



Volume 65 No. 8 *“And Ye Shall Know The Truth...”* March 10, 2021



Lucas County's Diversity and Inclusion Director

Crystal Harris Darnell

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We Shall Overcome Once More

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

The Truth Contributor

Our struggle is a struggle to redeem the soul of America. It's not a struggle that lasts for a few days, a few weeks, a few months, or a few years. It is the struggle of a lifetime, more than one lifetime.

- John Lewis



The 2020 national election saw two-thirds of all eligible voters turn out to vote. The vast showing was the greatest in 120 years, surpassing even Obama's 2008 victory over John McCain or John F. Kennedy's narrow defeat of Richard Nixon in 1960.

Yet, instead of celebration, the accomplishment sparked a fervent backlash.

Riding the wings of lies about voter fraud, legislators in 43 states quickly countered the unprecedented turnout by introducing over 250 bills designed to make voting harder, the Brennan Center for Justice reports.

These bills include harsh restrictions on voting by mail, burdensome voter ID requirements, severely curtailed voter registration opportunities, more aggressive voter purge practices, and proposed changes in allocating presidential electors.

Presently, no voter suppression bills have been introduced in the Ohio Legislature. Still, we are watching as it may be only a matter of time. We do know that Secretary of State LaRose has ruled only one drop box per county for the upcoming primary. It is the same tactic LaRose implemented in 2020 and frequently used to create long voter lines in larger cities and urban areas.

There has even been a barbaric Georgia proposal to outlaw providing pizza to voters waiting in line to vote.

To use the words of the Miami Herald's Leonard Pitts, "This is an all-hands-on-deck emergency!" Voter suppression, the Brennan Center's Myrna Perez adds, is a relentless issue that "the courts may not provide the answer."

What Shall We Do?

President Biden has signed an executive order with intentions to "promote additional access to voting and protect voting rights." But the order has also been described as merely an "initial step" without much bite or permanence.

The U.S. House of Representatives has also passed HR 1, a "sweeping election bill to fight Republican voter suppression." Yet, the bill could die in the Senate given the presence there of conservative Democrats like Joe Manchin and Kyrsten Sinema.

The work, instead, likely falls back on the coalition of Black women and progressive grassroots activist groups who tremendously impacted Georgia and the country, elevating Joe Biden over Trump while sending Ossoff and Warnock to the U.S. Senate.

These groups include multi-racial, multi-generational, multi-issue organizations such as Black Lives Matter, the Working Families Party, Frontline Alliance, Southern Movement Assembly, and United We Dream. Locally,

we will continue to count on groups like The Movement and the Ohio Unity Coalition, and Black women leaders such as Tina Butts, Petee Talley, and Anita Madison for even more collective impact.

I am excited about the unprecedented and confident grassroots mobilization and organization that we witnessed in 2020 and into 2021. With unity, collaboration, and coordination, we shall again overcome by defeating voter suppression.

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

Rep. Hicks-Hudson Statement on Transportation Budget Passage

Says bill doesn't go far enough to meet the needs of Ohioans, businesses amid economic recovery

Rep. Paula Hicks-Hudson (D-Toledo) issued a statement last week following the passage of House Bill (HB) 74, the state's two-year transportation budget. Democrats fought against the governor's proposed cuts to public transit funding in the bill, securing \$193.7 million over the next two years, double the governor's proposed investment. Despite the increase, Democrats said the bill does not go far enough to meet the needs of Ohio workers, businesses and the state's economic recovery. Rep. Hicks-Hudson voted against the bill.

"While many call this a jobs bill, it is not a true jobs bill for Toledoans who need public transit to get to jobs. A simple amendment was defeated which would have allowed local control and an opportunity to expand TARTA's territory. I decided to stand up for our community," said Rep. Hicks-Hudson.

Democrats secured several other wins to improve the legislation, including:

- * Ensuring fairness and transparency of taxpayer dollars by requiring more highway construction and maintenance projects are subject to competitive bidding;
- * Removing the governor's proposed hikes in vehicle registration and

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Community Calendar

March 13-14

St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church Annual Men Day Celebration
Kick off Drive By Breakfast on Saturday March 13 from 9:00 am to 12:00 noon. Drive by the Fernwood Side of the Church for your pickup. Donations are \$10:00 per Breakfast. Sunday Service will begin at 10.45. Please come and join us in person, Facebook Live or Conference Call. Mask and Social Distance are required. Come and help us Celebrate in this Worship Experience. For additional information please contact St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church @419.246.2886. Rev. James H. Willis Sr. Senior Pastor.

Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance of Toledo

Rev. Cedric Brock, President Ima

To the City of Toledo:

The Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance of Toledo, Pastor Cedric Brock, President, submits this official statement on the hiring of JoJuan Armour.

We the members of IMA fully support the appointment of JoJuan Armour to lead the initiative to Reduce Gun Violence. We stood behind Mayor Kap-zukiewicz's decision when he made the announcement and we continue to support this decision despite all of the negative coverage surrounding this decision.

We understand that there are concerns surrounding his past and that the Toledo Police Department may have concerns with having someone that is not part of the force leading this initiative. We know that Mr. Armour's background will actually benefit him in this role seeing how he has proven his ability to overcome certain obstacles and use his experience to mentor others in our community. We also know that the relationship between the community and the TPD provides some barriers that will slow this initiative's progress.

We ask that the City Officials work together to work out whatever obsta-

cles prevent the appointment of Mr. Armour to become official and that the plans to Reduce Gun Violence are put into place immediately. Mr. Armour is the man for the job and he will have a village supporting him.

Prayerfully Submitted:

Rev. Dr. Cedric Brock, President/ CEVO, IMA, Senior Pastor Mt. Nebo Baptist Church, Toledo, OH Rev. Marquisa Horton, Executive Secretary IMA, Senior Pastor Corinth MB Church, Toledo, OH.



JoJuan Armour

OLBC Foundation Calls on Gov. DeWine to Include African Americans in the Next Expanded Eligibility Group for COVID-19 Vaccinations

The Ohio Legislative Black Caucus Foundation today called on Gov. Mike DeWine to include African Americans as a vulnerable group. As with other designated groups, African Americans are at high risk of hospitalization, illness, and death from COVID-19.

