

The *Sojourner's* Truth

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"And Ye Shall Know The Truth..."

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HOPE Toledo's John C. Jones



Jumping in at the Deep End

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

The Truth Contributor

You never really feel ready, there is always sometime more that your mind tells you you should be doing. However, the trick is to be able to show up and perform no matter what the circumstance.

- Natalie Cook



It has been a mere four months since Cerssandra McPherson plunged headlong into the deep and tumultuous waters of Toledo politics. The fledgling city councilwoman finds herself trying to keep her head above water on a policy-making legislative body that has had to navigate a once-in-a-century pandemic, rising violence, allegations of public corruption and deteriorating police-community relations.

I spoke with McPherson concerning her experience surviving and thriving in Toledo City Council's sink or swim environment. The following is our discussion.

Perryman: Please describe how you have journeyed through life to arrive at Toledo City Council.

McPherson: Born and raised in Toledo. I went to Toledo Public Schools and graduated from Libbey High School. When this opportunity came about, I talked to my family members because I'm my mom's caregiver. My oldest brother and a couple of friends told me to go for it because you'll never know if you don't. So, that's what I did.

Perryman: Please talk about your work experience and educational background.

McPherson: I've worked for Toledo Public Schools for 32 years as a paraprofessional, a staff rep for Toledo Federation of Teachers, and I love working with students. My passion is special ed students. I attended the University of Toledo to get my bachelor's in special education but have not completed it. I belong to Braden United Methodist Church and attended there all my life. In addition to working in the church, I serve on the West Ohio United Methodist Conference as a certified lay servant.

Perryman: Please describe how your experiences have prepared or assisted your role as councilperson?

McPherson: We're looking now at the city's budget. Being at the church, I was chairman of the trustee board and the finance committee. So, I understand that process. Mind you, the city's budget is 12 times larger than the church's budget and entails a lot more, but a budget is a budget. You're looking at line items and what's the reality versus the wish list. You have to make decisions about what you can do and can't do.

With labor, I understand contracts and unions and what they're looking for versus what the city is looking for. So, I can give my input on that.

And then, being in education, I've served on various committees. Again,

my passion is young people and so with the city, looking at ways that we can implement programs and opportunities for our young people is a high priority for me.

Perryman: Describe your experience working with citizens from a) various cultural backgrounds and b) diverse generational categories.

McPherson: As a city official, I have not worked with many cultural backgrounds. It's hard not being able to get out and actually meet people with everything being on Zoom because of COVID. I'm meeting mostly officials and directors. I have talked to landlords, mostly white landlords, expressing their concerns with Section 8 vouchers and not agreeing with how it's coming down. I do understand where they're coming from.

I struggle with decisions that are maybe good for some, but not good for all. That's when I have to take some quiet time and pray for direction because I want to do my best for all of Toledo citizens, understanding that often the decisions that you make are not going to be popular with some of the people.

Perryman: Interests often diverge when we're talking about diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds or various socioeconomic backgrounds, including the haves and the have nots. What is your experience in balancing these diverse interests?

McPherson: My seniors are very important to me as well as young people. That was one of my concerns over the shooting at the Parqwood Apartments because I was under the impression that the Parqwood Apartments were still just for seniors. Now, you can reside under 55 if you have a disability. I was not aware of that and when I went over there that night of the shooting until the police officers clarified that for me.

When I did the press conference there, my concern was for the seniors staying in that complex. I talked with them and wanted them to know that we're working with LMH to ensure that they feel safe and I've been back over there a couple of times since then. I served Christmas dinner with the manager and also brought breakfast for the young residents because I didn't want it just to be a one-time thing.

Then, dealing with the haves and the have nots, I guess that's the bulk of the Section 8 voucher issue. I understand the intent is to help widen the opportunities for voucher holders to live anywhere, though I don't believe the legislation is the best way to make that happen.

Perryman: Please elaborate.

McPherson: Landlords that don't want people with Section 8 vouchers staying in their properties will find a way to get around it because not all, but those that are just adamant against it, are going to do other things to make that not happen. I think we do more harm than good in some ways, and that was my take on the section 8 voucher legislation.

I think that LMH could purchase more properties and self-place residents versus saying to landlords that you have to accept these vouchers.

Perryman: What is the most pressing issue facing Toledo?

McPherson: I think there are two. The rise of homelessness in Toledo is increasing every day because people are being evicted. Second, the gun violence in the City of Toledo is crazy.

Perryman: How do we address these problems?

McPherson: As I told the mayor, we've got to admit that there is a problem and that it is important to us and by investing dollars to rectify it with young folk. Put down the guns and pick up what? What are we offering?



Toledo City Councilwoman
Cerssandra McPherson

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Impeachment 2?

By Lafe Tolliver, Esq
Guest Column

Assuming that the American reading public has more than two working brain cells, the recent telephonic revelations of Herr Trump playing the Mafia Chief against the Secretary of State of Georgia is beyond startling.

It is downright criminal.

A delusional president, desperate for the immunity coverage that a second four year term in the White House would give him regarding possible federal charges for crimes committed while in office, is now reduced to the tried and true "ol' switcheroo" plan.

Very simply, it is this: To completely avoid being charged with federal crimes and being measured for an XXL orange jumpsuit to wear in a federal minimal security prison, Herr Trump will solicit his favorite lapdog/lackey, VP Mike Pence to pardon him when he resigns before January 20.

Of course, Pence being a very docile and brain-dead politico will pant and run-in circles to help his boss and Pence can boast on his resume that he was, in fact, president for a week!

Trump does not want to run the risk of doing the charade of a self-pardon because if the courts rule that it is bogus, Herr Trump is up a river with no pardon paddle.

If you listen to the gist and drift of the now famous one-hour phone call with the Secretary of State of Georgia, Herr Trump, except for changing his name to that of Marlon Brandon, is The Godfather!

Our delusional president has no respect for law and order, decorum, precedent and boundaries between the functions of the government. Trump is out for Trump and if you invoke his displeasure, you can inevitably expect bus tire tracks on your backsides.

Constitutional crisis, you say? Yeah! Big time! And especially so if the lobotomized GOP senators continue to hide in their cloakrooms in the Capitol and pretend that all is well in the republic. Such cowardice is off the charts and yet these same sycophants will be touting their credentials to their voters in the next two to four years.

Some will have the brazen effrontery to even try out a presidential bid for 2024 and they will preen before their voters intoning that they are the defenders of the Constitution and the guardians of all things democratic.

I was so dismayed with the one-hour tape that I had to throw down my last ace in the hole card and, through a back-door secret computer program known as Viceroy, I was able to reconstitute four minutes of the tape that even the Secretary of State of Georgia wanted to spare the American people from listening to.

Viceroy is a, "frontier3 monitor" software that one can attach to any electronic device, including phones and after the call is initiated, it can pick up any continuing conversations without detection after the parties have theoretically ended the call.

I was able to obtain a copy of Viceroy due to a big-time favor owed to me by a certain person in the CIA (now deceased) when I was able to intervene with a foreign government and have this covert agent's family whisked away from imminent imprisonment and possible execution.

But, enough about me. Let us focus on what Viceroy was able to secretly record on the "untold" part of that two-way phone conversation. Be forewarned. What you are about to read can be raw and ugly and is unfiltered:

Trump: Say Brad, I am told that you have three small grandchildren that are the darling of your eyes...

Raffensberger: (nervously clearing his throat...). Mr. President, do not bring up my family in this call. You have no right to do so. This is about your claims of being cheated out of hundreds of thousands of votes.

Trump: They tell me that the youngest one, a girl, is nine and she gets out of school at 3:30 PM.

Raffensberger: (practically shouting into the phone). Mr. President, if you so much as go within a hundred miles of her school, I will make it my mission to track you down.

