

The *Sojourner's* Truth

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Volume 65 No. 6

"And Ye Shall Know The Truth..."

February 17, 2021

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Building an Indispensable Bridge

By Rev. Donald L. Perryman, Ph.D.
The Truth Contributor



If you always do what you always did, you will always get what you always got.

- Moms (Jackie) Mabley

The legacy of slavery and other systemic tools of racial control continues to impact the mental health of Black people. The internal problems resulting from social oppression causes many to live in a perpetual state of crisis. Outcomes are rarely positive as we encounter law enforcement while trying to live crisis to crisis.

To understand, we only have to look to several recent officer-involved shootings of African Americans attempting to navigate the treacherous road through crisis, struggle, and recovery. Survival on this difficult journey is nearly impossible without adequate social support and leading-edge crisis intervention.

In my last column, I discussed Lucas County's Crisis Intervention program (CIT). Law enforcement officers are trained to effectively manage interactions with people they encounter who might have mental health, substance abuse, or developmental issues.

The program has flourished in Lucas County, and everyone—including the public and law enforcement officers—is better for it.

At the end of the column, I also said that it's essential to keep pushing and fighting for a better and more equitable crisis-response system.

In that effort, it is vital to keep our eyes on what is happening in other communities.

Several cities are implementing "co-responder" programs, where police, emergency response, and mental health professionals respond together. These cities include Chicago and San Antonio.

Others take it a step further and are pilot-testing responses in which there might be no police response at all, based on the situation.

Denver has established the STAR program. STAR stands for Support Team Assistance Response and consists of a medic and a clinician available to respond to calls involving mental health, substance abuse, or developmental issues. The doctor and clinician provide a third option for dispatchers when directing the response to situations like this.

The Denver program is a pilot, but in the first six months STAR was able to respond to 748 calls, none of which required police assistance and in which no arrests were made. The analysis shows that when the program is fully expanded, it could reduce police calls by 3%.

Denver's STAR program is modeled after a similar program in Eugene, Oregon. Also, New York City is piloting the program in specific neighborhoods.

Notably, the programs (Oregon's CAHOOTS program specifically), require responders to have 500 hours de-escalation training rather than the 40 hours required for Lucas County's CIT program.


These models train officers to both control a situation and protect property. The models also help crisis responders emphasize the dignity of the whole person and prevent a response from police "with an axe to grind and 'protect' religious cathedrals," as a local pastor explained.


For sure, a nonpolice unit working alongside police will help see/respond to things from more than a single perspective.


Finally, it is the element of collaboration that genuinely stands out in all of the models. In a large sense, the programs and systems we develop are only as good as the community that stands behind them. When a unified commu-

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TARTA Celebrates Black History Month





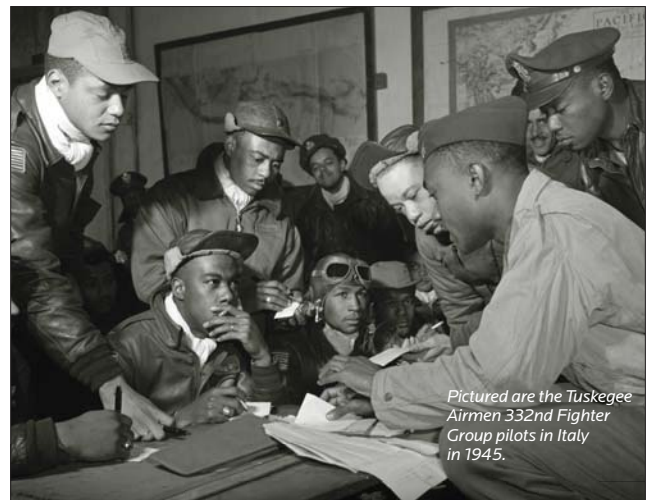


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Pictured are the Tuskegee Army Airfield pilots in Italy in 1945.

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Birth of a Nation ... Redux?

By Lafe Tolliver, Esq

Guest Column

If you are too young to recall the virulent racist film, *Birth of a Nation*, which was the first viewed in the White House during the tenure of the arch segregationist President Woodrow Wilson, who believed that it accurately portrayed the alleged vileness and sexual depravity of black people, then you need to see it if you are going to be able to contextualize the recent Capitol failed coup.

Birth of a Nation was a blatant rallying call for white people to take back "their" country from the hordes of menacing black people who were out to "get them."

Birth of a Nation was unrepentant racist propaganda in all its decadent glory. It promoted a "Big Lie" about the nature and character of black people and warned white men to stand up and protect, to the death, the virtuous flower of white womanhood.

Birth of a Nation, without a filter, shouted from the rooftops that if black people, and black men in particular, are not kept in their place by any means necessary, America would regress and the white race would be polluted by integration and race mixing.

Birth of a Nation championed the Klu Klux Klan as the valiant vanguard that would be the needed buffer zone between black upward mobility and the hegemony of the white race.

The KKK was America's hope to keep in check any advancements of people of color in America and to ensure that only Nordic whites could rule and reign supreme in American politics, finances and to continuously hold the reins of power.

Now, fast forward to the impeachment hearings of Herr Trump. The feckless GOP, which has sold its birthright for a mess of pottage in order to maintain control and incur the favor of Herr Trump, has already signaled that at least 44 of them are tone deaf to any notion of convicting Herr Trump for inciting an insurrection at the Capitol.

Repeatedly, year in and year out, Herr Trump has poisoned the wells of truth and critical thinking by promulgating the Big Lie that if he did not win the 2020 election, it had to be rigged.

Despite any evidence that any court in the land would accept as valid and on point, Herr Trump and his cast of misfits have bellowed in unison with Fox News and other friendly media outlets that the election was stolen, and Herr Trump won by a massive landslide.

Forty-four GOP senators with their heads in the sand, deny, against a tsunami of evidence,

that Joe Biden won the election. For them to say otherwise, Herr Trump's base would howl to the moon and threaten them with either a primary challenger or worse.

Understand that the underlying genesis of this Big Lie is that people of color voted illegally in certain urban swing states and their votes were the singular margin of victory for Joe Biden.