"African Americans are disproportionately affected by COVID-19, but were not considered when Gov. DeWine rolled out the first phase of the COVID-19 vaccinations. Black Ohioans have been underserved and not getting a cure," said Barbara Sykes, CEO, and President of the Ohio Legislative Black Caucus Foundation.

Sykes mentioned the decline in life expectancy for African Americans amid the pandemic. "Per the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the life expectancy of African Americans has dropped by 2.7 years, almost 3 years in the last six months because of COVID-19," Sykes said. "We know Black Americans are twice as likely to die of COVID-19 as White Americans, and Black Americans are also dying at rates similar to those of Whites who are 10 years older."

Sykes said the best predictor of Covid-19 vulnerability is not only age; it's race, and the solution is simple, prioritize Black Ohioans getting vaccinations. "The only way we can hope to stop this disproportionate and devastating impact upon the Black community is by getting the vaccine

in the arms of Black people," Sykes said.

The Ohio Legislative Black Caucus Foundation strives to be the pre-eminent hub for non-partisan analysis examining the impact of public policy on African American communities. OLBC works to advance Ohio's African Americans through educational research, facilitation of public policy development, and analyzing issues of social and economic importance including, but not limited to, promotion, inclusion, and diversification in the public and private sector.



Barbara Sykes



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Statement of President Joe Biden on the Passing of Vernon Jordan

Special to The Truth

Vernon Jordan began life in one of the first public housing projects in America and ended life as a fixture in our country's halls of power. Along the way, he became a foot soldier for civil rights, a trusted friend and counselor to presidents, and a loving husband, father, and grandfather.

Vernon navigated America's boardrooms with an activist's heart, working the levers of power in service of progress. And the countless business and political leaders who turned to Vernon for guidance did so because when he spoke, you could hear in his rich baritone the belief in an America that was capable of becoming an ever-more perfect union. It was a journey he'd lived.

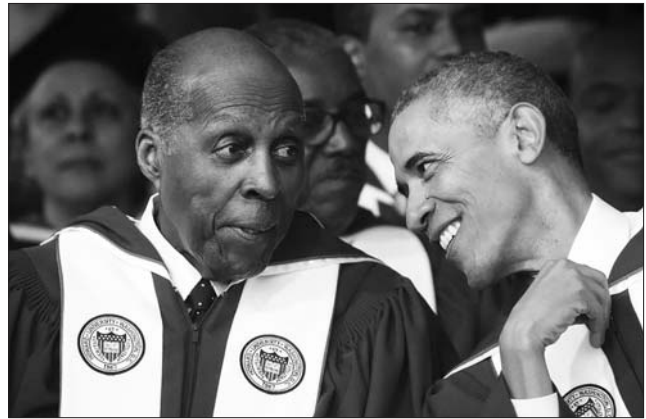
As a young lawyer, he went home to Georgia, to battle against unjust systems in the segregated South. As president of the National Urban League, he fought for economic justice because he knew that a job brought with it more than a paycheck; it brought dignity. As a civil rights leader shot in the back by a white supremacist, he came away from that near-death experience energized rather than embittered. As a high-powered lawyer and financier, "the Rosa Parks of Wall Street," he was often the first in many rooms but never afraid to speak his mind.

Vernon Jordan knew the soul of America, in all of its goodness and all of its unfulfilled promise. And he knew the work was far from over. He liked to say that we had torn down what Dr. King called "sagging walls of segregation," but we still had to deal with "the rubble" — with systemic racism, with inequity, with the injustice still faced by so many Black Americans. To honor him, and others of this Civil Rights generation, we must continue to do the same.

When eulogizing other leaders, Vernon liked to quote the great Reverend Gardner Taylor, and his words ring true today: "Something vast and noble has passed from among us. It is like a mighty oak has fallen, leaving an empty and gaping and glaring space against the sky where he stood." Jill and I extend our deepest condolences to Ann, Vickee, and the entire Jordan family.



Vernon Jordan



JoJuan Armour

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"Leaders think and talk about the solutions. Followers think and talk about the problems."

-Brian Tracey

R. Winspires

Transportation Budget... continued from page 2

other fees to save Ohioans money;

* Securing funds for public transit vouchers for victims of domestic violence who need help getting to court, medical appointments and school.

Democrats offered a number of amendments on the House floor Thursday, including an amendment to invest an additional \$13 million in public transit funds in each of the next two years and other amendments on motor fuel quality testing and tracking gas tax collection data to see where and how funds are spent. However, Republicans rejected each amendment.

After passing the House, the transportation budget moves to the Senate for consideration.

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f t y u i

Crystal Harris Darnell Becomes Lucas County Diversity and Inclusion Director

By Fletcher Word
Sojourner's Truth Editor

The Lucas County Commissioners have established a Department of Diversity and Inclusion in order to develop priorities that promote racial equity, county policy initiatives in diversity and inclusion and implement strategies to address social injustices in the county, they announced in a press release.

To lead the office, they have appointed Crystal Harris Darnell, who has, for the past eight years, been the director of the YMCA Achievers, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.

Harris Darnell, a graduate of Spring Arbor University, has been a trainer with "Bridges out of Poverty" and "Getting Ahead in a Getting By World;" an organizer of community workshops to assist individuals living in poverty with information to build resources to transition out of their situation; a facilitator with Dialog For Change" focus groups that deal with issues on racism.

Prior to her diversity and inclusion tasks with the YMCA, she served as a youth specialist with the Y and, before that, as a HIV youth coordinator with the American Red Cross.

"There is no question that the incidents of racism and brutality [brought to light] by the George Floyd incident and the awareness of that racism led to this," said Lucas County Commissioners President Tina Skeldon Wozniak during a conversation with The Truth.

"We have always felt we were working hard to have a just county government, but we never formalized it," Skeldon Wozniak said. "If you really mean it, you have to formalize it, and by formalizing it, you are going to have to think about it every day --- every day."

"This was our way of making sure we match what we believe because maybe we hadn't done it with a daily focus."

For Harris Darnell, who started her new position on February 22, this is a continuation of a lifetime devoted to her passion of "bringing people to one table" and examining the issue of "how do we get to the point to treat each other with mutual respect," she said.

Now, entering her county job, she mentioned three critical tasks before her.

First, "how do I find out what has been done ... what has worked and what has not worked and then how to build a framework.

Second, she needs to have meeting with community partners – and with staff and stakeholders, in order to discover what their goals are.