Trump: Hey, hey. Let us not get jumpy! Your wife who attends her book club meetings on Thursday nights at the local Y, would be sad if the Y building met an unfortunate accident!

Raffensberger: Mr. President, are you threatening me, because if you

are, two can play that game!

Trump: And what is it that I hear about your son playing tennis for his college?

I hear that you cannot play if you have two broken ankles.

Raffensberger: What is that you want from me?

Trump: Quite simple, my friend, quite simple. You go public and inform the media that you had an errant employee who made an honest computer error in the tabulations of the final vote count; and he confessed it to you today and that is why you are changing the vote count to show that I won Georgia!

Raffensberger: (softly crying to the phone) How could you expect me to do such an outrageous act! The vote has been certified!

Trump: Well, according to section 9121.03(A)(c)(iii) of the Georgia Voting Laws, a recertification is permissible upon reasonable and just cause.

My need to win Georgia is both reasonable and just. JUST DO IT!

Raffensberger (long silence...) I will see what I can do, just leave my family alone you monster!

Trump: Say, wasn't it was too bad that Clemson lost to those Ohio Buckeyes!

Brad (hangs up the line).

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Dancing at the Limen: Wilberforce University- The First and The Future

Sojourner's Truth Staff

When they approach me, they see only my surroundings, themselves, or figments of their imagination, indeed, everything and anything except me.

The Invisible Man
Ralph Ellison

There are few things as soul crushing as being unseen or seen in ways that belie the truth of who you are. For colleges and universities, the institutional saga may shift at various times and if, challenges exist that are deeply ingrained, the narrative about the institution may be intractable in the public's imagination. Even as success is realized, the prevailing perception and public identity of an institution will often continue to be shaped by its challenges. Unfortunately, in the minds of important constituents, an institution's triumphs and successes will likely remain obscured.

The recent Mackenzie Scott gift to 15 HBCUs on the heels of her earlier gift of over \$120M to 6 HBCUs is, without a doubt, a game changing event for the HBCU sector. Her interest in investing in HBCUs in a real and substantive way shines a welcomed spotlight on the value and importance of the work they do, and have done, in positively impacting the lives of African American and other students of color they serve. This astounding generosity is a significant act of affirmation by someone of such considerable wealth and influence. As a sitting HBCU president, I am immensely grateful for this philanthropic largesse and proud and happy for my colleagues. And I am also keenly interested in how I might position the institution I serve to gain this interest, investment, and support.

In a recent article, Ms. Scott outlined the process she and her team employed to select the institutions she ultimately funded. At Wilberforce University, this has occasioned an internal conversation about how we can best and most effectively tell the story of the work we are doing to support our students in teaching their academic and life goals. As the nation's first, private, HBCU founded by people of African descent, we recognize our rarefied place in the history and legacy of HBCUs. That alone, however, has not rendered us top of mind for the philanthropic generosity we have recently witnessed; nor should it. Over the past 18 months, we have done the rigorous and disciplined work of defining our value proposition and outlining a path forward for a viable and sustainable fu-

ture. A multi-million-dollar gift for us would be transformational. Our greatest lament are the metrics that continue to haunt us and shape our public self.

Our past challenges have been formidable: on paper we present a risk that no one with huge sums of money to give is willing to take. The lag between our current state of significant progress and our troubled past has not yet been fully eliminated. Our situation channels a universally understood motif in the African American community; the unschooled, single mother with a minimum wage job who sends each of her children to college which positions each for a transformed life. On paper, you would not bet on that mother, in reality, her family outcomes are extraordinary. Meanwhile we continue to do the work of institutional renewal with focused precision one day at a time, ameliorating one issue at a time. We remain forever hopeful that we are finally seen in the fullness of Wilberforce's incredible past, complicated and nuanced present, and promising future.

This is an inflection point for HBCUs as we confront a global pandemic, a reckoning of racial and social injustice and the historic levels of philanthropic support. The entire sector is lifted by the investment and recognition of these record breaking gifts. We are all compelled to excellence and high performance and the hope of attracting additional donors who will not feel as though they are throwing their good money after bad.

As a small, special-mission, rural, institution with small enrollment and endowment, Wilberforce finds itself at a liminal moment; a place of transition from the old, crisis-laden institution with a tenuous future to an expansive, bountiful future of high performance and growth. We exist at this limen; a threshold of interrogation, strategic thinking and action and innovation regarding who we are as a 21st century University and what we might be capable of and committed to becoming.

At Wilberforce, resilience is part of our institutional DNA and we choose to use these historic circumstances as an urgent call to action to continue our work of institutional renewal and transformation. We invite partners to support and invest in Wilberforce University as we honor the work begun by our founders 164 years ago.



Alfred Anthony Pinkard, PhD
22nd President
Wilberforce University

A native of Miami, Florida, Alfred Pinkard holds a Doctorate degree from Harvard University, a Masters from Howard University, and a BA from Morehouse College. Over his more than 40-year career, Pinkard has served as the Founding Executive Director of the UNCF Institute of Capacity Building; Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer at Johnson C. Smith University; Associate Provost at Dillard University; Chief Planning Officer at Spelman College; Chair, Division of Social Sciences at Florida Memorial University. In addition, Pinkard had held faculty and administrative positions at Miami Dade College, Colgate University, the College of Wooster, and California State University-Long Beach.

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John Jones Comes Full Circle at HOPE Toledo

By Linda Nelson

Sojourner's Truth Reporter

"We are true to our creed when a little girl born into the bleakest poverty knows that she has the same chance to succeed as anybody else."

— President Barack Obama

A deep commitment to service and community is at the heart of John Jones' vision for HOPE (Helping Our Population Educate) Toledo's directive to create and deliver a quality education from cradle to career.

"Education is the greatest civil rights effort that we can undertake," said Jones, president of the 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization whose most recent efforts involve the HOPE Toledo Promise initiative at Scott High School.

The program, which was funded by Pete Kadens of The Kadens Family Foundation and creator of HOPE Toledo, pledged to pay four and a half years of tuition to a public college, university, or trade school for Scott High School's entire 2020 senior graduation class and one parent from each family.

"The better our children are educated the more opportunities they will have and the better our communities will be," Jones said about HOPE Toledo's commitment to educational advancement for those in the Toledo community.

Jones, who grew up in Toledo's inner city, has first-hand knowledge that a quality education can be the catalyst to closing economic gaps in low-income communities.

A degree from Central State University followed by career stints at Ernst & Young and ProMedica have opened the doors for Jones to take his place in board rooms and have become the building blocks that have brought him full circle to help others succeed.

"Our quality education concept was birthed out of questions on how we could create a program to eliminate barriers in our communities," said Jones.

"You don't need to look far across our landscape to see that, in our community, pursuing a secondary education is difficult. There are often too many silos created that make it hard to connect the dots from where people are to the classroom."

According to the Ohio Department of Education, in 2019, more than 800,000 students were classified as economically disadvantaged, an 18 percent increase from 10 years ago.

Despite a plethora of contributing issues that threaten to overwhelm low-income communities and communities of color thereby keeping them on the margins of society, Jones continues the push toward a data driven emphasis on quality education and its capacity to lift the underserved out of lifelong and generational poverty.

"In order to be successful, the community needs to understand the value of education in young people," Jones said. "Education is the great equalizer."

For Jones, success also comes in the form of strategic partnerships and hands-on involvement.

But while he acknowledges that partnerships with like-minded organizations, which include Toledo Public Schools, ProMedica, and the Greater Toledo Community Foundation, have been vital to HOPE Toledo's overall growth, Jones says he would like to see more community members find a

place within the program.

"We have volunteers who have actively been doing this for decades," Jones said. "But at the end of the day we need to continue to elevate the message of education."