The assault on the Capitol was Trump's followers expression of outrage that a duly elected president should not take office because in their corrupted thinking, Herr Trump had the election stolen from him and his followers.

Those brawlers at the Capitol were ginned up for a reckoning with anyone who was not on their side and if that included threats of lynching Vice President Mike Pence, so be it.

If that including executing Nancy Pelosi or anyone else who stood in their way, that was OK with them. Some of them believed that they were on a divine mission!

They wanted a return to the good ol' days where the warped thinking of Herr Trump would be the order of the day in order to make America great again.

A corollary to that alleged greatness would require people of color to again be subordinated to a second-class status; and their acts monitored by white militia groups who would serve as "de facto" watchmen or modern-day overseers.

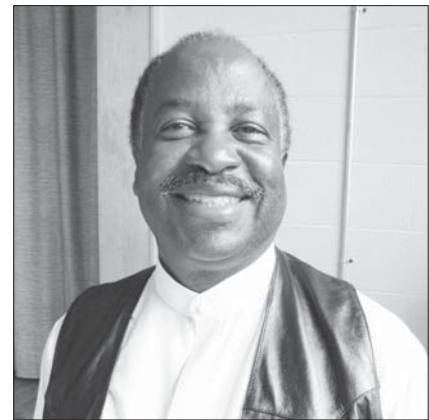
Yes, the Capitol insurrection was inspired, in part, by past and present racial phobias of "you" people ascending to become the dominant ethnic group in America.

To overturn the validated 2020 election results would necessitate erasing from the vote tallies, millions of votes cast by people of color.

The mob that ransacked the Capitol, some carrying Confederate Flags, saw it as their duty to obey the call to arms given a few minutes earlier by Herr Trump in a bombastic speech that said they must fight, or they would lose their country.

The marauders thought they were carrying out a divine order to correct a wobbling America that they believed was color struck; they felt that their white ethnic standing was soon to be downgraded to a minority population status.

Herr Trump gladly stroked their racial demons for his own political good and continued



Lafe Tolliver

to feed the Big Lie that he was a victim of a nationwide conspiracy to deny him a second term.

The brain-dead GOP has no intentions to convict Trump, regardless of the copious amounts of caustic evidence that demonstrates that he violated his oath of office and sanctioned a coup against the America that he so professes to love.

For those craven politicians, it is a simple story of retaining their power and fat pay checks as opposed to evaluating the evidence and saying to Herr Trump, "We gotcha...you are in fact, the real enemy of the people!"

If the director of the incendiary film *Birth of a Nation* was able to read the screen play written by Trump since 2015 to present date, he would have made a sequel to that film and done so in vivid living color. The assault on the Capitol, in the understated name of white supremacy, is that sequel.

In America, there is never a bad time to stop the progress of black and brown people and if the occupant of the Oval Office can lend his stature and aura to any efforts to snare and trap black people in moving forward, Herr Trump would gladly do so.

Would I place pointy Klan hoods on any GOP senator who throws in his or her lot with Herr Trump and refuses to listen to the overwhelming evidence, and not convict him of violating his oath of office and aiding an insurrection?

What do you think?

Contact Lafe Tolliver at tolliver@juno.com

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The Three Great Ironies of the Trump Insurrection

By Dr. Mallory Williams, MD, MPH

Guest Column

On January 6, 2021 after then-President Donald J. Trump addressed individuals attending the Save America March, acts of domestic terrorism that will forever haunt our nation took place in order to overturn a presidential election. Explosive devices were placed near the headquarters of both major political parties, nooses were hung from gallows which were erected on the west lawn of the Capitol Building, and insurrectionists invaded and desecrated the Capitol resulting in the death of five individuals. We are left as an intact democracy to intellectually grapple with not just the events of that day but also the continued commentary from the insurrectionists which promise that they will return.

As a Colonel in the United States Army and a trauma surgeon on duty at the Howard University Hospital Level I Trauma Center in Washington, D. C. on that dreadful day, I have deeply reflected on the occurrences and have concluded that there exist three great ironies of the Trump Insurrection. These ironies are centered on the leader of the insurrection, the location of the insurrection and the loyalists to Trump.

The leader is the first great irony. The leader of the insurrectionist was former President Donald J. Trump. He would not accept the fact that he lost the 2020 Presidential Election to Joseph Biden. He has given great effort to contest this fact and to proffer a different reality to his followers such that they believe the election has been stolen. No court of law has upheld these accusations.

But Presidential elections aside, by every determination Donald J. Trump has had an extraordinary American life. Both he and his businesses have benefitted in an enormous way from both the free markets and freedom that this nation's democracy offers.

Six bankruptcies have allowed Trump organizations to financially reorganize and remain in business while dissolving debts. Trump has enjoyed a tremendous amount of financial success and received a \$72.9 million tax refund from the Internal Revenue Service in 2010.

The Trump organization defines its real estate portfolio as the finest properties in the world. And yet it is ironic that the former president would lead a cause that would destroy the very foundations that enabled his astronomical success, American democracy.

Even for those who would empathize with the former president's belief of a fraudulent election, they surely would also agree that Trump and his family have enjoyed a wealth of opportunities in America and there can simply be no reasonable explanation for his actions on January 6, 2021. For Trump to attempt to destroy or overthrow a system of government that has allowed him to both accumulate tremendous wealth and consistently recover from financial failure seems to be quite contrary to what we should all expect.

We might therefore ask the question, "For Donald J. Trump, when was America not great? Even after not winning a presidential election, when was American not worthy of his loyalty, his decency, his patriotism?"

The location of the insurrection is the second great irony. Washington, D. C. is the ancestral home of the Nacotchtank people who were violently driven off of their land by British colonists. We must always have the intellectual courage to appropriately begin the discussion with the first injustice.

The Residence Act of July 16, 1790 establishes the capital of the United States in the District of Columbia replacing Philadelphia, PA. Some viewed the rationale for this decision to be based in part on the appeasement of southerners who feared a capital city based in the North would be sympathetic to abolitionists.

But clearly the attributed major impetus for the movement of the nation's capital to the District of Columbia was another insurrection, the Pennsylvania Mutiny of 1783. During a session of the Continental Congress, unpaid former Revolutionary War soldiers marched on Independence Hall and blocked the doors and demanded their wages. Because these soldiers were state residents the interests of the newly-created weak federal government were in conflict with the state of Pennsylvania.

