



Lakers Legend **Elgin Baylor** Passes Away (See page D-1)



LOS ANGELES SENTINEL



Rev. **Nontombi Naomi Tutu** Connects with God's People Through Gift of Pastoral Care (See page E-1)

VOL. LXXXVII NO. 12, \$1.00 +CA. Sales Tax "For Over Eighty Years, the Voice of Our Community Speaking for Itself." THURSDAY, MARCH 25, 2021

Sheard Elected COGIC Presiding Bishop, Blake Requests Emeritus Status



Bishop **J. Drew Sheard** COGIC.ORG

BY CORA JACKSON-FOSSETT
Staff Writer

The Right Reverend J. Drew Sheard has been elected presiding bishop and chief apostle of the Church of God in Christ, Inc., the nation's largest Pentecostal denomination of more than six million members.

The announcement was made on March 20, follow-

ing the Quadrennial Election, which was held virtually.

Sheard replaces the Right Reverend Charles E. Blake, Sr., pastor of West Angeles COGIC in Los Angeles, who served 13 years as the chief apostle and presiding bishop.

Last October, Blake stated that he would not seek another term and had

requested to receive emeritus status.

At the time, he expressed "gratitude for every opportunity that God has afforded me in serving you," and vowed to support "a smooth transition so that the work of the Lord will seamlessly continue."

He also revealed his intention to remain as pastor of West Angeles and focus

on the construction of the Family Life Center building project, which he described as "a 25-million-dollar addition that will attach to the West Angeles Cathedral." A lifelong COGIC member, Blake has served 35 years as a bishop and 32 years on the denomination's General

{See BISHOP A-10}

Young Black Female Pilot Flies First Plane by Herself at Age 16



L.A. native **Cailey Stewart** flew her first plane by herself at age 16. COURTESY OF SHERIE STEWART

BY BETTI HALSELL
Contributing Writer

L.A. native, Cailey Stewart, flew her first plane by herself at age 16 when she felt the rush of navigating a 172 aircraft across the sky and seeing the outline of the city through the haze of fluffy clouds. Stewart became addicted to the scene and adrenaline. Two years later, she is engulfed by the technicalities of aviation; with the support of her mother and mentors, the sky is the limit for Stewart.

er, saw the spark in her daughter's eyes whenever she was aboard a plane. Sherie would travel and prepare aircrafts for a safe journey as a flight attendant for United Airlines. Stewart would be among the pilots. "She was like drawn to it," Sherie said, explaining her daughter's early signs of obsession. "She's just been addicted to it—around 15 she said, 'I don't want to play soccer anymore, I want to fly airplanes.'"

Hypnotized by the procedures of flying a plane,

Sherie, Stewart's moth-

{See PILOT A-10}

Women Leading California's COVID-19 Response



(L-R) **Yolanda Richardson, Dr. Nadine Burke and Kimberley Goode** FILE PHOTO

This Women's History Month, California Black Media is profiling three Black women on the leading edge of California's response to the COVID-19 pandemic: Surgeon General Nadine Burke Harris, California Gov Operations Secretary Yolanda Richardson and Kimberley Goode, senior vice president of External Affairs at Blue Shield of California. The profiles explore how these exceptional women have brought their experience, knowledge and leadership abilities to driving California's COVID-19 recovery efforts. It also looks at the challenges they have faced, the successes they have won, and how they balance the rigors of their public roles with the responsibilities of their private lives.

(See FULL STORY B-1)

Heather Hutt is Top Vote Getter in CA Democratic Party Delegate Election

Front-runner **Heather Hutt** continues to outpace the competition, securing more Democratic delegate votes than any other candidate.

BY SENTINEL NEWS STAFF

On Sunday, March 21, the Democratic Caucus met to decide which of three Dems they would be supporting for the special election for the 54th Assembly District seat. Heather Hutt, former California Statewide Director for then-U.S. Senator Kamala Harris, earned more votes than any other candidate in the California Democratic Party endorsement delegate vote for the upcoming May 18 special election for the 54th Assembly District seat.