"We need a community who understands that early childhood education is essential to a four-year-old's trajectory," said Jones. "We need community volunteers who will come alongside and help us carry out that mission as well as those who will work with us as mentors on the Promise side of the program to help students make the transition from high school to post-secondary learning spaces."

As the organization clears its first hurdles – finding stability in its first year of operation and navigating the challenges of the ongoing COVID crisis – Jones believes that the HOPE Toledo Promise project at Scott High School is just the beginning of what the organization plans to accomplish in the next five years.

"We have to be intentional," Jones said, as the organization's cradle to career objective continues to push to increase its capacities.

"An ideal quality education involves one that is loaded and reflects six-hour days and five-day weeks," said Jones. "We want to see teachers compensated properly in early education spaces and we also want to see some barriers eliminated in post-secondary spaces. The better our children are educated, the more opportunities they will have, but it will take time and hard work."

On its face, it may seem like a huge undertaking in just five years but Jones has a secret weapon that keeps him motivated and on track; family legacy and faith.

The legacy is rooted among his family's place at Christian Temple Baptist Church where his grandmother once pastored, his father currently pastors, and where Jones himself is associate pastor. It's where Jones says he first learned about the importance of service and the importance of sowing seeds that help to build the next generation.

"My father always told me to do the work that will produce fruit for the next generation," Jones said. "I'm not doing this so that I can see the fruit of it, but so that my children and their children can."

To learn more about HOPE Toledo's Promise initiative and how you can get involved contact them on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/Hope-ToledoPromise>





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Toledo Black Agenda... continued from page 16

differences — and they are literally leading Black and Brown people to die in far greater numbers, than others” she said.

Ohio by The Numbers

When it comes to developing a health system rooted in the principles of health equity and justice, the numbers below will show that Ohio and Lucas county face significant challenges.

- Ohio **consistently ranks among the bottom half of states on measures of health and wellbeing.** For example, Ohio ranks 38 out of 50 states on America's Health Rankings 2019 report.

- In the Health Policy Institute of Ohio's **2019 Health Value Dashboard, Ohio ranks 46 out of 50 states and D.C. on health value, a composite measure of population health and healthcare spending.** This means that Ohioans are less healthy and spend more on health care than people in most other states.

- Ohio is in the bottom quartile (42 out of 50 states) for Black child wellbeing based on the Annie E. Casey Foundation 2017 Race for Results Report, indicating that Black children in Ohio do not have adequate supports to achieve optimal health.

- Ohioans of color face large gaps in outcomes across socio-economic factors, community conditions and health care. This, in turn, drives poorer health outcomes among Ohioans of color, such as higher rates of infant mortality and premature death.

- Women of color and low-income mothers, are several times more likely to suffer from postpartum mental illness but less likely to receive treatment than other mothers, according to recent studies.

- According to the study, “Suicide attempts rising among Black teens.” Reuters, Oct 16, 2019, while the overall proportion of teens reporting suicidal thoughts or plans declined for all racial and ethnic groups during the study period, the proportion of **Black teens attempting suicide surged by 73%.**

- A Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report found that Black women are about three times more likely to die from causes related to pregnancy, compared to White women in the United States. (Source: “Huge Racial Disparities Found in Deaths Linked to Pregnancy,” New York Times, May 7, 2019)

- In Cleveland, Ohio Black babies are dying at a rate of 7 times that of White babies. Generally, in Ohio, Black infants die at a rate of 2-3 times that of White infants

- Black children are almost three and a half times more likely to die within 30 days after surgery than White children, according to a new study published in the journal Pediatrics

- Twenty percent of Ohio children live in poverty (Spotlight on Poverty and Opportunity 2019)

- Blacks have the highest mortality rate for all cancers combined compared with any other racial and ethnic group.

- The likelihood of having two or more significant conditions is 60% by the age of 75-79 years, and more than 75% by 85-89 years causing most Seniors to suffer complications from comorbidities.

- Food insecurity in Ohio has nearly doubled from 13.9% to 23%

- In Ohio, more than one-in-six older adults (17.6 percent) face the threat of hunger. Ohio is among the 10 worst states in the nation for food insecurity among older adults, with over 457,000 Ohioans over age 60 who are either “marginally food insecure” or “food insecure,” according to a recent report by Community Solutions, “Fighting Food Insecurity Among Older Adults” (2017)

- Suicide attempts for Black teens rose 73% in 2019 while they fell for every other group. **Lucas County by the Numbers**

- 19.3% of Lucas County residents live in poverty, higher than the national average of 13%.

- Those poorest are women 18-34 years of age

- 38.2% of Toledo children live in poverty, compared to 28.1% in Lucas county (Toledo and Lucas County Poverty Study 2019).

- In Lucas County, white babies died at a rate of 4.7 per 1,000 live births, while the rate for Black babies was 13.7.

- In Lucas County, Ohio and the United States in 2012-2016, Blacks had higher cancer mortality rates than Whites.

- In Lucas County, one in nine (11%) Lucas County Black adults were diagnosed with cancer at some point in their lives, increasing to 25% of those over the age of 65 based on the 2017 Health Assessment.

- In Lucas County, Blacks have a higher rate of co-morbidities than Whites

- 36% of those over 65 in Lucas County rated their health as fair or poor

- Four percent (4%) of Black adults reported they had heart disease, increasing to 13% of those with incomes less than \$25,000 and 14% of those over the age of 65 according to Healthy Lucas County's 2018 Community Health Assessment.

- According to the same report, 22% of Lucas County African American adults had been diagnosed with diabetes, increasing to 45% of those over the age of 65.

- By 2030, older adults will make up 25% of the population in Lucas County.

- 28% of Lucas County residents and 1 in 4 children experience food insecurity

Health Statistics for Black American Men

Black men in the United States suffer worse health than any other racial group in America. As a group, Black men have the lowest life expectancy and the highest death rate from specific causes when compared to both men and women of other racial and ethnic groups.

Statistically speaking, Black men live 7 years less than men of other racial groups. They have a higher death than Black women for all leading

...continued on page 12

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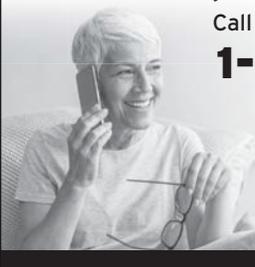
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In Memoriam

Phillip Copeland – May 16, 1945 – January 1, 2021

Phil Copeland, longtime labor leader and elected official, former business manager of Local Laborers 500, former Toledo City Councilman, current Lucas County Recorder died on January 1, 2021.



The Lucas County Democratic Party issued the following statement:

“The Lucas County Democratic Party mourns the passing of Phil Copeland. Phil devoted his life to serving working families in this community. That service included as a respected labor leader, a member of Toledo City Council and as a Lucas County Recorder. Through it all, he taught us about resilience, decency and the power of personal change. We extend our condolences to his family and friends. He will be missed.”

A Toledo native, Copeland was born May 16, 1945 and attended Gunckel Elementary, Robinson Junior High School and Scott High School. He dropped out of high school but later earned a GED and worked his way up the Laborers Local 500 ladder, the same union his uncle, Bill Copeland led for many years.

Copeland began his career with Local 500 in 1966 and served on a variety of committees before being elected to secretary/treasurer in 1985.

He has served on the boards of the Toledo Branch NAACP, TARTA, the Open Door Ministry, the Lagrange Development Corporation, the Lucas County Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services and the Toledo Board of Community Relations.

Phil Copeland was appointed to Toledo City Council in 2005 while he was secretary-treasurer of Local 500 and was elected business manager of the union in 2007 after a scandal left the top office vacant.

In 2012, Copeland won his race for the Lucas County Recorder position and has served in that office ever since, winning re-election this past November.

