic.

Work Ready Lucas County data, ending the week of November 21, 2020:

- 30,000+ initial jobless claims filed by Ohioans
- 2 million people, jobless claims since start of pandemic
- 260,000+ continued jobless claims filed by Ohioans

"We've also seen some positive trends in Luca County, unemployment rate has decreased in Toledo and Lucas County since June, and 4,000 people returned to work. The OhioMeans Jobs Center will remain closed to general public, but staff is still available by phone due to Ohio's red status. However, once red status is lifted, we will open for appointments. There are nearly 10,000 jobs posted on the website within 20 miles of downtown Toledo, some are entry level or high-level positions that required experience and degrees. If you're talking to people who feel discouraged, there are jobs out there. We're working with employers and hopefully people can find jobs that fit their needs," explained Michal Veh, Work Ready Lucas County, Deputy Director.

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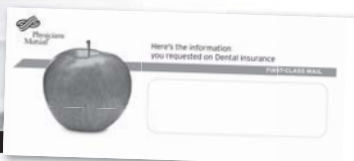
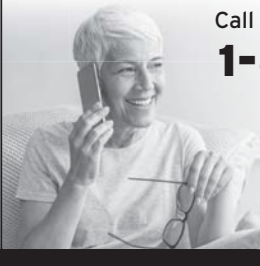
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Center of Hope and Health Department Partner for Mask Up Campaign

By Fletcher Word

Sojourner's Truth Editor

If you haven't already, it's time to mask up. So says the Center of Hope Family Services in its recently announced "Mask Up Toledo" project.

According to an estimate by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), by the day after Christmas, December 26, 329,000 Americans will have died from COVID-19 – a pandemic that has reached catastrophic proportions during the fall months. The Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME) at the University of Washington's School of Medicine projects that 538,893 Americans will die from the disease by April 1, 2021

Unfortunately, so much of the disease and death that has consumed the United States in most of 2020 could have been prevented, says the CDC and many infectious disease experts – by wearing masks, washing hands, avoiding crowds when possible and keeping a social distance when avoiding crowded situations is not possible.

There is, however, a resistance to those simple acts so prevalent in our society – a result of horrible leadership, an overweening desire for personal freedom and what has become an extensive skepticism that so many people experience about any information given out by media, elected officials or "experts" of any type.

The Center of Hope Family Services has partnered with the Toledo Lucas County Health Department to emphasize, and re-emphasize, the preventive measures that need to be a part of everyone's daily life these days. The grant to fund the project is from the City of Toledo Department of Neighborhoods and the goal is to reduce the spread of the virus among the city's youth and minority populations.

Tracee Perryman, PhD, CEO of Center of Hope Family Service has felt compelled to take direct action and implement the Mask Up Toledo program for a number of reasons. Her father, Rev. Donald Perryman, pastor of Center of Hope Baptist Church contracted the coronavirus in February but it went undiagnosed at the time. Additionally, Tracee Perryman has seen so many friends and local first responders contract the virus.

However, in spite of the overwhelming numbers of those who have fallen ill, there are two issues of concern. First, so many young people, as Perryman notes, fall into that category of being skeptics about "official" information and advice.

"Young people don't understand that they may pass it on to older ones" says Perryman.

Secondly, it has now been estimated by the National Center for Health Statistics that African Americans and Hispanics are 2.8 times more likely to contract virus than are those in the white community and almost twice as likely to die from COVID-19.

Underlying these concerns is the fact that a lack of testing leaves so many people in the dark about the extent of the virus among the populace.

Getting accurate information to the community is a critical component in the battle to check the spread of the coronavirus and to eradicating it in the future as vaccines become available. The partnership of Center of Hope Fam-