John Dickinson, the head of the government in Pennsylvania refused to use state troops to protect the United States Congress. It is because of this insurrection, resolved by Alexander Hamilton, that it was decided in the United States Constitution (Article I Section 8) to situate the capital in a federal district controlled by Congress and not a state. So the events of Wednesday January 6, 2021 occurred in a city created with the

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Dr. Mallory Williams

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TARTA : Laying the Groundwork to Opening Doors of Opportunity for the Community

By Fletcher Word

Sojourner's Truth Editor

In her first year at the helm of the Toledo Area Regional Transit Authority, CEO Kimberly Dunham has the public transportation system on track to improve service and develop funding streams to maintain a high level of customer satisfaction, said Mark Aesch, CEO of TransPro Consulting. TransPro is working with TARTA on its strategic plan.

"TARTA is focused on the right metrics to promote organizational excellence," said Aesch during a community forum that TARTA held on Wednesday night, February 10, during Ohio Loves Transit week. The forum gave the transit system an opportunity to explain to the public what it has achieved and the plans it has for the future.

Dunham opened the forum with a brief explanation of what has been accomplished at TARTA during her first year such as, building a new management team, creating a culture of diversity and inclusivity, re-designing services and seeking long-term funding.

A well-run public transit system, she said, "opens doors of opportunity and changes people's lives." However, there will always be challenges, she acknowledged, "even a well-funded system faces challenges."

TARTA's funding challenges are well-documented. For several years, the system has sought approval from voters to change from local levy funding (based upon taxing homeowners) to a sales tax, which has greater fundraising potential. Such a plan has faced obstacles in the outlying areas that TARTA serves.

As Dunham explained, TARTA has, after "a decade of neglect" spent a year building partnerships in the community and laying the groundwork for making progress, such as working with TMACOG (Toledo Metropolitan Area Council of Governments), which she described as a "progressive partner."

Aesch, the keynote speaker for last week's forum, was the CEO of the Rochester, NY, transit system for 10 years and he assumed that position when the system was in dire straits: a 40 percent operating deficit, preparing to raise fares and slash services, reeling from a high-profile

Three Great Ironies... continued from page 4

intent of securing the nation's government against insurrection by the citizenry.

It would be intellectually insufficient to completely illustrate the irony of the location of the Trump insurrection only in terms of the founding of Washington, D. C. The United States Capitol Building was invaded on January 6, 2021 and there is great irony in this architectural desecration.

The Capitol Building was built in part by the labor of enslave African Americans. Owners leased their slaves to the federal government for a fee. These patriotic inhabitants of the new nation cannot be called Americans because legislatively they were more property than person.

However, there is no historical record of their revolt against a nation that declared its independence in a historic document whose second paragraph reads, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights..."

These slaves literally built the foundations of the federal government and patiently waited for the perfection of the union. But even more ironic is the fact that the insurrectionist, Secretary of War and, later, President of the Confederacy Jefferson Davis, presided over the building of the Capitol. And it is his prerogatives that have been historically preserved unfortunately both in the stone and spirit of the building.

Secretary Davis rejected architectural design features that spoke to a brighter future including freed slaves in America. The original design of the Stature of Freedom atop the Capitol Building included a knitted liberty cap symbolizing the token given to freed slaves in the Roman tradition. This was changed at Davis' request to a crested helmet with a circle of stars. More substantially, the inhabitants of the Capitol's hall persisted for over 100 years to deny or limit the right of representation and local governmental control to the citizens of America's first black

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internal theft scandal and a performance rating of 70 percent for its on-time service.

The system set goals under Aesch's leadership and achieved them to such a success that the system was able to deliver high performance ratings, raise funding and actually lower passenger fares during his tenure.

As the founder and CEO of TransPro, Aesch has enabled transit agencies to realize millions of dollars in cost savings, according to a press release, and has guided organizations to new levels of performance excellence with the 7 Steps to Success performance management model.

During his keynote address Aesch spoke of three key elements to achieving excellence for a transit system: organizational excellence, operational excellence and investment excellence. TARTA he noted, has attained the organization excellence by assembling an executive team of outstanding professional and defining a clarity of purpose while prioritizing a measurement of success.

That newly-added executive team includes: Chief Communications and Customer Experience Officer Laura Koprowski, Human Resources Director Jim Fight, Chief Financial Officer David Robinson, Deputy Finance Officer Samuel Henderson and Director of Paratransit Patricia Talbott.

A look at customer satisfaction responses demonstrates that TARTA is poised to reach operational excellence. Pre-COVID Net Promoter Score (NPS) showed the system with a score 82 percent higher than the industry standard; On-time Performance of 73 percent and Route Coverage of 80 percent and great satisfaction with bus safety (91 percent) and representatives courteousness (86 percent).

TARTA is "on the right track," said Aesch.

Now comes the really tricky part – investment excellence. "Yet to be determined," said Aesch.

Funding has been the chief concern for TARTA over the years. Funding streams include, grants, fares and, most critically, property taxes. During recent years, TARTA, the only Ohio transit system to rely on property taxes, has appealed to area residents for a change to a sales tax. These overtures have been rebuffed in several suburban areas that TARTA services.

"Are there new revenue streams?" asked Aesch of the effort to shore up TARTA's finances. Can the system find partners, such as school systems or nursing homes, for example, much as Rochester did during his tenure there? "How can community partners advocate for more funding?" he asked.

Part of the method for soliciting such partnerships, said Aesch, will be start with organizational and operational excellence and telling the story about such successes.

"Let's talk about what we are doing right."

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Clara Petty: YWCA Milestones Education Honoree

By Fletcher Word

Sojourner's Truth Editor

This year's YWCA Milestones: A Tribute to Women honoree for Education is Clara Petty, executive director of the Monroe Street Neighborhood Center, for her success in bringing the Children Defense Fund (CDF) Freedom School to the MSNC to enhance the variety of services offered by the agency.