Copeland's friends were stunned by the sudden, unexpected death of their friend. Lucas County Commissioner Pete Gerken, said he was shocked and described Copeland, during his tenure as leader of Local 500, as being responsible for helping thousands of Toledoans to start their careers.

Copeland's replacement will be appointed by the Lucas County Commissioners after considering recommendations from both the county Democratic and Republican parties.

Herman Harrison --- December 17, 1944 – December 25, 2020



A native of Shreveport, Louisiana, Herman Harrison and his beloved wife, Barbie, have lived in Toledo since 1972. On December 25, 2020, Herman died in the arms of his wife and surrounded by their children.

The son of Reverend Andrew C. and Vera Harrison, Herman was preceded in death by both parents and his sister, Mattie (Howard) Spiller.

Herman earned his bachelor of arts degree in Biological Science and Chemistry at Grambling State University in 1969. After graduation, he taught for several years in the Mansfield and Caddo Parish School Systems. He worked at Libbey Owens Ford Glass Company as a research chemist and was transferred to Toledo in 1972.

Herman worked with LOF for 13 years before joining BASF Corporation. He led the Electro-Coat Paint Division and was later transferred to Detroit as a Marketing and Technical Sales Representative before retiring in 2006.

In 1975, Herman was ordained as a deacon at Macedonia Baptist Church by Pastor Elijah S. Hicklin and provided leadership in various church ministries. He and Barbie would enroll in the masters of Divinity Program at Winebrenner Theological Seminary in Findlay, Ohio.

Almost 40 years after being ordained as a church deacon at Macedonia, Herman finally took the plunge on Sunday December 14, 2014 and began the next chapter of his life – preaching. His inaugural sermon at his then church, third Baptist, was inspired by one of his favorite passages, the 23rd Psalm and its critical phrase – “though I walk through the shadow of the valley of death, I will fear no evil.”

There are two types of valleys, he explained. One is the physical, while the other is the emotional – the low place in life caused by loneliness, despair, depression. Those are the places, said the first-time preacher, where one need not be alone.

“When you walk through the valley, take the Lord with you,” he advised his listeners. “He doesn’t want you to be alone. He knows all about your problems. He knows about all of your problems. He knows about your valleys. Put your trust in Him.”

Herman and Barbie shared three children – Brian, Marcus and Kristan. Herman was a devoted husband, father and grandfather – he was a supportive friend to many. He is survived also by brothers Cornelius (Neal) Harrison, Charner (Annie) Harrison, Joseph (Sally) Harrison, Johnny Ray Harrison; seven grandchildren – Darre, Isiah, Tavion, Addie, Phillip, Marcus II and Andrew, along with numerous loving nieces, nephews, cousins, in-laws and friends everywhere in the country.

Virtual services were held at the House of Day Funeral Service on Saturday, January 2, 2021

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Perryman... continued from page 2

Where are the opportunities? What programs are out there for young people right now?

Perryman: Are our neighborhoods healthy?

McPherson: No.

Perryman: What would you do to change them?

McPherson: They used to be called neighborhoods, then they took off the neighbor and just called it a 'hood because we no longer have neighbors. We've got to invest in our neighborhoods. We have so many abandoned houses and, if they're not abandoned, they're halfway up, half down.

Perryman: In what neighborhood do you live?

McPherson: I'm on Avondale, right off of Junction in the Junction Coalition area. Just on my block, we have maybe five houses left now, and four of them are empty.

Perryman: Two final questions, you can answer in which order you want, but the first one is if you had a \$2 million grant, how would you choose to spend that money? Number two, when you hear about something that concerns your constituents, what steps do you take to see that the concern is resolved?

McPherson: I'll take the latter one, first.

Once a resident shares an issue with me, I tell them to please leave your name and number and give me 24 hours to get back to you. If you have not heard back from me in 24 hours, call me back, I will not be offended.

And, since I'm still learning how to navigate the system, having a go-to person you can contact with questions is invaluable. I usually call Mr. D (Gerald Dendinger), our Clerk of Council, because he is so knowledgeable. He often directs me, or if it's something with having your alley cleaned or having some garbage picked up or something, I can call Engage Toledo myself, tell them what the issue is. They're usually pretty good about taking care of it.

I had a gentleman call me the other day and said city sewage is backing up in his basement. He had been trying unsuccessfully to contact his district councilperson. I told him that I would forward the email to his district coun-



Councilwoman Cerssandra McPherson with families of murder victims

cilperson and Ed Moore, who is over public utilities, to look into it. That's how I handle concerns. I try to direct constituents to the correct person, and then I'll call that person back to see if they've gotten the issue resolved. If they haven't, then I'll just recycle and do it all over again.

The two-million-dollar question? I would use the funding for youth programs, youth summer jobs and incentives for young people.

Perryman: Early on, you stressed that you had to jump right into, what was for you, a new and unfamiliar experience. Please elaborate on your experience of still learning to navigate the process.

McPherson: Yes, it's a lot to navigate, and there's a lot to learn. The four of us new council members were dropped straight in the deep end. We were sworn in on Friday, and we had a council meeting on Tuesday. You didn't have a lot of preparation time, so it's in and get moving. Just learning the procedures of how they do their agenda meetings versus the actual council meeting and how things are brought to council is a massive task.

Perryman: What can you tell others who find themselves thrown into a similar sink or swim situation?

McPherson: Everybody has their own agenda, and I tell people I am a team player, and there are 12 members to this team. I always want to play

... continued on page 13

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Don't Burnout on Cooking

By Patrice Powers-Barker, OSU Extension, Lucas County

The Truth Contributor

While there are many positive benefits associated with eating family meals at home including better nutrition, quality time together and less money spent on food compared to eating out, the pandemic made major changes on food preparation and mealtime habits in the United State in 2020. Most households have eaten many more meals at home compared to recent years. The pandemic has limited many outside opportunities at mealtime and, "What's for dinner?" might seem like the never answered question.

Can you relate to any of these situations? A survey regarding meals during COVID-19 found:

- 40 percent of consumers say planning different meals every day is among their biggest food challenges
- 55 percent of Americans surveyed said that cooking at home has made them feel fatigued
- 69 percent wish they could make a healthy dinner more quickly

Respondents ranked the following tasks as the most fatiguing parts of serving a meal: (1) prep work, (2) clean up, (3) planning meals for the week, (4) cooking and (5) collecting ingredients. Here are some tips to make those steps easier.

Planning meals. Keep a list of easy to make meals for times when cooking fatigue sets in. While each household has different favorites, some examples are breakfast for dinner, soup and sandwiches, and grain bowls (make your favorite grain like rice or quinoa, add cooked meat, vegetables and a sauce). If there are others in your house, ask them to come up with different meal ideas. Ask family and friends outside of your household for ideas about their favorite meals and recipes.

Collecting ingredients. When choosing family favorites or looking for new recipes, look for ones that have six ingredients or less. Keep a grocery list of commonly used items to make sure they are in stock in your pantry.

Prep work. To pull together recipes quickly, use convenience items such as frozen or canned vegetables. If you need to chop part of an onion for a recipe, just chop the entire onion and freeze the extra for the next time they are needed. When you are making a more complicated recipe, double it and freeze half to enjoy again at another time.

Cooking. Use your kitchen appliances to make cooking easier. For example, in the survey about mealtime preparation during the pandemic, many people are using slow cookers and half of them use pressure cookers. Make a meal with pre-packaged favorites. Start with something simple like macaroni and cheese and add vegetables and cooked meat.

Clean up. Fill the sink with hot soapy water to easily wash some of the dishes as the meal is being prepared. After the meal, have everyone help with the clean-up. Even little ones can help by collecting the used napkins or dirty silverware.

Quick Fixes To benefit from meals at home, every dish does not have to be made from scratch every day. Use short cuts such as those listed above and add a side of frozen vegetables or canned fruit. Support the locally owned restaurant with a take out order.