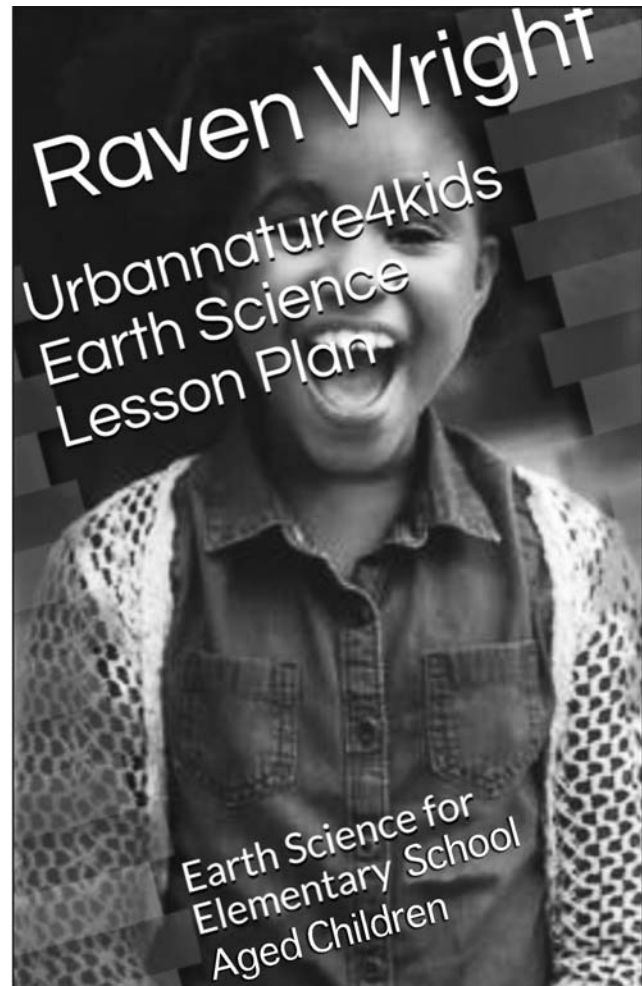
ily Services with the Health Department will focus on the message of "Keep Your Guard Up," says Perryman. That message has been broadcast in a public service announcement featuring a music video in which Perryman, an accomplished singer/songwriter, tells listeners that "if your life matters to you, wear the mask for me because it can save you."



Tracee Perryman, PhD

Content will be featured in a number of places including YouTube, the Health Department's website, Center of Hope's website, network television stations, through paid advertising and "every platform possible until the message has traction," says Perryman.

Think about others, is one of the central themes of Perryman's message. If you are young and feel invincible, remember that there are others in your family and circle of acquaintances who might be so fortunate.



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Snow Bright White and Natural Light

By Carla Thomas /Owner CYT Images

The Truth Contributor

Welcome to week two of my photography series where each week in December, I'll be sharing cool holiday photos featuring some of my amazing clients representing different genres of photography, all in keeping with the holiday theme.

When we think of winter, we think cold, wet, dreary and, "Hurry up spring!" We often miss the beauty that nature offers us during this season because we're so busy hustling and bustling trying to get in and out of the cold.

A couple of weeks ago, we experienced our first snow fall and as I drove around admiring the beauty of the fresh snow as it sparkled and glistened on top of the tree branches, I knew I had to capture it before it melted and disappeared.

As a self-taught photographer, there were two factors that helped me develop my skills early on; natural light and people willing to let me practice on them.

I picked natural light because I didn't have to worry about understanding flash or need any type of lighting setups. All I needed was the great, big, beautiful outdoors. Secondly, people willing to let me practice on them because having real subjects taught me how to ebb and flow and capture the unique essence of every individual.

Meet Darlene K. Whitehead. Darlene was one of my very first "Guinea pigs" so to speak and has regularly participated in various CYT Images projects over the years so I knew I could call upon her at a moment's notice and she trusted me enough to flow with whatever I had in mind. The bonus was, that as the owner/CEO of ASAP Mow & Snow, LLC, her business sits on 1.5 acres of land, (a photographer's dream!) and served as the perfect backdrop for this holiday snapshot in natural light!

I asked Darlene why she agreed to come out in the cold snow at the last minute to accommodate me?

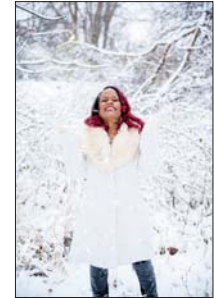
Darlene explains, "I love the holidays! Throughout the year, I feel as though we all go about our busy, hurried lives and often forget to take care of one another. The spirit of the holidays, namely Christmas, tends to remind us to slow down, spread love and be kind. Being an Ohio native and currently living in NW Ohio, I love the beautiful winter snow. Our current business location sits on 1.5 acres of land, with a creek and affords us an opportunity to deer watch and I knew it would be a beautiful canvas to capture breath taking photos!"

There are of course other factors that must be taken into consideration when shooting in natural light such as, time of day, the sun's position in the sky, sunny versus cloudy days, etc., but for the most part, you can't

... continued on page 9



Darlene K. Whitehead



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Historically Black College Forges New Traditions during Pandemic

The recent Coronation of Miss Talladega College 2020-2021 Patria Gatson was unlike any of the college's previous coronations.