Petty, now in her 14th year at the helm of the Center, oversees a number of program and services designed to strengthen families and offer children a safe environment outside of the home. The addition of the CDF, now approaching its fifth summer, helped take the mission a step further by offering children a nationally recognized creative curriculum with a proven track record of success.

As with most education programs in this difficult COVID-19 season, last summer's CDF program had to be altered to fit the realities of the pandemic. The program was offered virtually to a reduced number of students – but that it was offered at all is a tribute to the previous success of the program and the encouragement parents offered to keep it on track, said Petty.

The K-8 grade program normally brings in 60 students for the Integrated Reading Curriculum during the morning and the art, theater, music and dance activities in the afternoons.

The Integrated Reading Curriculum provides students an opportunity to bridge some reading gaps. In addition, CDF offers STEMM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine) skills for the young participants. Additionally, amongst all those activities, the youngsters are provided breakfast, lunch and a snack.

The MSNC's Freedom School was the brainchild of Gloria Layson, a member of the Braden United Methodist Church, who approached Rev. Larry Clark, pastor of Monroe Street United Methodist Church (which houses the MSNC) with the concept. Then Petty came into the picture and a partnership was formed with the church, the MSNC and the Maumee Watershed District – the region's 25 Methodist churches.

"A church can't be a Freedom School," said Petty who became the program's administrator. "It needs to be a 501(c)(3) so Pastor Clark came to us and said we should do it."

Money needed to be raised, of course. The Center had to come up with \$65,000 to cover the Freedom School expenses such as training, staffing and testing. The partnership of the 25 churches in the Maumee Watershed District, the Monroe Street church and the Center and a grant from the Toledo Rotary Foundation resulted in a successful initial fundraising effort.

"We could not have done Freedom School without the support of the 25 Methodist churches of the Maumee Watershed District that poured financial and spiritual help into the school," said Petty.

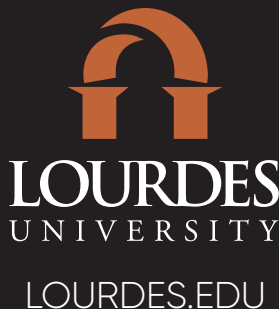
Individuals like Mayor Paula Hicks-Hudson and former University of Toledo men's basketball coach Stan Joplin were part of the group of guest readers who volunteered their time.

Washington set about mastering the Freedom School curriculum and put in about 250 hours prior to the opening of the summer session – without pay – researching, organizing and training "because she really believed in the program," said Petty. "You have to have a commitment in order to give away that amount of time."



Clara Petty

... continued on page 13



Celebrating
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"I'm Not Throwing Away My Shot!" • "I'm Not Throwing Away My Shot!" • "I'm Not Throwing Away My Shot!" • "I'm Not Throwing Away My Shot!"

Area Office on Aging Helps Seniors Get Vaccinated

While the Area Office on Aging is not a vaccine clinic, the organization has been assisting the Toledo-Lucas County Health Department, the Ohio Department of Aging and the National Guard in getting older adults the vaccine. The agency's latest efforts have centered around getting the most vulnerable older adults living in senior apartment complexes the vaccine.

The Ohio Department of Aging Regional Rapid Response Assistance Program (R3AP) worked with the Area Office on Aging, Black and White Transportation of Toledo, the Toledo-Lucas County Health Department, and the Ohio National Guard to sponsor a Vaccine Clinic in the Ohio's senior community of Toledo on the 10th of February.

Last week, the clinic set up operations at the Northgate Senior Apartments to vaccinate 70 adults, at the UAW Local 12 headquarters for another 70 and at the Margaret Hunt Center to vaccinate 175.

"The Area Office on Aging is thrilled to be able to help 300 older adults with this important and potentially life-saving help," said Area

Office on Aging President/CEO, Billie Johnson.

Major Jordan Hickey of the Ohio National Guard and 16 soldiers from the medical task force were deployed to the locations as part of what has become regular duty for them.

Since older adults have been able to start receiving vaccines, call volume has more than tripled due to calls about the vaccine. The Area Office on Aging increased their staffing capacity to be able to schedule these vaccine appointments.



Area Office on Aging CEO Billie Johnson and Army Major Jordan Hickey



Naomi Craford receives her shot



"The real estate agent said we might be more comfortable living in a different neighborhood."



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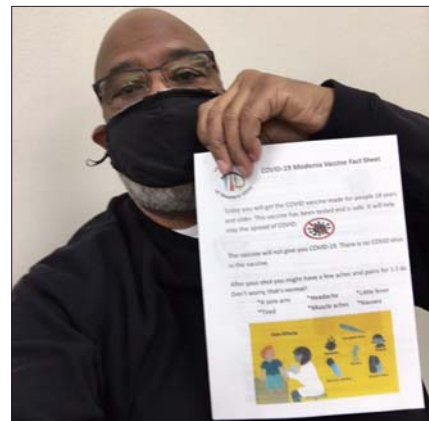
Larry Sykes Gets His Shot

Got my vaccination for the COVID-19 virus. Sadly, there are those who are still hesitant to get vaccinated. Fifty-nine percent of women over 60 say they will take the shot.,78 percent of men over 60 say they will take the shot.

Unfortunately, only five percent of African Americans and 11 percent of Hispanics have gotten vaccinated. A doctor who worked in a central city clinic in New York City stated that when they started giving the COVID-19 shots his waiting room was full of white people who were not from the neighborhood.