People-centered. As food is obviously the theme of a meal, the people in the household are just as important. Limit distractions such as TV and other technology. Take steps to make mealtime pleasant and not a challenge. Don't use mealtime to bring up problems. Try to keep it upbeat and stress free. Some days that is easier said than done, but it is a good goal.

Gratitude-centered. Expressing gratitude is one technique to work through challenging times. This could be as simple as, "I'm thankful for the food on my plate". This looks different for everyone. Some households may choose to pray or give a blessing at the beginning of the meal.

Others may choose to just name one thing they are thankful for that day.

In addition to cooking fatigue, there are other reasons some may be feeling low or fatigued during this time of year. Not only has the pandemic been a challenge, but Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD), is also a concern as a type of depression related to seasonal changes. SAD is most often associated with late fall and wintertime. Sometimes referred to as the "winter blues", if you suffer from SAD, please talk with your doctor about the best steps to keep your mood and motivation steady.

If you are interested in learning more about Beating the Winter Blues, the Ohio State University Extension will be offer a four-part, free webinar series in January 2021 on Fridays from 11:00 – 11:30am. Topics will include beating the winter blues by unplugging, exercising and using humor. The webinar series is free but you must register at www.go.osu.edu/beatthewinterblues

Information from Live Healthy Live Well OSUE blog, University of

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Health Section • Health Section

4 New Year's Resolutions Black Women Can Make to Improve Heart Health

Special to The Truth

High blood pressure -- the leading risk factor for heart attack and stroke -- continues to disproportionately affect communities of color. Addressing this health inequity is especially important right now, as people with hypertension and serious heart conditions are at an increased risk for more severe outcomes if they acquire COVID-19.

According to the American Heart Association, the prevalence of high blood pressure among Black adults in the U.S. is among the highest in the world, with the prevalence of high blood pressure in Black women nearly 40 percent higher than white women in the U.S.

While many long-standing inequities and stressors produced by structural racism have created and continue to exacerbate these conditions, there are steps individuals can take to help improve their blood pressure right now. The New Year is a great opportunity to prioritize self-care and get started.

This is why the American Medical Association (AMA), the AMA Foundation, Association of Black Cardiologists, American Heart Association, Minority Health Institute and National Medical Association have launched the "Release the Pressure" campaign with ESSENCE. The campaign is aimed at partnering with Black women to help improve their heart health and be part of a movement for healthy blood pressure, with a shared goal of engaging more than 300,000 Black women.

As part of the campaign, the AMA and this coalition of national health care organizations encourages Black women to take a pledge to be part of a healthy blood pressure movement at ReleaseThePressure.org. Specifically, the pledge encourages Black women to take the following four steps:

1. Set a blood pressure goal: Schedule an appointment with your physician or other health care professional, in-person or virtually, to work in partnership on understanding your blood pressure numbers and knowing your goal for optimal blood pressure.
2. Monitor blood pressure numbers at home: Once you learn your blood pressure numbers, take and keep regular records of your blood pressure.
3. Activate a personalized wellness plan: Identify specific goals for fitness and heart healthy eating and connect virtually with family members and friends from your "squad" to keep you on track.
4. Make regular check-ins with your "squad": Lean on your family and friends to help you achieve your heart health goals by checking in with them on a daily basis.

"Preventive care is vital to breaking the devastating impact of high blood pressure within the Black community, particularly during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic," says Patrice A. Harris, M.D., MA, president of the AMA. "At the individual and family level, it starts with understanding blood pressure numbers and taking action to manage blood pressure."

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Health Section • Health Section

A Mental Health Moment: Living That COVID Life in 2021

By Bernadette Joy Graham, MA, LPC, NCC, Licensed Mental Health Therapist
The Truth Contributor

As each new year begins, we often decide to list resolutions, things we promise ourselves will be different such as weight loss, improved income and even treating ourselves and others better. Ringing in the new 2021 year, life as we knew it has changed tremendously.



We lost more than we could ever imagine but we also gained new insight and coping mechanisms. We learned to better care for ourselves whether we wanted to or not. We learned that living with fear can greatly influence our perspective and outlook on both life and death.

Resolutions and goals for this new year still have us all scratching our heads because we do not know what can happen day to day, yet even before this deadly pandemic that was still a truth. None of us know what will happen tomorrow or the new day or the next month. We have held on to faith and hope in meeting our needs and wants but much more this year than ever before in our lives.

For those of my readers who have come to follow me and my monthly writings, you know that I am an enormous fan of humor and comedy as a way to overcome hard times, coping with that which is out of our control and even defeating depression. One glorious component of our human existence is the chemicals released upon laughing, smiling and having fun. Its free and one does not need a prescription to laugh to release this wonderful endorphin to relieve heartfelt pain and challenging times.

I myself have relied upon much humor and kind words from mentors and colleagues who work closely with those affected by COVID. One of those such persons who wished to remain anonymous is a previous classmate from undergraduate days of college. We were both following the path of pre-med, I majored in psychology and he in biology. Over the years, we have remained in contact keeping up-to-date on our chosen career paths. He is now a physician at a hospital system in the Maryland

...continued on page 12

Some New Year Thoughts from Ryan

I want to start by saying, "Happy New Year" to everyone.

Without a doubt 2020 has been an extremely challenging year. I know many of us are still feeling the burden of this situation and some feel there is no light at the end of the tunnel. Stress is a huge factor right now and many of us are not dealing with it well.

Along with overeating, lack of activity and just being stressed out, your body has decided that it's going to store some extra fat for you. A lot of people have put on more weight than the normal 10 pounds that are gained throughout the holiday season.



For a lot of us the weight gain started back in March and has continued till now. It is time to put it behind you and press forward. Make the decision to heal your mind, your body and your spirit. It is time for you to grab the bull by the horns and take control of YOUR situation. Worry about what you can control and leave the rest alone.

You can control your eating, activity level and your decisions to make positive changes for yourself. Spring is less than three months away!

This is not a suggestion for you to make a New Year resolution but a life-style change. A decision to do better for yourself, to think positively about the things you can control, to become active again with whatever level of comfort you feel safe with. Be your motivation to take the step to healing and possibly be the motivation to inspire someone else to do the same.

Start by creating your day the night before, even if it's just one simple goal to start with. Make a decision to go for a 20-minute walk. Set a time and do it. Maybe it can be a nutrition goal to drink more water or to cut out all sugars for the day. Each small step is one step closer to living a healthier lifestyle and becoming a better version of you.

It is my belief, always has been and will be, that you have to take care of yourself before you can help anyone else. I have been helping people reach their fitness goals for over 30 years.

You have to remember that you did not get out of shape in a month and

...continued on page 12

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Health Section • Health Section

Health Order Signed Encouraging Ohioans to Stay Home

Ohio Governor Mike DeWine last week announced that Ohio Department of Health Director Stephanie McCloud signed a health order encouraging people to stay at home during specified hours unless they are working or engaged in an essential activity. This extends provisions in previous orders and applies until January 23, 2021, at 12:01 p.m.

Specifications in this order include:

* Individuals within the state must stay at a place of residence during the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 5:00 a.m. except for obtaining necessary food, medical care, or social services or providing care for others.

* This order doesn't apply to those that are homeless. Individuals whose residences are unsafe or become unsafe, such as victims of domestic violence, are encouraged to leave their homes and stay at a safe, alternative location.

* The order does not apply to religious observances and First Amendment protected speech including activity by the media.

* The order permits travel into or out of the state and permits travel required by law enforcement or court order, including to transport children according to a custody agreement, or to obtain fuel.