"COVID-19 has forced colleges to find creative ways to maintain their cherished traditions. Our Miss Talladega College 2020-2021 Coronation was held outdoors, and our queen arrived in a horse-drawn carriage wearing a face shield," said Talladega College President Billy C. Hawkins, PhD. "Many people thought the outdoor event was among our most beautiful coronations ever and said the horse-drawn carriage added an extra-special touch. Some suggested that we hold future coronation ceremonies outside. In the midst of the pandemic, measures initially taken as health and safety precautions may actually inspire many colleges to form new traditions."

Anthony Jones, who has served as the Miss Talladega College advisor for over 20 years, added, "In our many decades of holding the Miss Talladega College coronation, the event was never outdoors and our queen never arrived on a horse-drawn carriage."

While the weather in the small Alabama town was pleasant enough for the November gathering, taking a traditionally indoor event outside presented a variety of unexpected challenges. Had he not set up early, Jones believes the event might have been a disaster.

"The wind kept blowing up the backdrop. We had to pin it down and find bricks to hold it in place. We also had to carefully select and secure the greenery to make sure nothing blew away," Jones said.

The greatest challenge for Jones was figuring out how to make the event, which traditionally runs 1 1/2 hours and attracts throngs of students and alumni, into an elegant 30-minute affair with socially distanced chairs and relatively few attendees. Dr. Hawkins applauded Mr. Jones's for accomplishing this mission and making the event special for Miss Talladega and her Royal Court.

"Miss Talladega College, Patria Gatson, is an exceptional scholar and an outstanding campus leader. She and members of her royal court deserved their special day. While I made the difficult decision to cancel Homecoming and many other significant events due to the pandemic, I am pleased that Mr. Jones used his creativity to help us safely maintain - and enhance - our coronation tradition."

Gatson was crowned by Hawkins, Miss Talladega College 2019-2020 De'Jha Billingsley and Mr. Talladega College 2019-2020 Cheikh Ahmadou Bamba Ndiaye. Members of the Royal Court included Miss Senior Jordan Dubose, Gentleman in Waiting Robert Walker, Miss Junior Ayala Seaborn, Mr. Junior Kobe Dickerson, Miss Sophomore Chaniaya McKenzie, Mr. Sophomore Trayon Miller, Miss Freshman Christian McKinney, and Mr. Freshman Ulises Rivera Jr. Miss Talladega College 1994-1995 Terri A. Harvill delivered the invocation, and Talladega College Show Stopping Crimsonettes dancers Yvonne Hamilton and Ranisha Morris performed.

The oldest private historically black college in Alabama, Talladega College was founded in 1867 by two former slaves, William Savery and Thomas Tarrant. Talladega College is the home of the renowned Hale Woodruff Amistad Murals, which received rave reviews from the New York Times during a three year, eight-city tour.



Patria Gatson

Snow Bright... continued from page 8

ask for a simpler way to capture your subject than in lighting that nature offers so freely.

Want to try something new? Spring, summer, and fall are busy seasons for photographer's, but people will rarely brave the cold for a cool, dope, outdoor photo session. Dare to be different! The next time it snows, get warm and cute and schedule your shoot!

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Department of Education Extends Student Loan Suspension Through January 31, 2021

Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos announced Friday evening, December 4, that the Trump Administration will extend the federal student loan repayment forbearance, including suspension of interest accrual and collections activity, through Jan. 31, 2021.

Center for Responsible Lending Federal Advocacy Director and Senior Counsel Ashley Harrington released the following statement:

"While we are relieved that payments will not resume in January, a one-month extension is insufficient. Congress needs to approve a stimulus relief package that will pause student loan payments for the duration of the pandemic and help student borrowers plan for the future. Beyond the uncertainty for borrowers and the strain on our economy, the federal repayment system is not structured to withstand starts and stops.

"Real relief is also needed as short-term payment suspension alone is not enough to help the millions of struggling borrowers. We must remember that the nation is still grappling with a surge of coronavirus cases, mass unemployment, and a fragile economy that is disproportionately affecting Black Americans and people of color. The incoming Biden-Harris Administration must keep its promise to provide substantial, across-the-board debt cancellation and take the necessary steps to prevent further financial devastation for vulnerable borrowers and communities."

How to Make Remote-Learning More Rewarding and Fun

Special to The Truth

In the remote-learning environment of the 2020-21 academic year, certain types of classes have been deprioritized and the school day has lost some of the structure and sociability that in-person learning affords.