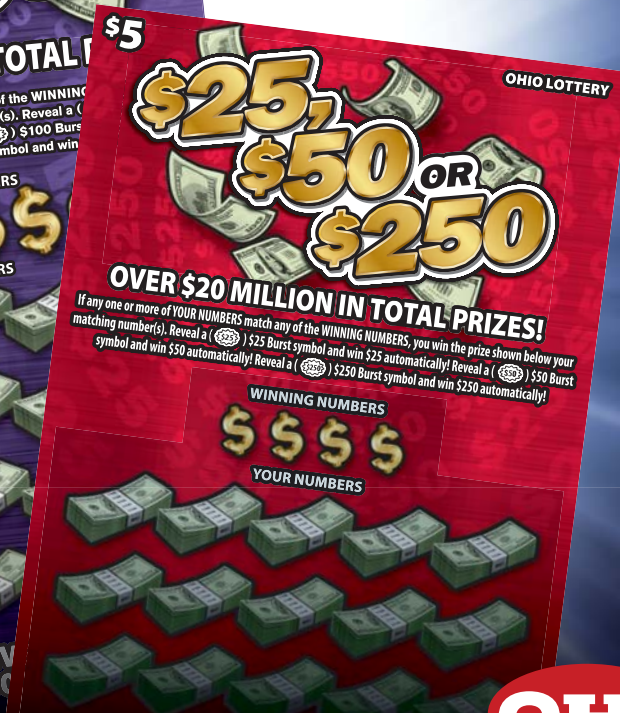
Access to the vaccinations is also a problem because of transportation for people of color. Just as with grocery stores that are not in the highest risk and poorest neighborhoods, there are no clinics, drug stores or other facilities giving out the shots. So transportation is a problem.

Young people who are part of the guns, gangs and violence cultures don't believe they are going to live to be 20-25 so why take the shots? They believe that they are going to die anyway from some form of violence.



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Taxpayer Advocacy Panel (TAP)

Want to improve the IRS? SPEAK UP

Andrea Price, TAP member representing Ohio

Guest Column

The Taxpayer Advocacy Panel is comprised of civic-minded citizen volunteers from all walks of life representing each state, D.C., Puerto Rico and an international member (citizens living, working or doing business abroad). TAP is a Federal Advisory Committee whose mission is to listen to taxpayers, identify taxpayers' issues and make suggestions for improving the IRS service and customer satisfaction.

Everyone has something to say about taxes and the IRS. Please take a moment to give us your suggestions for TAP to consider by contacting one of the following:

TAP Ohio member: tapohioandreaprice@gmail.com

Call Toll-free at: 1-888-912-1227

Website: www.improveirs.org

The Taxpayer Advocate Service (TAS) is your voice at the IRS. TAS provides oversight and support for the Taxpayer Advocacy Panel (TAP), a federal advisory committee.

The panel, established in 2002, consists up to 75 volunteers. To be a member of TAP, a person must be a U.S. citizen, be current with federal tax obligations, and pass a Federal Bureau of Investigation criminal background check. Members cannot be federally registered lobbyists. In addition, current Department of the Treasury and IRS employees cannot serve on the panel, and former Department of the Treasury or IRS employees and former TAP members must have a three-year separation from their service to be eligible for appointment. Tax practitioner applicants must be in good standing with the IRS (meaning not currently under suspension or disbarment).

The TAP will begin accepting applications in February for new members or alternates. New TAP members will serve a three-year term beginning December

2021. Applicants chosen as alternate members will be considered to fill any vacancies that open in their areas during the next three years.

If the TAP's mission interests you, we invite you to apply to serve on the panel and help the IRS understand how it can better assist taxpayers. As the IRS works to understand how to do a better job of meeting taxpayer needs, it needs to hear directly from taxpayers – and that's why the TAP is so important.

TAP members generally spend 200 to 300 hours per year identifying major taxpayer concerns and making recommendations to address them. The TAP's six core Project Committees submitted 224 recommendations to the IRS in 2019.

Members of the TAP have a wide variety of backgrounds, such as health care, real estate, higher education, military service, and local government. You don't need any knowledge of tax administration to serve – just a desire to improve the services and operations of the IRS. You can learn more about the TAP in by visiting www.improveirs.org for more information, including details about the application process.



Andrea Price

Social Security Column

By Erin Thompson

Social Security Public Affairs Specialist in Toledo, OH

Get Your Social Security Benefits Statement

Tax season is approaching and replacing your annual Benefit Statement has never been easier. The Benefit Statement, also known as the

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CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH. The time is always right to do what is right. - MARTIN LUTHER KING. You could start right now by doing a small part to treat people with dignity, courtesy and respect. Harbor has responded to the behavioral health care needs of individuals and families, regardless of age or the severity of challenges. Harbor is a leading mental health and substance use treatment provider in Ohio and provides a comprehensive continuum of care for our patients. Harbor 419.475.4449 www.harbor.org

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Social Security Column... continued from page 10

SSA-1099 or the SSA-1042S, is a tax form we mail each year in January to people who receive Social Security benefits. It shows the total amount of benefits you received from us in the previous year so you know how much Social Security income to report to the Internal Revenue Service on your tax return.

If you live in the United States and you need a replacement form SSA-1099 or SSA-1042S, simply go online and get an instant, printable replacement form using your personal my Social Security account at www.ssa.gov/myaccount. A replacement SSA-1099 or SSA-1042S is available for the previous tax year after February 1.

If you don't have access to a printer, you can save the document to your computer or email it to yourself. If you don't have a my Social Security account, creating one is very easy to do and usually takes less than 10 minutes.

With a personal my Social Security account, you can do much of your business with us online. If you receive benefits or have Medicare, your personal my Social Security account is also the best way to:

- Request a replacement Social Security number card (in most states and the District of Columbia).
- Get your benefit verification letter.
- Check your benefit and payment information.
- Change your address and phone number.
- Change your direct deposit information.
- Request a replacement Medicare card.
- Report your wages if you work and receive Social Security disability insurance or Supplemental Security Income benefits.

If you're a non-citizen who lives outside of the United States and you received or repaid Social Security benefits last year, we will send

you form SSA-1042S in the mail. The forms SSA-1099 and SSA-1042S are not available for people who receive Supplemental Security Income benefits. Visit www.ssa.gov to find more about our online services.

Social Security Is Not Just for Retirees

You don't have to be retired or even close to retirement to benefit from a personal my Social Security account. Calling or visiting a local Social Security office probably is rarely necessary once you have one. You can do much of your business with us online.

With your personal my Social Security account, you can:

- Request a replacement Social Security card (in most states and the District of Columbia).
- Estimate your future benefits to compare different dates or ages to begin receiving benefits.
- Check the status of your Social Security application when you do decide to apply.
- Review your work history.

If you already receive benefits, you can also:

- Request a replacement Social Security card (in most states and the District of Columbia).
- Get a benefit verification or proof of income letter.
- Set up or change your direct deposit.
- Change your address.
- Request a replacement Medicare card.
- Get a Social Security 1099 form (SSA-1099).
- Opt out of receiving certain notices by mail and receive them in the secure Message Center.