Individuals are permitted to leave a place of residence during the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 5:00 a.m. for the following essential activities:

* Engaging in activities essential to their health and safety or the health and safety of those in their households or people who are unable to or should not leave their homes, including pets. Activities can include but are not limited to seeking emergency services, obtaining medical supplies or medication, or visiting a health care professional including hospitals, emergency departments, urgent care clinics, and pharmacies.

* To obtain necessary services or supplies for themselves and their family or members of their household who are unable or should not leave their home, to deliver those services or supplies to others. Examples of those include but are not limited to, obtaining groceries and food. Food and beverages may be obtained only for consumption off-premises, through such means as delivery, drive-through, curbside pickup and carryout.

* To obtain necessary social services.

* To go to work, including volunteer work.

* To take care of or transport a family member, friend, or pet in their household or another household.

* To perform or obtain government services.

Toledo Black Agenda... continued from page 8

causes of death. Black men suffer more from preventable oral diseases that are treatable, have a higher incidence of diabetes and prostate cancer. In Lucas County, Black men have a 38% obesity rate and 44% are consid-

ered overweight. Suicide is the third leading cause of death in 15-24-year-old Black men. In 2017, homicide was the number one cause of death for young Black men between the ages of 15 and 44.

Ed. Note: The Task Force's recommendations will be published next week.

Ryan Rollison... continued from page 11

it's going to take time and consistency to reclaim your healthy status. But be confident that you can do it, be confident that you are strong enough to stick to your plan and make the changes needed to improve you! You may have slip ups or days that you just lack the motivation to do something. That's ok, you are allowed to feel that way or have a slip up. Just don't make that a habit!

Get your mind right and begin new. Take your

eating one meal at a time. If you slip up, make your next meal better. If you miss a workout, make it to the next one. Take control! Find a friend to be accountable to. Make change your habit, not excuses. Feel better mentally when you accomplish what you have set out to do. Acknowledge your efforts to yourself. Pat yourself on the back and keep moving forward with confidence and self expectations.

I hope this New Year will Be positive for you all and that you live a healthy and happy life-

style.

I am still training through this pandemic doing one on one training in a sanitary environment and holding my fit camps with social distancing. If you are in need of help please contact me and we will get you started.

Ryan Rollison

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Mental Health Moment... continued from page 11

area. Once COVID became more deadly, we spoke more often exchanging stories on how we have lost so many clients and patients and how it affected us personally.

While I assist clients grieving over the loss of loved ones, he experiences the death of patient's daily working 14 – 16 hours a day. We discussed choices such as: if during our undergraduate studies we would have known that COVID would one day greatly affect us in our

chosen career paths, would we have changed our course of study? I am positive these sorts of discussions are between many a colleague in careers so closely related in our present day.

Take a mental health moment to discuss with others and most importantly yourself, what does COVID life look like in 2021 for you. There is no acting as if it does not exist, there is no magical cure if the thought does not exist but there are steps you can take for your new year. 1 – Don't be in denial, 2 – Take the best measures and steps you can to remain safe and keep those around you safe, 3 – Understand time, nothing lasts for-

ever not your feelings, emotions nor perspective, 4 – Change with the change, while we cannot at this time enjoy social entertainment there are alternative ways to enjoy yourself (don't isolate), and 5 – Utilize this time to slow down, think, take a step back, and ask for help (counseling is not just for deep seated depression, it is there to help you find insight and think outside of the box for a better you.)

"Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time, we are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek." Barack Obama

Bernadette Graham is a Licensed Professional Mental Health Counselor, National Certified Counselor and Certified Grief Recovery Specialist. Provide feedback or reach out at graham.bernadette@gmail.com For appointment information please call 419.409.4929 (Telehealth is available for ongoing and new clients at this time as well as in person appointments available on Tuesdays and Fridays only). Office location is 3454 Oak Alley Ct. Suite 300 Toledo, OH 43606 www.bjgrahamcounseling.com

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Mediocre: The Dangerous Legacy of White Male America by Ijeoma Oluo

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

The Truth Contributor

This year, you are going to roar.

You're going to seize every opportunity, wrestle every bad habit to the ground, and do better than your best. You're gonna kick the universe in the tail. This is absolutely going to be your year – unless, as in the new book *Mediocre* by Ijeoma Oluo, someone's standing in your way, now and for a hundred years.

In addition to a quiet setting and uninterrupted time to write, on a recent retreat for women, Ijeoma Oluo noticed that when socializing, most of the attendees talked about men – but not the boyfriend-husband-partner men. They discussed bad “dudes,” particularly the white ones that largely controlled publishing. That conversation morphed into bad men, white men in general, that are “found just about everywhere...”

There are, Oluo says, “a thousand memes” that feature the words, “Lord, give me the confidence of a mediocre white man,” meaning that “white male mediocrity is a baseline” from which all power rotates, “regardless of skill... or talent...” It's as if some sort of higher rank should be granted just because those individuals happen to be white men.

None of this is new. It's been going on for hundreds of years, Oluo says, and Black women aren't the only ones on the receiving end of it. It exists in the West, as white men fight against white men over land that white men stole.

We see white male privilege all over politics, from the top down and especially in political arenas where white supremacy exists. It's been on college campuses, and in places of higher education where Black people were his-

c.2020
Seal Press
\$28.00 / \$35.00 Canada
336 pages

torically denied entrance. It's in the workplace, where Black women continue to make far less money than their white male counterparts.

White male privilege exists today in economics, pro sports, in language, in an ignorance of history and the contributions of Black men and women, and in entertainment. It's a “very dark place,” Oluo says, and there are things every American can do about it – starting with two things: an acknowledgment that we need white men, and an admission to our complicity in this terrible, untenable legacy.

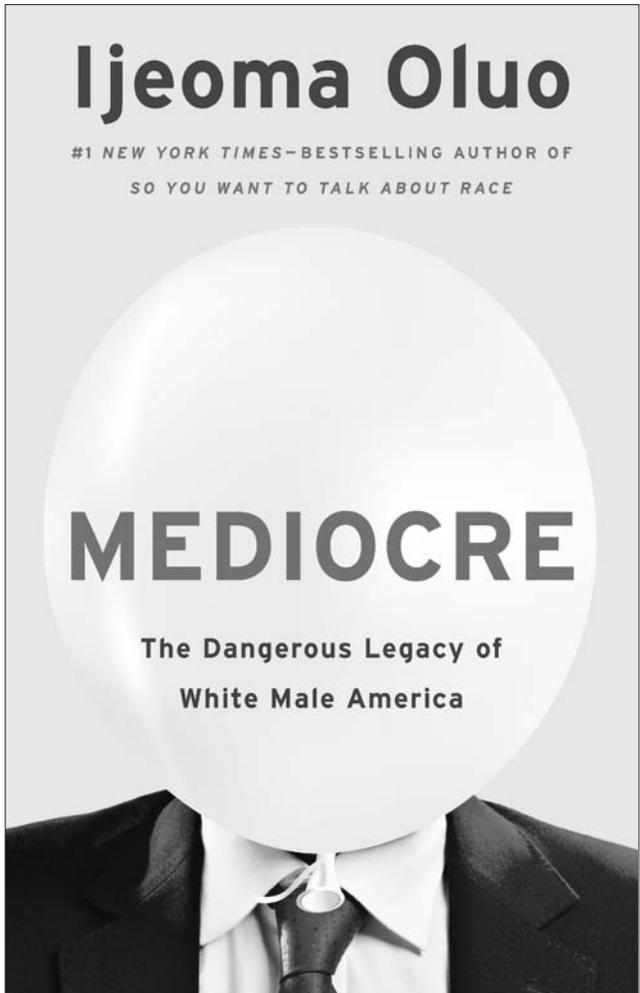


Mediocre author Ijeoma Oluo

Got a few days to read? Yeah, and grab a packet of those sticky-flag things, too. *Mediocre* is a book that practically demands them: though this is not a seven-hundred-page manifesto, there's that much information inside its covers.