In the face of these challenges, how can you make remote-learning more rewarding and fun for your child? Consider the following tips and ideas:

- Encourage video study sessions: Socializing is an invaluable aspect of a traditional school day. Unfortunately, remote-learning can be a lot more isolating. Have your child invite classmates to form a remote study group. Doing so will help reinforce lessons, make learning the material more interactive and provide a much-needed opportunity for students to socialize.
- Reinstate music education: Have music classes been cancelled this year? Your child can still reap the benefits of a music education by playing an instrument like a Casiotone Keyboard. The Casiotone series of keyboards are great for beginners. Not only do they have a built-in learning system,

they have a 3/4 jack for headphones so the rest of the house doesn't have to be distracted during practice sessions. Learning to play a keyboard is not only fun, it can help with science, math and cognitive learning. Studies have shown that children and adults with musical training have heightened skills in an area called executive functioning.

- Schedule midday movement: Physical education may no longer be part of your child's curriculum, but you can still make time for movement. Schedule a screen-free block of time each day to replace gym class or recess. Encourage kids to move around and if possible, get some fresh air. They'll return to their next class refreshed and focused.

- Master math at home: Math can be an especially tricky subject to master remotely. But new tools can help students grasp complex concepts. For example, ClassPad.net is a tool geared toward K-12 and beyond that exceeds the functionality of a calculator. Among its many features are a virtual protractor and compass, and a math-based text editor that provides a rich assortment of mathematical templates. This web-based calculator also gives users the ability to create folders, organize and share work. These tools are free to educators and students and can eliminate the need for an expensive graphing

... continued on page 13

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Combating Heath Barriers Through Collaboration

By Romules Durant, EdD, CEO/Superintendent, Toledo Public Schools

Special to The Truth

It is widely recognized that conditions including poverty, housing, poor water quality, social isolation, unemployment, limited access to healthy foods and lack of family cohesion are all social determinants of health and quality of life. These factors continue to be barriers for our families to lead healthy and productive lives.

In Toledo, Ohio, the median income is roughly \$37,000. Currently, seven percent of children who attend Toledo Public Schools are homeless and the city is among the highest in the state for obese adults. It is incumbent upon all of us to combat and invest in the challenges that are negatively impacting so many across Ohio.

How do we take steps forward to make a meaningful change for our youth and those that live in our communities? It starts with community collaboration and bold visions and it's these simple concepts that You Will Do Better in Toledo is built upon.

In partnership with Green Bronx Machine, Anthem Inc. awarded 29 Toledo Public Schools with 40 indoor, aeroponic tower gardens that allowed students to grow their own food and gain an appreciation for adding vegetables to their diet. Not only did the students benefit from their hard work, so did their classmates, their families and their community as a whole.

The hands-on activities incorporated elements of math, science, and English in a fresh and engaging way. The program aims to set students on a path to incorporating healthier food and behaviors into their lives and in doing so, paving the way for thriving communities that are health conscious.

We continue to build the future of our youth through collaborative efforts with Anthem and other community partners that seek quantifiable results. Through the Anthem Toledo Public Schools Family Stabilization Program, operated by Lutheran Social Services of Northwestern Ohio, we have assisted more than 100 residents with rental assistance, housing stabilization and financial support services. This program demonstrates the importance of leaning on others in times of uncertainty. The positive outcomes to this initiative shows our commitment to doing what's best for our students who otherwise might lose their access to a quality education or support structure as the result of unstable housing.

The challenges that our community faces, were recently highlighted in Generation Growth, an award winning documentary that takes viewers on a journey across the country and addresses the social determinants that impact healthy lifestyles in cities like Toledo. A sense of hope emerges through stories that show the positive impact of communities rallying around those who need it most by cultivating minds and focusing on the future.

MLK Jr. Academy for Boys and Marshall STEMM Academy are featured in the documentary and their work shows the school district's revitalization efforts and making the connection between a strong public school system and the community.

Generation Growth was selected for the Heartland International Film Festival

in Indianapolis and the critically acclaimed Hot Springs Documentary Film Festival. The documentary has also been submitted for consideration to the Athens International Film and Video Festival and the Cleveland International Film Festival taking place in April, 2021. For more information on Generation Growth and to view the documentary film trailer, please visit <http://www.generationgrowthdoc.com>.

You Will Do Better in Toledo is a shining example of what can happen when we come together for the greater good and create avenues for meaningful and impactful change. The ongoing commitment to addressing the social determinants of health, including homelessness and food insecurity, drives us to innovate and develop community relationships that expand access to resources for everyone living in the neighborhoods surrounding our schools. Our continued success and drive to excel is another reason we can all be TPS Proud!



Romules Durant, EdD.