Third, she feels it is necessary to develop a strategic plan that will lay out procedures to improve service delivery, tackle training and settle on a common language. An advisory group will probably be an important element of such a plan, she said. "I won't do it all by myself."

Her very early impression of the job before her is that there is a lot of work to be done. "For the County to create such a position speaks volumes – that states that we have challenges that cannot be swept under the rug."

And it's a big challenge to be sure. Harris Darnell will be reporting to the Lucas County Commissioners but will also have to interface with a number of County offices which are not under the supervision of the commissioners – a different set of challenges perhaps with each department.

"There is a strong value in getting people to collaborate and work together," said Skeldon Wozniak of those challenges. "[Harris Darnell] can help us learn ways to build collaboration and to bring change; she can help us learn strategies and help us to improve."

As Skeldon Wozniak explained, Harris Darnell's responsibilities will include not only working with those County departments outside of the commissioners' supervision but also communicating with diversity and inclusion colleagues at a range of other institutions – corporations, agencies, non-profits – throughout the area. That can influence how the County does business, said Skeldon Wozniak.

"The County is committed to figuring this out," said Harris Darnell. "And I want to make a difference. How do we help everyone and make them feel they are part of our success?"



Crystal Harris Darnell

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ERCOT Resignations Follow Massive Winter Storm Power Outage

By Rebecca Aguilar

Staff Writer: Texas Metro News

Garland Journal

I Messenger

Following harsh criticism for mishandling the massive power outage that affected more than 4.5 million Texans during last week's winter storm, five of the 15-member Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT) board resigned on Tuesday, March 2.

Responsible for the Texas power grid and managing the flow of 85 percent of the electricity used in Texas, ERCOT came under fire from citizens and elected officials, and not just in Texas. "I think they are cowards for not wanting to deal with the consequences," said Kristy Willis of Arlington, adding that she and her wheel-chair bound daughter were without power for 32 hours in frigid temperatures. "I have a special needs daughter in a wheel-chair, and it would have been too difficult to try to relocate because I was afraid of slipping on the snow and ice."

Texas Governor Greg Abbott, who had called for ERCOT board members to resign after the massive power blackout, released a statement on Tuesday welcoming the resignations. "The lack of preparedness and transparency at ERCOT is unacceptable. We will ensure that the disastrous events of last week are never repeated." The Public Utility Commission (PUC) oversees ERCOT. Abbott appointed the three PUC Commissioners.

"Having out-of-state board members resign will not change the failed oversight by the Public Utility Commission or the lack of common-sense policy by the Texas Legislature," said Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner, in a statement he issued on the resignations.

According to ERCOT's website, in addition to Chairman Sally Talberg, who lives in Michigan; Vice-Chairman Peter Cramton, who re-

sides in Maryland; Terry Bulger, Vanessa Anesetti-Parra and Ray Hepper also do not live in Texas. Four members submitted a joint resignation letter Tuesday that expressed their concerns about being out of state leadership. They also said that Texas should invest in an infrastructure to prevent another power outage disaster.

"We have noted recent concerns about out-of-state board leadership at ERCOT. To allow state leaders a free hand with future direction and to eliminate distractions, we are resigning from the board effective after our urgent board teleconference meeting adjourns on Wednesday, February 24, 2021," read part of their statement. News of the resignations did not appease Texans.

"Resigning does not make one 'not guilty,'" said Dee Fuente, adding that she wants answers from ERCOT and Abbott. According to Fuente, her husband left their West Dallas home last Monday night when the power went out. He and their dog stayed in their car with the engine running outside a gas station to keep warm in frigid temperatures. "We prayed that we would make it out and no one would get hurt," said Fuente.

Unfortunately, there were several other cases of displaced, having medical emergencies and also reports of citizens who didn't survive the more than five days of freezing temperatures and power outages.

During a packed virtual town hall meeting last week, called by Texas State Senator Royce West and attended by more than 20 area elected officials, ERCOT and provider Oncor reps, the questions were intense as many shared their horror stories of dealing with the power outages, some lasting more than 40 hours, despite initially being told of 15-45 minute outages. The senator said citizens deserved answers, adding that generator companies had been forewarned.

"I'm disappointed we didn't fix this 10 years ago," said Sen. West, referencing the cold temperatures and snow storm during Super Bowl XLV in 2011. Oncor said there were two major issues: "winter storm outages and controlled power outages directed by ERCOT, which serve to reduce high demand and protect the integrity of the electric grid."

Those outages have disproportionately impacted Black and Brown communities, according to Dallas City Councilman Omar Narvaez, who said one of the zip codes in his district, 75212, has the second highest percentage of residents with power outages. According to Woody Rickerson, ERCOT Vice President of Grid Planning and Operations, one out of four were not getting the power they needed because of the need for more generators because of broken or frozen parts.

"The cold weather has caused a lot of them to break and this is colder than any weather we've seen," he said, adding that the natural gas pipeline freezing was not anticipated. Texas State Rep. Ramon Romero, Jr., told Texas Metro News every angle into the massive power outage should be investigated, "It's not just ERCOT, but also the PUC and the energy providers, transmission lines, generators, and the producers."

He said he believes blame can go in any direction, but it's important to gather the facts first. "Personally, I want answers as to how we will never allow this to happen again," said Rep. Romero. "The people of Texas will have to decide what to do with those that put us in this situation."

Cheryl Smith contributed to this report.



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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 few months weeks. The following is an excerpt from the sixth, and final, pillar – the Workforce Pillar.

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

PART VI: THE WORKFORCE PILLAR EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

More now than ever, it is very evident that to start addressing workforce issues you must first start by addressing the tone at the top of an organization. Boards and executive level positions lack diversity, especially when you are looking specifically at African- American board members, C-suite executives, and VP-level leaders in Corporate America. Boards and senior leadership set culture, policy, and corporate norms. This tone impacts recruiting, hiring decisions, promotions, and inclusion. The board and the leadership team decide what is going to be measured. If a diverse and inclusive work environment is going to happen, there needs to be diverse people and mindsets at the decision-making tables.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

With the June unemployment rate being 11.1% for the United States, 10.1% for White Americans, and 15.4% for Black Americans, the workforce issues that have plagued us for decades are even more relevant now. During an economic crisis, African-American are usually the first to shed job.