What's more, author Ijeoma Oluo asks readers to think about her words, and not lightly. This is a read-a-few-paragraphs, put-it-down kind of book, making you live with the facts before moving forward. Oluo uses stories to illustrate many of her points, diving into American history, politics, and economics to help readers to see how quietly, totally entrenched white male privilege is and has been. Most eye-opening are her many statements of relevancy, showing how white males enjoy other cultures blithely, often while denigrating those very cultures.

Be prepared to give yourself a lot of time with this book – it needs that. And then be prepared for action, because *Mediocre* is going to make you roar.



Perryman... continued from page 8

with the team, under the concept that we are better together and we can do great things together. That is my motto. We don't have to agree upon everything, but we can agree to disagree and always stand as a united front when we are out front. I am not delusional in thinking that I can come up with grandiose ideas and make them happen all by myself. I need the other 11 players to make it happen.

I also want people to understand that we have to be compassionate and show people that we care. I don't have all the answers, but I'm out here trying. Are you your brother's keeper? Yes. I'm out every third Saturday feeding the homeless because I'm blessed to be able to do it, and God has placed that on me to do. I'm all for the people, and I pray each day that God gives me everything that I need to do his will in this position. If and when I falter, I can forgive myself, get up and try to get it right the next day. That's it.

Contact Rev. Donald Perryman, PhD, at drdlperryman@centerofhopebaptist.org

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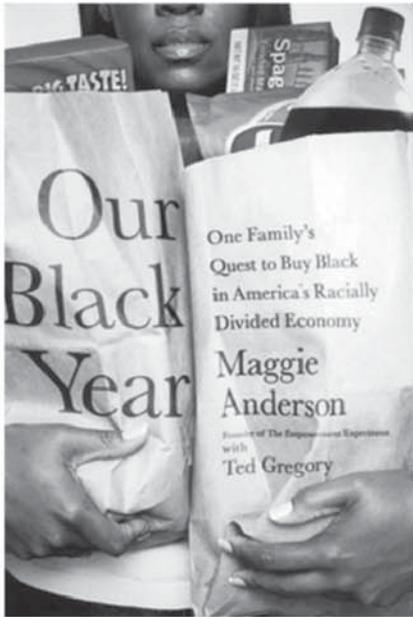
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SEEKING A VISUAL AND QUALITATIVE REPORT

The **Mental Health & Recovery Services Board of Lucas County (MHR SB)** seeks to fund an individual or organization to develop a visual and qualitative report and presentation based on quantitative data collected by the MHR SB. This information will be used as a baseline report to the community on the MHR SB's health equity efforts. Proposals are to be delivered no later than 5:00 p.m. ET on January 22, 2021. All questions should be submitted to crs@lcmhrsb.oh.gov. Details regarding the project deliverables and submission criteria are located on the MHR SB's website: <http://www.lcmhrsb.oh.gov/publicnotice/>.

RFQ BUILDING ENVELOPE/WEATHERPROOFING PROJECT

Request for Qualification (RFQ) to Hire an Architect/Engineer (A/E), Inquiry # FY21-30, Project #1130-21-232. The University of Toledo intends to retain professional services for the Building Envelope/Weatherproofing Project. Project Construction Cost: \$2,000,000. Please mail your response to The University of Toledo, Attn: Lise Konecny, RFQ FY21-30, Project #1130-21-232, MS 216, 2801 W. Bancroft St., Toledo, Ohio 43606 or bring directly to the University of Toledo, Plant Operations, Room 1060, 2925 East Rocket Drive, Toledo, Ohio 43606. DATE: Friday, January 15, 2021, TIME: 2:30 p.m. All questions and inquiries can be emailed directly to robert.waddle@utoledo.edu. For a copy of the RFQ visit our Construction Website: <http://www.utoledo.edu/facilities/construction/> or <http://ofcc.ohio.gov> Please reference Inquiry # FY21-30, Project #1130-21-232, Building Envelope/Weatherproofing Project on the outside of envelope and include 6 (six) copies and 1 (one) electronic copy of the SF 330 Form with your response.

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PUBLIC NOTICE 2ND SUBSTANTIAL AMENDMENT TO THE 2015-2019 FIVE-YEAR CONSOLIDATED PLAN

In accordance with 24 CFR 91.05(c)(2) and subpart B of the federal regulations relative to citizen participation for Community Planning and Development Programs and applicable waivers made available to those requirements through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act), the City of Toledo (COT) is making a 2nd amendment to the 2015-2019 Five-Year Consolidated Plan available to the public through this notice.

Public Comment Period and Process:

The Consolidated Plan amendment will be available for review beginning **Friday, January 8, 2021**, on the website of the following entities:

Department of Neighborhoods
One Government Center, 18th Floor
Downtown Toledo, Jackson & Erie Streets
website: <https://toledo.oh.gov/departments/neighborhoods>

Lucas Metropolitan Housing Authority
435 Nebraska Avenue
Toledo, Ohio 43604
website: www.lucasma.org

Office of the Mayor
One Government Center, 22nd Floor
Downtown Toledo, Jackson & Erie Streets
website: <https://toledo.oh.gov/government/mayor>

Toledo Lucas County Homelessness Board
1946 N. 13th Street, Suite 437
Toledo, Ohio 43604
website: www.endinghomelessness.toledo.org

Clerk of Council
One Government Center, 21st Floor
Downtown Toledo, Jackson & Erie Streets
website: <https://toledo.oh.gov/government/city-council/>

Toledo-Lucas County Public Library
325 Michigan Street
Toledo, Ohio 43604
website: www.toledolibrary.org

The Fair Housing Center
432 N. Superior Street
Toledo, Ohio 43604
website: www.toledofhc.org

Lucas Co. Board of Developmental Disabilities
1154 Larc Lane
Toledo, Ohio 43614
website: www.lucasdd.info

A public hearing on the 2nd Substantial Amendment to the 2015-2019 Five-Year Consolidated Plan is scheduled as follows:

Thursday, January 14, 2021 5:30 p.m. by Virtual Hearing
Virtual Link: <https://toledo-oh-gov.zoom.us/j/85987681908>

This Consolidated Plan amendment will also be available for a 5-day public review and comment period from **Monday, January 11, 2021 to Friday, January 15, 2021**. Citizens wishing to submit written comments during the public review and comment period may mail them, postmarked no later than **Friday, January 15, 2021**, to the following:

CITY OF TOLEDO
DEPARTMENT OF NEIGHBORHOODS
2nd SUBSTANTIAL AMENDMENT TO THE 2015-2019 FIVE-YEAR CONSOLIDATED PLAN
ONE GOVERNMENT CENTER, SUITE 1800
TOLEDO, OHIO 43604

You may also email comments no later than **Friday, January 15, 2021** to Monica Brown, Admin. Analyst IV, at monica.brown@toledo.oh.gov.

Amendment:

This is a 2nd amendment to the 2015-2019 Five-Year Consolidated Plan for the COT to enable the COT to receive \$1,526,505.00 in Community Development Block Grant-CV (CDBG-CV) funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) made available through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act).

Additional CDBG funding made available to the COT by HUD through the CARES Act is unknown as this time but will be used for the same purpose of the initial allocations indicated above which is to prevent, prepare, or respond to the spread of Coronavirus 19 (COVID-19) and facilitate assistance to eligible agencies, households, and persons economically impacted by COVID-19. In addition, the COT may reprogram recaptured FY 2019-2020 CDBG funding as needed to respond to COVID-19.

Eligible CDBG activities include, but are not limited to, assisting low- and moderate-income households with mortgage assistance for no more than 6 months and support of other COVID-19 response services.