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Rep. Hick-Hudson Applauds House Passage of Fair School Funding Plan

Bill would transform broken school funding formula, invest in Ohio's future

Rep. Hick-Hudson (D-Toledo) last week voted in favor of the Fair School Funding Plan, House Bill (HB) 305, bipartisan legislation sponsored by Rep. John Patterson (D-Jefferson) that would transform the way Ohio's schools are funded. Democratic lawmakers have long fought to reform the state's school funding formula, which the Ohio Supreme Court has found unconstitutional four times, beginning with the DeRolph decision in 1997.

"I am encouraged by the passage of HB 305, for too long Ohio's schools have been disproportionately funded. HB 305 brings much needed transparency to the funding in our education system and is a step in the right direction to continue to improve education for all Ohioans" said Rep. Hick-Hudson. "My vote today is part of my promise, the Ohio Promise, to support the education of our children.

It is an important first step in funding public education."

The Fair School Funding Plan would better determine the base cost of educating a typical Ohio student before supports such as Gifted Education, Special Education, poverty and transportation, among others are added. Ohio's current formula lacks this input, which was a major factor in the DeRolph decision to rule the formula unconstitutional.

The bill would also address another key DeRolph finding: the current overreliance on property wealth in determining a district's ability to fund its local share. The Fair School Funding Plan blends property and income wealth to determine a more precise, predictable basis for the local share.

After passing the House, HB 305 now moves to the Ohio Senate for consideration.



Rep. Paula Hicks-Hudson

Rep. Sobecki Votes to Pass the Fair School Funding Plan

State Rep. Lisa Sobecki (D-Toledo) last week voted to pass House Bill (HB) 305 "Fair School Funding Plan", a bill she co-sponsored, after speaking in favor of the bill during floor debate.

"Today was a long time coming. 'The Fair School Funding Plan' is understandable and properly funds Ohio's public schools. Ohio students have waited long enough for a new, fair school funding formula," said Rep. Sobecki. "I'm proud to have supported HB 305 to not only properly fund the school districts I represent, but all 610 districts throughout Ohio."

During her floor speech, Rep. Sobecki highlighted some of the struggles Washington Local and Toledo Public face due to inadequate funding, including capped state funding, high homeless rates, and raising cost in transportation for special education students. Rep. Sobecki believes that the new formula passed today helps school districts provide a better educational experience for their students.

HB 305 passed by a vote of 84-8 and will now be referred to the Senate for their consideration. A companion bill, Senate Bill (SB) 376 is pending in the Senate Finance Committee.



Rep. Lisa Sobecki





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My Life in the Purple Kingdom by BrownMark with Cynthia M. Uhrich, foreword by Questlove

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

The Truth Contributor

You had every intention to stand still that night.

Nice try. Your shoulders were shimmying ten seconds after you stepped to a beat, left foot, right foot, through a wall of thump that came from speakers taller than you. You stopped, and it was as if your behind had its own mind. In those days, you couldn't stop dancing, and in *My Life In the Purple Kingdom* by BrownMark with Cynthia M. Uhrich, one man couldn't stop guitaring.

Before he was even old enough for school, Mark Brown decided that he wanted to be a guitar player some day. Growing up in Minneapolis, he remembers listening to the radio because the family didn't have a TV, but he was thrilled to hear music by "people who looked like me..." When television finally came to the Brown household, seeing musicians on the small screen solidified his dream.

By then, Brown was eight years old, and because his mother didn't have money to buy him a guitar, he figured he'd have to earn the money himself. Ultimately, that led to a well-earned instrument and work-for-lessons from a proprietor of a local music store but Brown struggled with school and patience. Once transferred to a new area school for his own good, he found a way to play and it helped his self-confidence.

Success, though, was an uphill road. Racism was a problem with local bars and clubs then, and getting a toe on-stage took effort, which Brown was willing to put forth to make himself a rock star. He was still in high school, still held down outside jobs and interests, and yet he found time to rehearse with the series of bands with which he performed.

It was at one such rehearsal that someone said there was a phone call for him.

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That was unusual so, intrigued, he took the call and answered curtly.

Prince was on the other end of the line...