According to a recent McKinsey Report “39 percent of jobs held by black workers—seven million jobs—are now vulnerable to reductions in hours or pay, temporary furloughs, or permanent layoffs”. During June 2020, Black Ohioans were 13.1% of state residents, but represented 25% (Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services) of displaced workers filing initial unemployment claims. This data holds true for Lucas County where Black Americans were approximately 20.3% of the County residents, but represented 30.2% of displaced workers filing initial unemployment claims.

As of July 21, 2020, there are only 3 Black CEOs serving at Fortune 500 companies- Kenneth Frazier of Merck & Co., Marvin Ellison of Lowe's, and Roger Ferguson, Jr. of TIAA. This number is down from seven less than a decade earlier. There are currently no African American women serving as a Fortune 500 CEO. In fact, there have only been 2 in the history of the Fortune 500 (Ursula Burns, former CEO of Xerox and Mary Winston, the former interim CEO of Bed, Bath, & Beyond).

SITUATION ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Corporations have identified this issue and are hiring more Black board members. In 2019, for the first time in history the Russell 3,000 had more than 10% of ethnic minorities populating their board seats, with 4.1% of these seats being held by African-Americans. The Nonprofit sector tends to do better than corporate as it relates to diversity, according to Nonprofit quar-

terly in 2017 4% of Nonprofit CEOs, 5% of Board Chairs, and 8% of Board members were Black. If cultivating a diverse inclusive workforce is going to be a priority, organizations need to think strategically, look inward to cultivate a pipeline of African-American leaders, recruit African-American board members and talent to fill impactful open positions.

Recruiting and retaining top talent is one of the top imperatives for most thriving businesses. Talent pool and development discussions populate most human resources departments' agendas. The focus should be on the fact that top talent wants to be in an inclusive culture. The business case for an inclusive culture is clear. According to a McKinsey study companies who have diverse talent improve their “customer orientation, employee satisfaction, and

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THE TOLEDO BLACK AGENDA

Addressing Six Critical Pillars Vital
to the Success and Equality of the
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Linda Mansour: A Milestones Honoree and a Crusader for Social Justice

By Fletcher Word

Sojourner's Truth Editor

This year's YYCA Milestones: A Tribute to Women honoree for Business, Linda Mansour, does not feel that she is businesswoman in the traditional sense of the word, but she is, nonetheless, all about business.

"I invest in the economy of human beings," says Mansour whose law practice focuses on litigation, immigration, domestic and international business, real estate and commercial transactions, family law issues and the formation of for profit and not for profit organizations.

Mansour is not only an attorney, she is also a lifelong advocate for issues related to social justice, issues at home and abroad. For years that advocacy has led her to engage in numerous local, national and international organizations and to travel the globe to far flung corners such as the Middle East, China, Austria, among others, to discuss topics such as cross border trade, cultural awareness and diversity.

Mansour has led fact-finding delegation of American women leaders to the Middle East to examine the U.S. military and economic role in Israel's apartheid and the violations of Palestinian human rights.

"We must speak," she says of her drive to advocate for the underdog. That drive is deeply ingrained in this daughter of a Palestinian immigrant.

"My dad left Palestine in 1948 when he was kicked out of his home by the Israelis. He came to America to become a physician," she recalls.

Her family's experiences in Palestine certainly planted the seed of Mansour's passion to campaign for social justice. "My cousin was imprisoned there for 12 years because he was in a car in the wrong place with the wrong color license plates," she says of one such experience.

Mansour would grow up in a various places – the U.S., Europe and the Middle East – and become trilingual (English, French, Arabic), attend law school, serve as the United Arab Republic resident associate in charge of Sidley & Austin of Chicago (President Obama's former law firm) before

returning to Toledo to establish her practice.

And through it all, she has never lost that passion to fight for human rights as nations around the world continually sanction, exclude, punish and even slaughter their racial, religious and ethnic minorities.

"It's happening all over the world," says Mansour. "I can't take care of the whole world but in my backyard and those from whose heritage I come."

As Mansour views that backyard, and the world for that matter, she is saddened by the lack of collaboration among those who see the problems of inadequate social justice but seek redress by themselves.

"We are so siloed, so cut off from each other," she observes. The inability to connect, she adds, renders so many causes ineffective. "What happens now in the Black community is so related."

Mediation is high on Mansour's list of ways to bring opposing sides together to solve their differences. She has been a facilitator for both commercial and family mediations and arbitrations referred from the courts for decades and has been active in labor relations, tripartite arbitration panels. She was appointed a judge at the Willem C. Vis International Commercial Arbitration Moot Court Competitions in Vienna, Austria.

Here at home Mansour is convinced that the path forward in the struggle for social justice must include a responsible approach by businesses and government agencies. "More and more businesses have to recognize their role in social justice," she says.

We do see some recognition in certain instances – the sporadic corporate responses to the D.C. Capitol riots on January 6 or the murder of George Floyd over the last year, for example – but the recognition is anything but all-embracing.

Businesses speak out, more often than not, when speaking out brings a positive impact to the bottom line. Unfortunately, governments are not as consistent in their messaging which makes Mansour's struggle for social justice that much more complicated.

The YWCA's recognition of Mansour for her body of work has earned her gratitude, not just for herself but also for the women, now and in the past, that the Y has honored for their commitment to social justice.

"Women involved in grass roots and social justice issues are to be acknowledged," she says. Mansour has certainly earned that acknowledgement.



Linda Mansour

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Mary and Gail's Clothing Closet Opens at Mt. Nebo

Sojourner's Truth Staff

Pastor Cedric Brock and First Lady Debra Brock received a little help this past Sunday from Toni Pace, director of Family House, as they opened Mary and Gail's Clothing Closet on the second floor of the church.

The new clothing closet, which was built with the help of renovation funds from the Toledo Rotary Club and will be managed by First Lady Debra Brock, has been named for Mary Caldwell Simmons and Gail Brown, two members of the Mt Nebo Baptist Church congregation who passed in 2020. Caldwell Simmons was a 50-year member of the congregation.

The clothing assembled by the church is a result of donations from Macy's, New York and Company, the Rotary Club and various community donations.

The clothing is earmarked for community shelters. The church will play an active role in picking up residents of the shelter and bringing them to the church and the Closet to select appropriate clothing.