Further, eligible CDBG costs incurred as of March 1, 2020, and paid for with nonfederal funds may be repaid with CDBG funding, including those made under the CARES Act. These pre-award costs will meet all HUD requirements applicable to CDBG, including those under the CARES Act. Unless waived by HUD, CDBG pre-award costs for FY 2020-2021 will not exceed 25% of the grant and will be used for the CDBG-eligible activities as indicated above.

Public notices regarding future amendments to the Consolidated Plan will be printed in local newspapers and posted online on the COT's website at www.toledo.oh.gov.

Lastly, in the 1st amendment, the COT revised the Consolidated Plan's Citizen Participation Plan to include the 5-day comment period as indicated above as well as to make other changes. The revised Citizen Participation Plan will be available for review on the COT's website at: <https://toledo.oh.gov/departments/neighborhoods/fiscal-monitoring>.

Background on the Consolidated Plan:

The Consolidated Plan describes the housing and community development needs, as well as activities to address those needs, as defined and funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). As required by HUD, the Consolidated Plan brings together, in one (1) consolidated submission, the planning and application aspects of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME), and Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Programs. More information on the Consolidated Plan is available on the COT's website at: <https://toledo.oh.gov/departments/neighborhoods>.

For reasonable accommodations or additional information, please contact Monica Brown, Admin. Analyst IV, Department of Neighborhoods at monica.brown@toledo.oh.gov.

A Look at The Toledo Black Agenda

A wide range of leaders in Toledo's Black community have joined forces to put together a report on the challenges facing that community in six critical areas.

*The report, **The Toledo Black Agenda**, a months-long project in the making, examines historic obstacles and current challenges in the areas of criminal justice, economic development, education, health, housing, workforce development.*

The community leaders and experts were assembled by Lisa McDuffie, CEO of YWCA of Northwest Ohio and Robin Reese, CEO of Lucas County Children Services.

Now Toledo's Black Agenda will be made available to local government agencies, along with a host of private and public companies and entities in order to gather community-wide support for the demands and suggestions proposed in the report.

We are printing excerpts from the report over the next few weeks. The following is an excerpt from the fourth pillar – the Health Care Equity & Justice Pillar. We will print the recommendations of the Health Care Task Force next week.

The entire report, with citations, can be read online at thetruthtoledo.com

PART IV: HEALTH CARE EQUITY & JUSTICE PILLAR

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

The issue of equity in healthcare is a complicated one. To improve health for everyone, hard, unflinching questions must be asked, and reasonable, innovative and well-formed solutions designed to directly address the needs of those disenfranchised in our communities must be provided. There can be no fear of confronting history and its fostering of the intentional development of public policies that “ghettoized” neighborhoods making them unhealthy places for families to live. We must ask why housing stock is allowed to remain infested with lead, well known to impair the cognitive ability of our children. We must challenge our elected officials to answer the question why, in the most progressive and technologically advanced time in our history, in the richest country in the world, issues of food insecurity, educational process that fail many children in our urban centers and environmental issues that deprive our communities of life sustaining basics like water, still exist? Employment and associated advancements are still unevenly available and the inability or unwillingness to provide equal access to health care, especially specialty care, remains of great concern. Tough questions with no easy solutions, but all necessary inquiries in the movement toward healthcare equity.

What Is Health Equity?

A basic principle of public health is that all people have a right to health care. When access to care is denied, significant negative differences in the health status between groups occur. These differences most often affect those who are marginalized because of socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, disability status, geographic location, or some combination thereof. People in these groups not only experience worse health but also tend to have less access to those resources which typically form the foundation of healthy communities. Suitable housing, sound education nutritional food and safe neighborhoods are all examples of what are now called the Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) and are considered essential resources in the pursuit of Health Equity.

The actual definition of Health Equity is complicated by the influences of those elements related to SDOH and its similarity to its counterparts, Health Disparities and Inclusion Health. The World Health Organization defines **health equity** as the “absence of avoidable, unfair or remediable differences among groups of people, whether those groups are defined socially, economically, demographically, geographically or by other means of stratification” in the pursuit of optimal health status. It is, as defined within the Veterans Health Administration's Health Equity Plan, “the understanding of how people's social characteristics and environments affect health...” These are the definitions of health equity to be used within this document. Health inequities are not naturally made. They arise from racial and class inequities; from decisions that this society has made. The single strongest predictor of our health is our position on the class pyramid.

The issue of Health Equity is both massive in scope and complex when

considering a pathway toward its attainment. And while there are a significant number of health issues that should be addressed by this community, this document will identify those health issues in our community that require immediate consideration. One thing is without question; the data and research evidence are clear that racism is a systemic and ongoing public health crisis with serious consequences for the health of Black Ohioans. It is also clear that racism has a profound and pervasive impact across all the factors that shape our health. This includes our healthcare delivery systems, education, housing, food, economic, environmental, criminal justice and political systems, among others.

Health disparities on the other hand, are the health-related outcomes present in **marginalized communities**, which are directly attributable to the systematic and **unjust distribution** of those critical resources mentioned above. Equally important is the somewhat derivative definition of **Inclusion Health**. This term is used to define a number of groups of people who are not usually well provided for by healthcare systems, have poorer, access to healthcare, experiences and health outcomes than even the most vulnerable of our population. This definition covers people who are homeless, vulnerable migrants (refugees, those undocumented, asylum seekers) and sex workers to name a few. The conceptual differences between these terms are subtle but significant. It is important however, that they and their differences be understood as each is important in this discussion.

The Cumulative Impact of Healthcare Inequity

Racism and the inequities it creates are well documented as drivers of health disparities and overall poor health in the Black community. While these are avoidable differences in health outcomes among groups, the ongoing trauma of systemic or institutional racism, results in an unequal allocation of social resources that shape health status. Resulting imbalances can be seen in conditions that shape and define Social Determinants of Health. But beyond these things, evidence suggests that the stress of the experience of racism may have its own physical impact. “It's about access and unequal treatment, but it's also about much more than that” states April Thames, PhD, Associate Professor of Psychology and Director of the Social Neuroscience in Health Psychology lab at the University of Southern California.

The fact that individuals live with these stressors their entire lives produces adverse health consequences. Discrimination has a directly toxic impact on health in general and neurologic health in particular. Several studies have shown clear biological links for poor health outcomes associated with racism, even after controlling for other factors that might serve as a proxy, such as access to care. In fact, the persistent stress of these environmental influencers causes changes to the neurological, endocrine and immune systems. These changes contribute to a great number of health maladies including high rates of infant mortality and co-morbidities such as hypertension and heart disease. Comorbidities render Black people more vulnerable to illnesses like COVID-19, shortens lifespans and increases medical complications and death from otherwise survivable diseases.

There are also real differences in how people are treated when they obtain care. The examples are many and range from providing significant misinformation (telling a patient with suspected Multiple Sclerosis that “Black people don't get MS”) to disparities in the way illnesses are managed. For example, Black patients experiencing a stroke are one quarter less likely to be given thrombolysis, the treatment which is known to be most effective, than White patients. In her book **CASTE**, Isabelle Wilkerson discusses that empirical studies show physicians often disregard the reports of pain from Black patients, wrongly believing that Blacks in particular have higher pain thresholds. This, according to Wilkerson, has led physicians to undertreat or deny pain medication to Black patients—even those with metastatic cancer—while readily prescribing medication to White patients reporting equivalent levels of pain. The disparity is so severe that Blacks as a group receive pain medication at levels beneath the threshold established by the World Health Organization.

California Surgeon General Dr. Nadine Burke Harris is a pediatrician who has studied the profound health effects of childhood trauma and stress. In pointing out the higher COVID-19 rates among Black and Brown people, she identified their long term environmental and racially tinged experiences to be “severely flawed and systematically different than others, resulting in negative health outcomes. We (this country) have created these

... continued on page 6