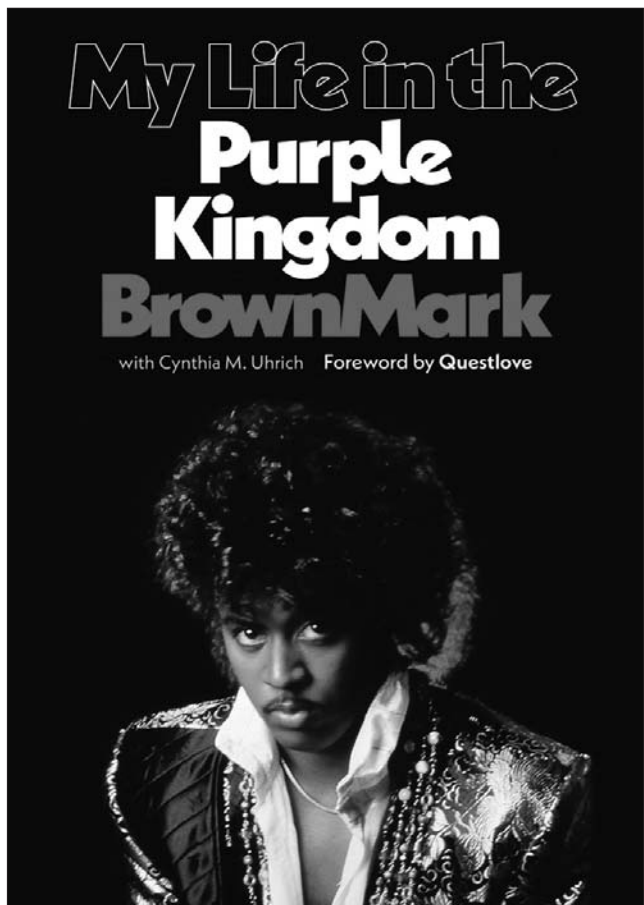
Reading *My Life in the Purple Kingdom* feels somewhat like attending your high school class reunion: there's always that one guy there who made it big but rather than quietly accepting kudos, he feels the need to humble-brag instead. His story is interesting and you can't resist it, but you really could do without the faux bashfulness.

Indeed, according to his own book, author BrownMark (who changed his name while with Prince), worked himself ragged to be a professional musician, and that perseverance should be lauded. Despite storytelling irritations and cutesy-purposeful misspellings, this memoir could be a real inspiration to someone with dreams.

While the story (with Cynthia Uhrich) is mostly about BrownMark's life, there's enough Prince here to attract Prince fans. Just beware that although there's a happy-ish ending to this book, its author isn't generally complimentary to his former boss and for that, and because Prince isn't alive to offer contradictions, *My Life in the Purple Kingdom* could be somewhat controversial. Still, if you're a concert-goer, nostalgic, clubber, or you need motivation, you should have every intention to read it.



BrownMark Photo courtesy Demetrious Williams of Rious Photography



Remote Learning... continued from page 10

calculator. To register or learn more, visit ClassPad.net.

- Create digital masterpieces: Art is still an important subject for kids, even if it isn't being offered this year. However, you don't need to install a full-fledged art studio in your home for kids to be able to create artwork in a range of mediums. Digital apps mimic the act of drawing, painting, illustration, collage and more, helping to build a foundation of skills and lay the groundwork for further exploration.

While some of the challenges of remote-learning are inevitable, there are many ways families can make the experience more positive for students.

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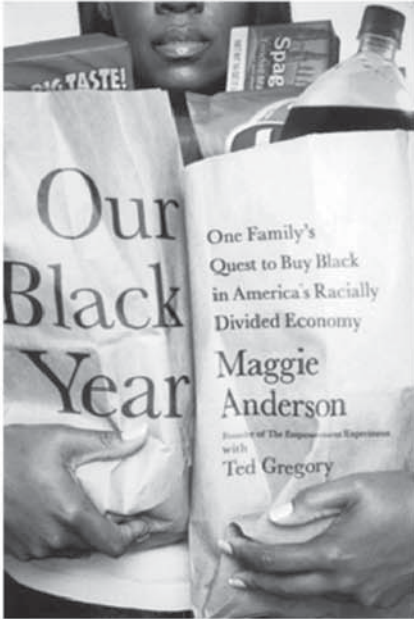
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CLASSIFIEDS

December 9, 2020

Page 15

MHR SB REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

The Mental Health & Recovery Services Board of Lucas County (MHR SB) is seeking to fund 15 proposals up to \$5,000 each for our upcoming Community Mini-Grant Cycle. Interested grassroots organizations that provide services to the population that MHR SB serves are encouraged to apply. Services can include programming that offers skills, strengths, resources, supports, or coping strategies to support mental wellness. Proposals are to be delivered no later than 4:00 p.m. EST on December 31, 2020. Direct all questions to net-mail@lcmhrsb.oh.gov. A complete description of the "Request for Proposal" and information on the upcoming Mini-Grant Information Session can be found at <http://www.lcmhrsb.oh.gov/publicnotice/>.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS ELEVATOR MAINTENANCE & REPAIR SERVICES RFP20 – R007

Lucas Metropolitan Housing (LMH) will receive proposals for **Elevator Maintenance & Repair Services**. Received in accordance with law until **November 19, 2020, 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.



EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Lucas Metropolitan Housing (LMH), located in Toledo, OH is seeking experienced applicants for the following position(s):

- Inspection Supervisor
- Maintenance Mechanic III

For complete details, visit <https://www.lucasmha.org> and click on Careers. Deadline: 12/18/20. This is a Section 3 covered position. HUD recipients are encouraged to apply and are to indicate on the application if you are a LMHA Public Housing client or Housing Choice Voucher Program participant. Persons with disabilities are encouraged to apply. NO PHONE CALLS. Equal employment opportunity shall be afforded to all qualified persons without regard to age, race, color, religion, religious creed, gender, military status, ancestry, disability, handicap, sexual orientation, genetic information or national origin.



PARK MAINTENANCE

Metroparks Toledo is looking for a qualified individual for Park Maintenance at Swan Creek Metropark.

HS Diploma or equivalent and valid driver's license required. Moderate level of specialty maintenance experience required. 40 hrs/wk. \$18.45/hr. Go to www.metroparkstoledo.com <<http://www.metroparkstoledo.com>> for complete job requirements and to apply. EOE

NOTICE TO BIDDERS

SEALED PROPOSALS for bidding on **Metroparks Toledo, Howard Marsh Phase 2, 611 Howard Road, Curtice, OH 43412** will be received; opened; and read aloud at the Metropolitan Park District of the Toledo Area, Fallen Timbers Field Office, 6101 Fallen Timbers Lane, Maumee, Ohio 43537 **Friday, December 11, 2020 at 2:00 p.m.** local time.

COVID-19 UPDATE: In the event the office is not staffed to receive early, hand-delivered bids, bidders may drop off sealed bids to the aforementioned office address through the front door slot. Staff will be present at the Fallen Timbers Field Office for one hour prior to bid opening. If social distancing becomes problematic due to bid-opening turnout, the opening will be held outside or in an adjacent larger facility. Masks are required.

THE SCOPE OF WORK consists of **diked wetland construction**: including tile search/removal, erosion control measures, mass excavation and embankment for dikes and channels, riprap/fabric, pumps/pump unit structures & electric, seed & mulch and **park amenity construction**: including aggregate path & kayak channel. Bidders may obtain copies of plans, specifications, contract documents and plan-holder's list through Newfax Corporation, 333 West Woodruff, Toledo, Ohio 43604 between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday (check made payable to Newfax Corporation) or via the Newfax Digital Plan Room at www.newfaxcorp.com. Newfax can be contacted at 419-241-5157 or 800-877-5157. A non-refundable fee of \$15 is required for each set of full-size documents obtained. For additional information, please contact Jon Zvanovec @ 419-360-9184, jon.zvanovec@metroparkstoledo.com.

EACH BIDDER MUST FURNISH either (1) a bond for the full amount of the bid or (2) a certified check, cashier's check or irrevocable letter of credit in an amount equal to ten percent (10%) of the bid with its bid. The successful bidder must furnish a 100 percent (100%) Performance Bond and a 100 percent (100%) Labor and Materials Bond.

No bidder may withdraw its bid within thirty (30) days after the actual date of the opening thereof.

THE BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS OF THE METROPOLITAN PARK DISTRICT OF THE TOLEDO AREA reserves the right to reject any or all bids, and to waive any informality in bidding.

By order of the Board of Park Commissioners
METROPOLITAN PARK DISTRICT OF THE
TOLEDO AREA

David D. Zenk, Director

CONTROLLER POSITION AVAILABLE

The Fair Housing Center, 432 N. Superior St., Toledo, Ohio, seeks an experienced Controller to oversee accounting and financial operations. Reporting directly to the CEO, the successful candidate must demonstrate proficiency in generally accepted accounting principles for non-profit organizations to ensure that the highest accounting standards are met, maintain financial records to ensure accuracy and ease of reporting on fiscal activities to Board and funders, be well-versed in basic Microsoft Office software applications (Word, Excel, etc.) and Sage accounting software, with the ability to track activities in our proprietary case management system, and possess the knowledge and ability to interpret, Federal, State, and Local laws regarding non-profit financial management, including 2 CFR Part 200 and other federal guidance documents. The Controller is also responsible for managing the annual audit process, forecasting, budget preparation, 990 submission, preparation of the agency indirect cost proposal, and other duties as assigned, including the fiscal components of the grant writing process.