Pastor Cedric Brock, Mother Delores Brown and First Lady Debra Brock open the Closet



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Wilberforce University Continues Moving Towards Excellence in Courses of Study

The nation's first, private HBCU introduces Nedra Allen, EdD, the university's new Dean of General and Foundational Studies and the Center for Academic Support.



Nedra Allen, EdD

General education is an area of academics that does not target one specific course of study. Under her department leadership, freshman and sophomore students will better matriculate through their general education coursework. Direction from Allen will increase motivation for Wilberforce students who need more strategic focus in their academics.

"It is my hope these young minds, through general education, will be successful and will learn to use skills to better themselves toward their future at Wilberforce and throughout life," said Nedra Allen, Dean of General and Foundational Studies and the Center for Academic Success -

Allen will report to J. D. Jones, Provost and VP, Academic Affairs.

"Dr. Allen comes to Wilberforce with an extensive background in general studies. That includes understanding the needs of some students may not be quite college ready and need extra help to navigate towards the goal of graduation. Whether that involves tutoring and/or mentoring, the university will provide the necessary avenues to get that degree," said J. D. Jones

General education courses allow diversity of study that can lead to several more specific disciplines as students advance toward their junior or senior year.

Allen comes to Wilberforce University from Little Rock, AR. Her educational background includes a B.A. degree in English from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock, an M. Ed. in Instructional Technology from American InterContinental University, and an Ed. D. in Higher Education and Adult Learning from Walden University. She is the former Chair of the Literacy Skills Department in the General Education Division of Philander Smith College in Arkansas.

Allen began her employment at Wilberforce this past Monday, March 8.

60 Years of Peace Corps: A Look Back

Special to The Truth

While life around the globe has changed significantly since the Peace Corps was founded 60 years ago, the agency's mission to promote world peace and friendship between Americans and people around the world has not.

Established by President John F. Kennedy on March 1, 1961, via Executive Order, the concept for the public service agency was first introduced months prior in an impromptu presidential campaign speech delivered to college students.

"How many of you who are going to be doctors, are willing to spend your days in Ghana? Technicians or engineers, how many of you are willing to work in the Foreign Service and spend your lives traveling around the world?" then-Senator Kennedy asked the students. "I think Americans are willing to contribute. But the effort must be far greater than we have ever

made in the past."

The response was swift and enthusiastic. Since the Peace Corps' founding, more than 240,000 Americans have served in 142 host countries. Here's a look back at some of the agency's major accomplishments and milestones:

- 1961: President Kennedy hosts a ceremony in the White House Rose Garden in honor of the first group of volunteers departing for service. Congress approves legislation for the Peace Corps. The first volunteers arrive in Ghana.
- 1977: Carolyn Robertson Payton is appointed Peace Corps Director by President Jimmy Carter. She's the first female and first African American to serve in this role.
- 1985: The Paul D. Coverdell Fellows program, a graduate fellowship

...continued on page 11

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Talking to Your Child Gets Them Ready to Read!

Getting your child ready to read is as easy as talking, singing, reading, writing, and playing. The Library is here to help you incorporate these five early literacy practices into your daily routine with your birth-preschool age child.

This month we will focus on the early literacy practice of talking. Did you know that talking is one of the very best things parents and caregivers can do to help children prepare for future reading success? Technology is rapidly changing the way we interact with one another. While there are many positive ways technology can enhance early literacy at home (more on this in a later article!), studies have shown that the lack of human conversation with our babies, toddlers, and preschoolers hinders language development in these early years. The more words children hear before they enter kindergarten, the better readers they will become!

Look for chances to chat each day during morning and evening routines, mealtimes, while in the car, and while taking a walk. Help your child learn new words by repeating back some of what they say and adding new vocabulary.

Child: I see a bird!

Adult: You do see a bird! That red bird is a cardinal. What do you think the cardinal is doing?

Child: Eating?

Adult: That's right. The cardinal is eating seeds.

Here's something to talk about! Watch a virtual storytime from the Library with our children's librarians at toledolibrary.org/virtualstorytime. Books are also wonderful conversation starters. Visit or call any Library location for help selecting books that encourage talking.

To learn more about all the ways that talking can benefit children birth-preschool, as well as more information about early literacy tips, tools, and tricks, please contact the Ready to Read team, at 419.259.5253 or readytoread@toledolibrary.org, for a 30-minute early literacy training.

Using Play to Combat Your Child's Stress and Loneliness

Special to The Truth

With the pandemic continuing to disrupt routines, you may have growing anxieties about how the extended crisis will affect your child's social and emotional health long-term.

A new survey conducted by OnePoll on behalf of the The Genius of Play -- a national movement to educate parents and caregivers about play's vital role in child development -- examined the concerns of parents with children ages 2-18. Here are some of the findings, along with tips to counteract the negative effects of quarantine:

Social Skills

Seven in 10 parents believe spending a year in quarantine will have a lasting effect on their child's growth and development. Among those parents, the top concern is that it'll be more difficult for their child to connect with people in-

person in the future (52%). Tied for second and third were concerns that it'll be more difficult for their child to play (44%) or make friends in the future (also 44%) after being separated from their peers.

"There are numerous playtime activities that boost communication and social skills, which can be adapted to this new reality," says Anna Yudina, senior director of marketing initiatives at The Toy Association.

During a period when travel is limited, Yudina suggests playing "International Menu" to help kids learn about the world. To play, pick a location and discuss its local dishes. Then, give kids Play-Doh to create them. Have kids play restaurant with their new DIY meals. Using action figures and toys, try other roleplay games that encourage interaction and communication skills that

...continued on page 13



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Toledo Black Agenda... continued from page 7

decision making". Organizations must look at their recruiting strategy and tools to ensure that their practices are meeting their goals. Top talent can be found via an in-house recruiting list and at consistently attended career fairs, but if the list you have used has not changed in years and it hasn't resulted in a diverse workforce, then the list needs to be reviewed.

When reviewing the list, companies should ensure it includes Historically Black Colleges & Universities, Community Colleges, Trade Schools, and career fairs hosted by minority professional organizations. They should also be open to hiring employees that are re-entering the workforce from institutions. There are local workforce re-entry programs that they can partner with to help their employees be successful and they should review their assessment tools and process to ensure tools are being properly used and biases have been ruled out. Large corporations have had to pay millions because biases have been found in their pre-employment personality assessments.