Please help us spread the word. Let your family and friends know that they can create a my Social Security account today at www.ssa.gov/myaccount.

"JUST GET OVER IT" **STRENGTH IS**

CHANGING

THE STIGMA

"SUCK IT UP. BE STRONG."

"BE A REAL MAN"

"ONLY CRAZY PEOPLE GET HELP FOR MENTAL HEALTH"

This Black History Month we're celebrating the achievements of UMADOAP, uniquely centered on the urban community they have been consistent champions of mental health and recovery for more than 25 years.

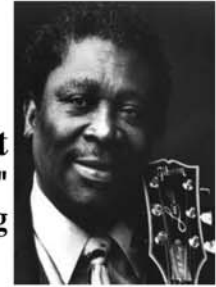


Speaking of Education...



Any book that helps a child to form a habit of reading, to make reading one of his deep and continuing needs, is good for him. ~ Maya Angelou

"The beautiful thing about learning is that no one can take it away from you."
~ B. B. King



"The function of education, therefore, is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. But education which stops with efficiency may prove the greatest menace to society." ~ **Martin Luther King, Jr.**

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



"I think education is power. I think that being able to communicate with people is power. One of my main goals on the planet is to encourage people to empower themselves." ~ **Oprah Winfrey**

"The ability to read, write, and analyze; the confidence to stand up and demand justice and equality; the qualifications and connections to get your foot in that door and take your seat at that table—all of that starts with education." ~ **Michelle Obama**



"I believe that a child going without an education is a crime." ~ **Kamala Harris**



www.tft250.org

Kevin Dalton
TFT President

@Kdalton250

Toledo Federation of Teachers Local 250

@TFTunion

United Way Celebrates 2-1-1 Day; Announces Major Milestone

United Way 2-1-1 announces that, since July 2019, it has handled over 100,000 calls from the community – stated ahead of the organization's annual "2-1-1 Day" celebration, happening on 2/11/2021, which raises awareness on this free, 24/7, information and referral service.

"Seeing that our 2-1-1 Community Resource Advisors have taken more than 100,000 phone calls brings about conflicting emotions," said Wendy Pestrue, president & CEO of United Way of Greater Toledo. "On one hand, I have a great sense of pride that, especially during this pandemic, we have been there to answer someone's call for help. On the other hand, this number brings so much gravity to how many folks are deeply hurting right now."

Last year, United Way celebrated "2-1-1 Day" with in-person educational sessions and an evening reception, which highlighted how 2-1-1 can assist community members in times of need. This year, the organization will be celebrating virtually, with a Facebook Watch Party and Facebook Fundraiser.

Additionally, United Way of Greater Toledo's various social media accounts will be sharing videos, written content and visual graphics throughout the day on how 2-1-1 can connect individuals to various resources – from housing, food and utilities – to employment, health care and legal assistance.

"Over the last year, we have seen 2-1-1's utilization from those we serve in Lucas, Ottawa and Wood County grow exponentially," said Jill Bunge, senior director of community impact at United Way of Greater Toledo. "In 2020 alone, 2-1-1 handled nearly 60,000 contacts. This includes phone calls, online chats, text messages and emails, on top of almost 20,000 webpage visits we had to 211nwo.org," she said.

More recently, since Ohio began its COVID-19 vaccine roll-out, United Way 2-1-1 has been assisting community members, and the Health Departments of Lucas, Ottawa and Wood County, with vaccine registration and information sharing. Those logistics on how 2-1-1 is helping are noted in United Way's previous release.

Clara Petty... continued from page 7

Student Leader Interns (SLI) – teachers – were also brought on board prior to the summer opening to undergo training to master the Freedom School concepts and curriculum.

The Freedom School enhanced an already rich variety of programs and services offered by MSNC pre-pandemic. That list includes the Savvy Senior Wellness Program; The Bridge (providing emergency food, clothing and transportation); Dress Right for Men and Women (providing professional clothing for those entering the job market); Documents Matter (assistance with securing a birth certificate or state ID) along with assorted wellness programs for seniors as Zumba Gold, Tai-Chi, cardio dance and a walking class.

These days, much of the efforts of the staff at the Center are to keep providing food to so many who have had financial difficulties during the pandemic. The Food Pantry, which is open on Tuesdays from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., used to serve from 50 to 55 people now needs to serve between 100 and 125.

"We are getting calls from all over," says Petty about the growing need for food. The Pantry obtains a good portion of its food from the SeaGate Center and the Northwest Ohio Food Bank. Extra funds have had to be raised to purchase additional items from the Food Bank.

All of these activities are carried out by a small staff – only three paid staff – and lots of volunteers.

Petty is a University of Toledo alumna with a master's degree in Public Administration and is also a licensed social worker. She began her career in social services over 35 years ago and has worked at various agencies in Toledo and Cleveland, including a position as program director at the Caldwell Center before she moved over to MSNC.

Now, as is the case with so many people in Toledo and around the nation, Petty is recovering from her own bout with COVID-19 – a bout so bad, she says, that she was sometimes afraid to go to sleep fearing she would not wake up again.

She was hit with the virus right after Thanksgiving and is still recovering from it, gradually building her strength to pre-disease levels.

Being named an honoree for the Milestones' Education Award could not have come at a better time.

This year's event will be held virtually on March 26 at 11:30 a.m.

This assistance had led to record-breaking numbers, never seen before by staff. The organization has shared that, in January of 2021 alone, United Way 2-1-1 received over 16,000 contacts. In a traditional month, the program finds itself handling 4,500-6,000 contacts. The last 2-1-1 record was broken in March 2020, when 2-1-1 Community Resource Advisors received more than 9,000 contacts, mostly for breakfast and lunch meal reservations once school districts stopped in-person learning, and students found themselves without the food they usually receive during school hours.

"Our 2-1-1 Community Resource Advisors are heroes. They are each handling hundreds of calls a day, often absorbing that emotional distress of the caller and doing all they can to help. It is admirable to say the least and I know they will be remembered for their courageous work," said Pestrue.