Qualifications: Bachelor's degree in accounting, finance or related field; 3 to 5 years of non-profit financial management experience; and Certified Public Accountant or advanced degree preferred.

This is a full-time exempt position, with some evenings or weekends as needed.
How to Apply: Please submit cover letter and resume to HR@toledofhc.org.

ABUNDANT LIFE OF PERRYSBURG ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS

Abundant Life of Perrysburg is accepting applications for its subsidized apartment communities. Abundant Life #1 offers independent living for senior citizens 62 years of age or older and individuals 55 or older with a physical impairment. Abundant Life #2 is a supportive living complex for people 62 and older. To apply individuals must meet the age and annual income requirement of no more than \$25,200.00 for one person or \$28,800.00 for two people.

We are located in the Three Meadows subdivision near the Manor of Perrysburg. Our garden style apartments offer an open floor plan, one bedroom, secured buildings with private patios and individually controlled heat and air conditioning.

We have a bus that transports all residents to area grocery stores and monthly outings. We offer exercise, worship services and a variety of opportunities for our active and not so active seniors. Please call (419)874-4371 to find out more about our fabulous communities and our availability for apartments. You may also visit us on the web at abundantlifeperysburg.org.



Sen. Brown Calls for Commission on Truth, Racial Healing and Transformation

Senator Urging Congress to Create Commission to Accompany Efforts Like The George Floyd Justice in Policing Act and Commission to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African-Americans Act

U.S. Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-OH) joined Sen. Cory Booker (D-NJ) in introducing the United States Commission on Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation resolution, urging Congress to form the first commission acknowledging and examining the systemic racism that has disenfranchised Black Americans throughout U.S. history and the racial inequities that persist today. Rep. Barbara Lee (D-CA) introduced the resolution in the House in June.

"For more than 400 years, generations of Black Americans have endured the detrimental impacts of slavery and the racial injustices that stem from it," said Brown. "In order to root out the systems of oppression that are engrained in the fabric of this country, we must acknowledge the harm it has caused the Black community and we must take action now. The Commission on Truth, Racial Healing, and Transformation will play a critical role in finding the long-term solutions we need to help our country heal and put an end to the inequities that still exist today."

The Senate resolution is also co-sponsored by Senators Richard Durbin (D-IL), Bob Menendez (D-NJ), Bernie Sanders (D-VT), Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI), Chris Coons (D-DE), Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Ed Markey (D-MA), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) and Tammy Duckworth (D-IL).

Earlier this year, Brown introduced a resolution alongside Sen. Booker



Sen. Cory Booker

and Sen. Kamala Harris (D-CA) to declare racism a public health crisis.

The coronavirus pandemic has been the great revealer - underscoring the racial disparities that continue to pervade public health as a direct result of systemic racism. Barriers to quality health care access, housing, jobs, wages and so much else contribute to stark health disparities for communities of color.

Brown also hosted the office's first-ever Ohio Black Women's Health Symposium. The virtual symposium, held over the course of two Saturdays on the social determinants of health, included panel discussions, workshops and speakers addressing physical, community/environmental, mental and economic health. At virtual workshops held during the symposium, participants received tools designed to help navigate and overcome barriers to health equity.

In June, Brown helped introduce the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act, a comprehensive package that would help put important policing reforms into place, help end racial profiling in the criminal justice system and work to improve police-community relations.

Brown also joined Sen. Booker and Rep. Lee in introducing the Confederate Monument Removal Act, bicameral legislation to remove all statues of people who voluntarily served the Confederate States of America from the National Statuary Hall Collection.

The full text of the resolution can be viewed here at www.brown.senate.gov



Sen. Sherrod Brown



WELCOME TO OUR NEW SITE



CommunityEnergyCenter.org will Educate the Public about Energy Empowerment among Diverse Communities

Diverse communities not only will be shaped by an evolving energy sector, they will shape it. Our new website - CommunityEnergyCenter.org - welcomes perspectives from commentators and journalists from publications in diverse communities to promote a deeper understanding of how energy and economic matters play a role in daily life. This new content hub will educate diverse communities to explore job opportunities and participate in the energy sector's growth and vitality.

Visit www.communityenergycenter.org to learn more.



The Community Energy Center, a cooperative with the National Newspaper Publishers Association and National Association of Hispanic Publications Media, will provide information and perspectives on the integral role of the energy sector in daily life for American families in a wide range of communities.