Once they have identified and recruited talent, human resource officers should make sure their application process is inclusive and also ensure there are not questions on their applications that perpetuate pay inequity and other biases. Salary history questions have long been used to screen out candidates or offer them an inequitable compensation package. This practice was banned in Toledo in 2019 through the enactment of Ordinance 173-19, titled "Pay Equity Act to Prohibit the Inquiry and Use of Salary History in Hiring Practices in the City of Toledo".

Biases around not hiring employees with police records disproportionately impact African-Americans due to their disproportionate interactions with the police, which has been at the center of the recent social unrest. Companies should review applications to ensure that they "Ban the Box", where they do not ask about arrest history and remove the questions about criminal history from the initial job application forms, while only asking about criminal history only in instances where it relates to the job in question. In 2016 Ohio passed House Bill 56 where they partially "banned the box", by limiting criminal records used in public employee hiring.

In order to retain diverse talent, after hiring such individuals, companies should make sure to have an inclusive environment and processes in place to keep and develop talent. Diversity & Inclusion is not a human resource program but is about people being allowed to bring and to be comfortable with bringing their authentic-self to work. This commitment to Diversity & Inclusion must not only be the CEOs and the Board of Director's commitment but must cascade through executive leadership, managers, and front-line staff.

An organization's strategic plan must be reflective of this by being created in a manner that does a broad environmental scan which includes what is going on in all communities that impact the organization. Metrics and priorities that measure

diversity and the impact of diversity should be considered and monitored. Inclusion is a talent & business strategy. According to the Harvard Business Review, companies who retain a diverse leadership team have a competitive advantage as they are 45% more likely to report a growth in market share over the previous year. Companies with a diverse leadership team are also 70% more likely to capture a new market.

Access to work and the ability to thrive in careers that pay a living wage is key to helping the African-American community close the wealth gap (see Economic Justice Pillar). It is challenging knowing that you are not getting paid what you are worth, especially when operating in non-inclusive environments. With the proper focus on workforce equity issues, successful, profitable, diverse and inclusive workplaces are attainable.

SUMMARY

- Establish accountability for equity, diversity & inclusion at the senior management, CEO & Board Level. (Example: Organizations can take a stand against racism by being active with the CEO Action for Diversity & Inclusion network)
- Meeting employees where they are. Focus on recruiting, developing and retaining employees reentering society from prison and other institutions (re-entry). As well as, recruiting employees from all levels of the social- economic continuum.
- Review recruiting processes and determine if they are inclusive.
- Review application processes and determine if they are inclusive.
- Ensure your organization is paying equitable wages across demographic groups, is supporting policies that ensure adequate childcare for working parents and is providing compensation & benefit packages that have suitable healthcare.

Additional Sources

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Monthly data (<https://www.bls.gov/eag/ead.us.htm> and <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/empsit.t02.htm>)

McKinsey & Company, Delivering Through Diversity, January 18, 2018 (<https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/organizations/our-insights/delivering-through-diversity>)

Peace Corps... continued from page 11

program offering financial assistance to returned volunteers, as well as opportunities to continue service in underserved communities, is established.

- 1995: The Peace Corps sends volunteers to the Caribbean island of Antigua to rebuild homes damaged by Hurricane Luis. This pilot program, Crisis Corps (now called Peace Corps Response), provides short-term humanitarian service to countries worldwide.
- 2005: For the first time, volunteers are deployed domestically when the Peace Corps Response program assists the Federal Emergency Management Agency's relief operations in the Gulf Coast region following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.
- 2007: The Peace Corps Prep program is established, offering an undergraduate certificate program that helps students build skills needed to be effective volunteers, giving them a competitive edge when applying for Peace Corps service.
- 2014: For the first time, Peace Corps applicants can choose the programs and countries they apply to, selecting the path that best fits their skills, languages, and personal and professional goals.
- 2016: The Peace Corps gets a makeover with the adoption of a new look and logo.
- 2020: The Peace Corps initiates its first global evacuation in its history in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

So, what's the status of the Peace Corps today? Currently, the agency is working to return to service and is accepting applications to serve. Interested applicants can connect with a recruiter to learn more and get the application process started by visiting peacecorps.gov.

From partnering with local communities, to mitigating the impacts of climate change, to teaching digital literacy, today's Peace Corps service opportunities look different than they once did; however, they all continue the agency's original and inspiring mandate to "promote world peace and friendship."

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The Black Civil War Soldier: A Visual History of Conflict and Citizenship by Deborah Willis Blood and Germs: The Civil War Battle Against Wounds and Disease by Gail Jarrow

By Terri Schlichenmeyer
The Truth Contributor

Put up your fists.

Yep, it's come to this: someone's looking for a fight and that's exactly what they're about to get. There will be a winner. It won't be fun: there'll be a loser, and probably some bruises. But at least you'll be able to open those fists and shake hands when it's over – unlike, perhaps, the people inside these two great books...

c.2021
New York University Press
\$35.00 / higher in Canada
256 pages

When the Civil War began, says author Deborah Willis, most "...enslaved blacks and servants were united in their opinion – they associated war with emancipation." They hung onto every bit of news about Abraham Lincoln and news from the battlefield, they were eager to know what Lincoln would do next, and in *The Black Civil War Soldier*, you'll get to meet some of those people and learn their stories.

You'll also get to see them, in portraits and snapshots taken on and off the field, in Black hospitals, homes, and asylums. These are the kinds of pictures that make you want to linger, taking in details of what was obviously someone's best dress, or someone's best and bravest face. Look at the pictures and read personal letters home, diary entries, and thoughts – words, says Willis, of absent loved ones, fear and confusion, frustration on the part of both soldier and commander, "dignity and pride... achievement and self-confidence..." and valor.

You'll also learn about the daily lives of a Black soldier during the war, and what happened in the years after wars' end. Together, this narrative and the photographs make an astounding book that show an often-little-told human side of the War Between the States.

When there's war, of course, you'll see action on the field but the fight can also go on far behind the lines, as you'll see in *Blood and Germs* by Gail Jarrow.

In this very heavily-illustrated book, young readers will get an authentic look at what, other than bullets, bayonets, and cannonballs, might've killed a Civil War soldier. These things – gangrene, scurvy, tuberculosis, typhus, and other horrible maladies or injuries – are examined and explained in context to the times in which they affected American on and off the battlefield; many of those maladies, after all, are rare in today's world and may be unfamiliar to young readers. Through letters and stomach-churning old-time cures, Jarrow also tells of the roles women played in nursing and ministering to the wounded and afflicted, how they stopped blood loss, saved legs and arms, ended pain, and kept away disease and death.