United Way 2-1-1 is a free, 24/7, 365-day health and human services referral resource for anyone in Lucas, Ottawa and Wood County. To speak with a 2-1-1 Community Resource Advisor, simply dial two, one, one; text your zip code to 898-211; or send an instant message at www.211nwo.org

Three Great Ironies... continued from page 5

city. So insurrectionists carrying the Confederate Flag vehemently marched and desecrated a monument built by slave labor to the specification of the former President of the Confederacy. Jefferson Davis was one of their own.

The third and final great irony are the loyalists to former President Donald J. Trump. There are many but, without doubt, the greatest loyalist has been the former Vice President Michael R. Pence. This life-long evangelical joined the Republican Presidential ticket to bring bona fide conservative credentials.

As a governor of Indiana he signed into law pro-religious and anti-abortion policies that were extremely popular among conservatives. He never differed or distanced himself from the president no matter the circumstance. He faithfully defended President Trump and his policies until the final day of his term, even after being denied access to his office in the White House after the insurrection.

On January 6, 2021 a roaring riotous crowd first erected gallows and hanged a noose on the west lawn of the Capitol. The same crowd shouted for the hanging of Mike Pence. And for likely the first time in Pence's life, he fearfully ran from his seat of power for the safety of himself and his personal family. Who chased him? The insurrectionists directed the frightful symbol of a noose not toward a black person but the vice president of the United States. These were supporters of Trump, conservatives whose policies he had championed throughout his career.

A larger group of Republican loyalists have traded the principles of their party in the hopes that they will be able to stay in power. They have lost the presidential elections and majority control of the United States Senate. But most importantly, they have lost the confidence of the majority of America. Donald J. Trump has left these loyalists with neither power nor their party. How ironic.

Dr. Mallory Williams, MD, MPH, Toledo resident, is a Professor of Surgery at Howard University. He is the Chief of the Howard University Hospital Level I Trauma Center. He is an expert on public policy surrounding violence prevention in urban disadvantaged communities. He is a former Harvard University Presidential Scholar.

Perryman... continued from page 3

nity addresses these problems—from law enforcement and first responders to clinicians to grassroots community leaders—we have the opportunity for real progress.

The STAR and CAHOOTS programs are examples of this kind of collaboration. So is the CIT program I wrote about last week and the new crisis services system, also here in Lucas County, that I wrote about the week before.

My point is not to advocate for a specific program. However, I urge our community to build on the good things we are doing now and continue to stand united for progress and mental health innovation.

It is a call that we can no longer disregard.

Contact Rev. Donald Perryman, PhD, at drdperryman@centerofhopepabaptist.org

CLASSIFIEDS

LEAD NATURAL CONSERVATION ASSISTANT AND NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION ASSISTANT

Metroparks Toledo has openings for seasonal Lead Natural Conservation Assistants and Natural Resources Conservation Assistants. Must be 18 or older with high school diploma or equivalent and valid driver's license. \$12.00/hr. for the Lead Conservation Assistants and \$11.00/hr. for the Natural resources Conservation Assistants. Some training or coursework in environmental sciences or natural resources management preferred. Some outdoor work experience with natural systems, forestry or horticulture preferred. Go to www.MetroparksToledo.com to view detailed position description and job requirements. Must apply online. EOE

MANOR HOUSE PROGRAM AND EVENTS ASSISTANT

Metroparks Toledo is looking for an outgoing individual to provide excellent customer service for park visitors and program participants through positive and engaging experiences. Must be at least 18 years of age and have a valid driver's license.

Must have completed some college course work in history, education, communication, or related program or equivalent work experience. Some experience in customer service, and public speaking. Experience leading public programs preferred. Seasonal position through December. May include some weekends, holidays, and evenings. Up to 35 hours per week. \$9.87/hr. Go to www.MetroparksToledo.com to review complete job description and to apply. EOE

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Lucas Metropolitan Housing (LMH) and its affiliate Lucas Housing Services Corporation (LHSC) located in Toledo, OH is seeking experienced applicants for the following position(s): Maintenance Supervisor and Resident Advisor. For complete details, visit www.lucasmha.org and click on careers. Deadline to apply: 02/28/2021. This is a Section 3 covered position(s). 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.



PUBLIC NOTICE

Warren AME Church Vision Empowerment Board
a non-profit 501(c)3 organization

will hold its

ANNUAL MEETING
VIRTUALLY

Tuesday, February 23, 2021
1:30 p.m.

Warren A.M.E. Church
915 Collingwood Blvd, Toledo, OH
43604

FOLLOW THE LINK BELOW TO JOIN THE MEETING:

Join Zoom Meeting
<https://zoom.us/j/98246213889>

Meeting ID: 982 4621 3889
One tap mobile
+1 646 876 9923 US (New York)
Meeting ID: 982 4621 3889

Find your local number: <https://zoom.us/j/ac1V0dF2c>

Vision Empowerment Board is dedicated to empowering seniors to manage life's challenges and to lead independent lives.

VISION EMPOWERMENT BOARD

WARREN AME CHURCH

4545 Ind. and 45th Avenue Toledo, Ohio 43604 • (419) 243-2277 office (419) 243-2261 fax

PARK SERVICES RANGER

Metroparks Toledo has openings for part time and full time Park Services Ranger for community policing and some park maintenance. Part time up to 24 hours per week, \$14.96 per hr. Full time Ranger, \$19.92 per hr. Certification as a Peace Officer in the State of Ohio is required. Go to www.MetroparksToledo.com to view detailed position description, job requirements and to apply.

BAKERS NEEDED

Jera's Heavenly Sweet is seeking bakers who have extensive, professional, "from scratch" baking experience. Bakers should be passionate, able to cut or multiply a recipe with ease, multitask, and effectively communicate. To apply, send your resume to heavenandsweet@gmail.com

DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION SERVICES NEEDED

The Mental Health & Recovery Services Board of Lucas County (MHRsb) seeks to fund and invites proposals from qualified individuals or organizations for consultation and training services to provide diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) services. Proposed services will support the sustainable achievement of MHRsb goals throughout the next phase of its DEI efforts. Proposals are to be delivered no later than 5:00 p.m. ET on February 26, 2021. Submit all questions to crs@lcmhrsb.oh.gov. Find details regarding the upcoming bidder's conference, project deliverables, and submission criteria in the RFP Framework located on the MHRsb's website <http://www.lcmhrsb.oh.gov/publicnotice/>.