Older teens and adults, especially those who are history buffs, are the perfect audience for *The Black Civil War Soldier*, although later-middle-schoolers shouldn't have any problem reading or understanding the book and may enjoy it. *Blood and Germs* is great for kids ages 10 and up and

adults, though parents of particularly sensitive kids should beware that some of the photos can really be quite gruesome. In both cases, the stories inside these books make them great additions to anyone's library, and good things to get your fists around.

c.2020
Calkins Creek
\$18.99 / \$24.99 Canada
176 pages

Child's Stress... continued from page 11

kids may not have practiced for awhile. Classic board games with questions and answers – like Guess Who? – can also help kids build and retain their social skills.

Loneliness

Four in 10 parents worry about their child's mental health as a result of the pandemic. What's more, 72% of respondents say they believe that during 2020 their child was lonelier than ever before. That's a feeling extending to parents themselves -- 58% said they, too, were lonelier than ever.

"Whether building a furniture fort, solving a puzzle or using a science kit, collaborative play gives us an opportunity to connect and combat loneliness while keeping children happy and entertained," says Yudina. "Playing together also offers parents insights into their child's world and what may be causing their stress and anxiety."

An arts and crafts session presents an opportunity to connect with friends and family who your child may be missing. Break out the paper, stickers, markers, and safety scissors to create cards to send to loved ones.

Be sure to organize virtual playdates, too. The latest apps are making it easier for kids to find, draw, act out plays, and watch movies virtually with friends.

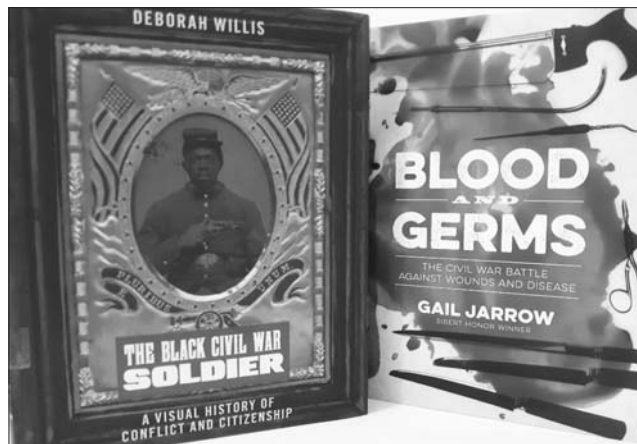
The Bright Side

Despite its difficulties, parents indicated that this period has had silver linings. When asked what positives have resulted from spending more time at home over the past year, the top response was being able to spend more time playing with their child (46%).

To get inspired to fill in all those additional hours with play, visit thegeniusof-play.org, a great online resource for parents offering tons of play ideas.

"The long-lasting effects of the pandemic are yet to be determined," says Yudina. "In the meantime, all this extended time at home is an excellent opportunity for families to connect and play, keeping both kids and adults social and active."

Courtesy StatePoint



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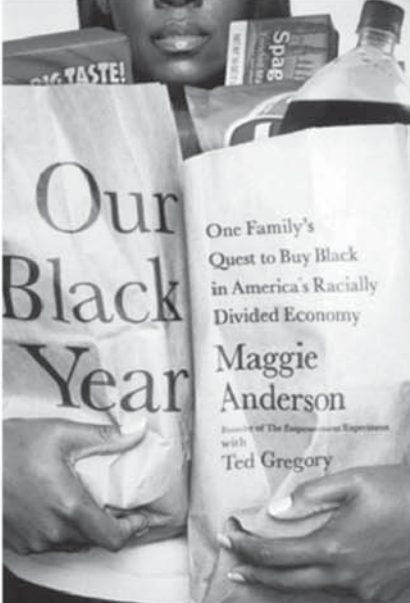
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Required Skills: Community lender.

Required Experience: Must have at least 2 years MLO experience.

The MLO must possess stellar oral and written communication skills. A minimum associate's degree (AA) or equivalent from two-year college or technical school; or five years related experience; or the equivalent combination of education and experience is preferred. Continuing education is required to remain current with area of responsibility.

Interested candidates should email resumes to Zcollins@toledourban.net or mail to Toledo Urban Federal Credit Union
Attn: Z. Collins
1441 Dorr Street
Toledo, Ohio 43607
419-255-8876

PROJECT # 0002-20-223 ANCIENT DNA LAB RENOVATION UNIVERSITY OF TOLEDO LUCAS COUNTY

Bids Due: 2:00 p.m. local time, March 23, 2021; through the State's electronic bidding system at: <https://bidexpress.com>

EDGE Participation Goal: 15.0% of contract
Domestic steel use is required per ORC 153.011.

Contract

Estimated Cost General Contract – Ancient DNA Lab Renovation
\$290,000

Pre-bid Meeting: March 9, 2021, 10:00am – 11:00am at Plant Operations Building, Room 1000. **Construction PPE and Face Masks will be required.** Follow all Parking Rules.

Walkthrough: A walkthrough of the project site is scheduled for March 9, 2021 immediately following the Pre-Bid Meeting.

Walkthrough Location (begin):

Bowman Oddy, Room 3047, 3100 West Towerview Blvd. Toledo Ohio, 43606

Bid Documents: Available electronically at <https://bidexpress.com>.

More Info: A/E contact: Paul Meneilly, Phone: 419-242-7405, E-mail: pmeneilly@tc.design

MANAGER, SENIOR SERVICES

Administers, coordinates, and oversees the various components of the senior services programs provided by Neighborhood Health Association and ensures the effective operation and management of two senior centers. Also responsible for supervising and managing program staff and volunteers. Responsibilities also include developing partnerships that assist in serving Seniors; assisting in the design and supervision of activities; developing budget and program billing and managing community outreach and education to ensure that all area Seniors know about and have access to services.

The right candidate will have a degree or certification in recreational, geriatric or activities therapy; a minimum 2 years in management/supervisory role; minimum 2 years working in culturally diverse and low-income environment; ability to pass a background check and drug screening; be physically fit; have an ability to adapt with strong organization and time management skills; possess excellent resource management, computer, record keeping, interpersonal, decision making and verbal and written communication skills.

The deadline to apply is March 26 at 5 pm.

Contact Roy Hodge. 419-514-1600 or rhodge@rehsystems.com



ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION PROGRAMMER

This position is located at Wildwood Preserve Metropark. Must have completed sophomore year towards college degree in environmental science, biology, education, outdoor recreation or related college program, or equivalent work experience. Previous work or volunteer experience working with groups of children and experience leading outdoor education programs for all ages required; previous experience as a counselor or naturalist at a children's camp preferred. All seasonal positions, up to 40 hours/week. \$10.47/hr. Go to www.metroparkstoledo.com or <http://www.metroparkstoledo.com> for complete job requirements and descriptions; must submit online application and resume. EOE

PUBLIC NOTICE

2021-2022 ONE-YEAR ACTION PLAN

To all interested agencies, groups, and persons:

The City of Toledo is seeking comments on its **Draft July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022 One-Year Action Plan** to be submitted to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) on or before May 18, 2021. The One-Year Action Plan is based on the HUD-approved Five-Year 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan submitted by the City of Toledo for housing, community, and economic development.

The One-Year Action Plan includes a description of the federal funds anticipated to be received, as well as other resources expected to be available within the City of Toledo during the 2021-2022 program year. The Action Plan provides a description of the activities to be undertaken when using these resources and the expected results of those activities. Also, the Action Plan depicts a geographic distribution of assistance, special needs activities, general and public housing actions, and activities specific to the 2021 47th Year Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), 35th Year Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG), 30th Year HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME), and the Neighborhood Stabilization Programs (NSP). In addition, the Plan will contain HUD-required certifications, as well as a summary of the community input received at the public hearings regarding the Action Plan.

The **Draft One-Year Action Plan** will be available for review beginning **Wednesday, March 24, 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>

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Public hearings on the **Draft One-Year Action Plan** are scheduled as follows:

Please register for the Virtual Public Hearings at the links provided below!

Thursday, March 25, 2021, 5:30 p.m. by Virtual Hearing
Virtual Link: <https://toledo-oh-gov.zoom.us/j/9202103250000>

Thursday, April 1, 2021, 5:30 p.m. by Virtual Hearing
Virtual Link: <https://toledo-oh-gov.zoom.us/j/9202104010000>

The City of Toledo will also receive comments from the public in writing beginning Friday, March 26, 2021 through Monday, April 26, 2021, at the following address:

CITY OF TOLEDO
DEPARTMENT OF NEIGHBORHOODS
2021-2022 ONE-YEAR ACTION PLAN
ONE GOVERNMENT CENTER, SUITE 1800
TOLEDO, OHIO 43604

For reasonable accommodations or additional information, please contact Monica Brown, Administrative Analyst IV, Department of Neighborhoods at (419) 245-1400.

A Business Brunch Vision Board Network Social at The Spotlight

Sojourner's Truth Staff

It was all business on Saturday, February 27 at The Spotlight lounge on Reynolds Road – the business of real estate, construction, health, insurance, nutrition, among other topics.

Confidence in a Cup, a TaShara Brown enterprise, organized a business brunch, network social and brought together a host of expert guest speakers to inspire an audience of about 100 attendees.

The audience members were treated to a late morning/early afternoon series of addresses by Rob Pasker of Pasker Real Estate; Ambrea Mikolajczyk of ARK Restoration and Construction; Nkechinye Okpah, a certified extraction specialist; Victor Coleman, PhD, a financial advisor; Sandy Spang, commissioner of Business Services with the City of Toledo.

Brown, an entrepreneur with a hand in a number of enterprises such as Che Boutique at 4903 Dorr Street; Body Me, a wellness operation based upon holistic products; Safety Nest, a licensed training center with about 40 instructors in numerous states and Confidence in a Cup, brought in sponsors, such as UMADAOP and Jump Start, to develop an inspirational gathering for business people and aspiring entrepreneurs.

Brown's co-host for the event was Arlinda Self, of Taylor Hyundai and Self Love Movement – Self studied dance at the Alvin Ailey American Dance Center.

Tyrone Cleveland of the Impact Program of Toledo received the Who's Who Award for his organization's work with youth. The Impact Program is a high school preparation and college initiative program for middle school students.

Brown and Self promoted the event through Facebook, said Brown. The turnout for the event was so successful that there was a waiting list to at-

tend, she said. Rogers High School will receive 20 percent of the proceeds and scholarships will be established for Rogers High School students.

It's only the beginning, said Brown. Confidence in a Cup plans to do more such events locally and have received inquiries about taking the show on the road – to Chicago for a start.

The event, in the words of its host, brought "more exposure to help other entrepreneurs."



Ambrea Mikolajczyk and TaShara Brown



TaShara Brown and Rob Pasker



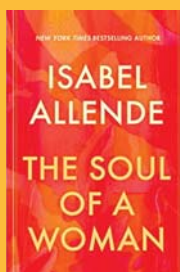
WHAT WE'RE READING NOW



Hades, Argentina by Daniel Loedel



The Kindest Lie by Nancy Johnson



The Soul of a Woman by Isabel Allende



The Project by Courtney Summers


toledolibrary.org
419.259.5200



Realize your dream of home ownership.



Cover up to 100% for purchasing and improvements and move into the home of your dreams.

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Susan Jester, NMLS #436983
Community Mortgage Lender
Sjester@YourPremierBank.com
419-537-9520

Tammy Moses, NMLS #494249
Community Development Officers
TMoses@YourPremierBank.com
419-794-5018

premier  bank

2920 W. Central Ave., Toledo ■ 419-537-9300
1707 Cherry St., Toledo ■ 419-214-4302
(inside the Seaway Marketplace)

*Subject to credit approval. Improvements must be rehabilitative in nature or add square footage. Maximum term for improvements, 6 months. Additional requirements/exclusions may apply. Borrowers must occupy the property. Borrowers must contribute \$500 of their own funds. Household income must be at or below 80% HUD Area Median Income or subject property located in a low/moderate income tract as shown in FFIEC Geocoding. Escrow for property taxes and insurance required. Home seller can contribute up to 6% of the sales price to be applied towards closing costs. Loans over \$150,000 and up to \$510,400 please call for additional required funds needed for down payment. Member FDIC