Account Executive

Buckeye Broadband is looking for a qualified candidate to fill an Account Executive position. The Advertising Sales Account Executive is responsible for prospecting new clients and the selling of multi-platform Buckeye Broadband advertising to local advertisers. The Advertising Sales Account Executive is responsible for achieving agreed upon productivity levels and revenue goals.

Minimum Requirements

- High school diploma or the equivalent – required
- Minimum 2 years of previous outside sales experience – required
- Intermediate computer skills with the ability to use the Internet – required
- Experience working with Excel, PowerPoint and Word – preferred
- Familiarity with contact management applications (such as salesforce or other CRM) – preferred

Core Competencies

- Agile – Embraces change; adaptable and flexible; sense of urgency;
- Innovative – Uses critical thinking; Creativity; Continuous learning; Challenges the status quo;
- Customer Focused – External/Internal; Creates the exceptional customer experience; demonstrates a sales and service mentality;
- Collaborative – Teamwork, Proactive knowledge sharing, Constructive Conflict;
- Accountable – See it, Own it, Solve it, Do it; Hold each other accountable.

Benefits at Buckeye include:

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| Free Cable (in our service area) | Opportunities for Advancement |
| Discounts on internet and phone service | Tuition Assistance |
| Comprehensive medical/dental/vision | Paid Holidays |
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Apply online today!

BuckeyeBroadband.com/Careers

Buckeye Broadband, TeleSystems, and Metro Fiber & Cable Construction Co. are equal opportunity employers (EOE).

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First Church of God

ProMedica joined forces with First Church of God on Collingwood to vaccinate 100 arms on Sunday, February 14. About a dozen ProMedica health care workers brought the Moderna vaccine to the church for the first round. On Sunday, February 21, another 200 people will receive their first shot. Everyone from the two groups will be reporting back to the church four weeks later for shot number two.



STRIVING TO BE THE BEST TODAY; TRAINING FOR A BRIGHTER FUTURE TOMORROW!



The Toledo Electrical Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee (JATC) is committed to providing an educated, well-trained workforce through a cooperative labor-management education program, as well as helping workers develop the complex skills, knowledge and abilities needed to retain highly paid, prestigious jobs in the electrical construction industry.

We offer three Apprenticeship Programs:

- Telecommunications
- Residential
- Inside/Commercial

Quality training programs such as these provide workers with the skills, knowledge, and abilities necessary to maintaining license and certification as a professional electrician, leading to a high standard of living.

Please visit our website tejatc.org for information on requirements and how to apply.



telecommunications



residential



commercial



803 Lime City Road
Rossford, Ohio 43460
419.666.8088




HEART CARE WHEN YOU NEED IT MOST.

PROMEDICA
Your Health. Our Mission.

You are the heart of your family. You're their role model and the shoulders they stand on. Don't let a heart attack keep you from the people who love you.

When you're having a heart attack, every second counts. Don't hesitate; call 911.

ProMedica offers expert heart care. Our team of heart specialists are here for you.

Learn heart attack symptoms at promedica.org/heartcare.

Lourdes Students Encourage Inclusion for Students of Color

On a campus like Lourdes University, the value of community means inclusion. We, the Black Student Union President, Tania Davis, and Latinx Student Union President, Amanda Vargas, know the importance of this all too well. Looking back on the past couple of years, maintaining a safe space of diversity and inclusion on college campuses has never been more crucial.

BSU and LSU are a major key in giving students a voice and a safe space. Being part of a student union at Lourdes University is more than just a student organization. We provide support, and guidance while voicing our opinions on issues on and off campus. Lourdes University provides us with opportunities to

be heard as people and future professionals.

We have benefitted from those opportunities to ensure campus is inclusive. Now with the support of faculty and staff, we continue working towards unionizing the Black and Latinx communities represented at Lourdes. Utilizing the Spring semester to strongly brand ourselves, our student unions are ready to ensure that inclusivity reaches every corner of our beautiful campus. In doing this, we can hold space for navigating through the often-difficult conversations about the issues facing our Black and Latinx communities.

For more information, email Lourdes University's Latino Student Union or Black Student Union at lsu@lourdes.edu or bsu@lourdes.edu



Lourdes students Amanda Vargas and Tania Davis are the 2020-2021 Latino and Black Student Union Presidents. Both have worked to create events and programs for students to attend on the Lourdes campus, and also work together to address issues in Black and Latinx communities.

Toledo Museum of Art programs to celebrate Black History Month

The Toledo Museum of Art (TMA) will host two free events in February as part of Black History Month.

Organized by soprano, educator, and community organizer Margaret Barron and visual artist and educator Yusuf Lateef, this two-part program focuses on conversation and spoken word in celebration of Black History Month.

The spoken word focus of the event will take place Saturday, Feb. 22 at 2 p.m. in the Great Gallery. The music focus of the event will take place Sunday, Feb. 23 at 3 p.m. in the Great Gallery.

Both events will explore this year's theme of African Americans and the Vote.

"This two-part event at the Toledo Museum of Art offers visitors the opportunity to hear from local voices as well as music that celebrates the history of Black History Month and the critical importance of voting to a community," said Scott Boberg, TMA's manager of programming and audience engagement.

Great Performances is supported in part by the Dorothy MacKenzie Price Fund, the Victoria Majure Souder Program Fund, Hartmann Bogan financial planning, Joseph and Judith Conda, Shaun Coughlan, Carlos A. de Carvalho, Geraldine Mowery, Nancy K. Phlegar, and an anonymous donor.

TOLEDO PUBLIC SCHOOLS CELEBRATES BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Toledo Public Schools' mission is to produce competitive college and career ready graduates through a rigorous curriculum. From kindergarten through high school, TPS teachers and administrators support students as they strive to reach their academic potential.

"The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character - that is the goal of true education."
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



tps.org

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[Twitter.com/TPSProud](https://www.twitter.com/TPSProud)