According to the votes tallied, Hutt earned



Heather Hutt is a candidate for the 54th Assembly District seat. COURTESY PHOTO



Heather Hutt, former California Statewide director. COURTESY PHOTO

25 delegate votes, which was more than any other candidate. In response, Hutt released the following statement:

"We are running a grassroots, people-powered campaign. Despite a wide-ranging field of candidates in this critically impor-

tant special election, we were able to come out on top as the campaign

{See HUTT B-3}

Red Tier Guidelines Get an Update as Vaccinations Continue, Grocery Stores Set to Close



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Public Health makes some modifications for re-openings and mobile vaccine units target hard hit areas.



Kroger is closing three more stores, including two Ralphs, one in Midtown and the other in South Los Angeles. SHUTTER-

(See FULL STORY B-3)

Taste of Soul Black Business Spotlight:

Perry's Joint: Sandwiches Crafted with Love for the Community



Perry's Joint founder, **Perry Bennett**



Specialty dishes from **Perry's Joint** includes: **The Hip Bird sandwich, The Guru, and The Hey Joe sandwich.** Picture showcases the **The Big Band sandwich.** PHOTO BY WALTER BUCHANAN

(See FULL STORY A-8)

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As COVID-19 lingers, and Californians continue to spend more time at home, it's important to know that secondhand smoke can travel through air vents, sink drains, and cracks in walls. Secondhand vape also drifts. They both carry toxic chemicals that can damage your lungs. If you're being exposed, get strategies on how to protect yourself from this secondhand harm, especially now when lung health is key. Go to [TobaccoFreeCA.com](https://www.tobaccofreeca.com).

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The Lookout: Several Bills Aim to Level the Playing Field for Disadvantaged Californians

BY ALDON THOMAS STILES
California Black Media

Watching your tax dollars, elected officials and legislation that affects you.

A pitcher throws a perfect game against a hitter without a bat, a tennis player aces a racket-less opponent, and the crowd elates. For many in California, that is their reality. The receiving end of a bad hand. A game most foul.

In Sacramento, there are a few bills being proposed that aim to level the playing field in California, particularly for disadvantaged Californians.

Senate Bill (SB)17, which is scheduled for an Assembly committee hearing March 23, would declare racism as a health crisis in California and develop a state government "Office of Racial Equity in the State Department of Public Health for purposes of aligning state resources, decision-making, and programs to accomplish certain goals related to health equity and protecting vulnerable communities."

The language in the text of SB 17 makes a distinction between this legislation and AB 3121, the "Task Force to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans," which Gov. Newsom signed into law last Summer.

"Existing law establishes the Task Force to Study and Develop Reparation Proposals for African Americans, with a Special Consideration for African Americans Who are Descendants of Persons Enslaved in the United States to, among other things, identify, compile, and synthesize the relevant corpus of evidentiary documentation of the

institution of slavery that existed within the United States and the colonies," the bill language reads. "Existing law requires the task force to submit a written report of its findings and recommendations to the Legislature."



ISTOCKPHOTO

"This bill would establish in state government an Office of Racial Equity, an independent public entity not affiliated with an agency or department, that shall be governed by a Racial Equity Advisory and Accountability Council," SB 17's authors continue. "The bill would authorize the council to hire an executive director to organize, administer, and manage the operations of the office. The bill would task the office with coordinating, analyzing, developing, evaluating, and recommending strategies for advancing racial equity across state agencies, departments, and the office of the governor."

As issues of racial inequity gain more traction in the U.S., bills like SB 17 are being introduced in legislatures around the country, proposing creative ways to uproot longstanding systems of inequality and discrimination.

During a global pandemic the racial disparities in the healthcare system

have become harder to ignore, according to Sen. Richard Pan (D-Sacramento), a medical doctor who is the author of SB 17.

"Extensive research has identified racism as a public health crisis leading to significant health disparities, including infant and maternal mortality, chronic disease's prevalence, life expectancy and now COVID mortality," Pan said. "The state needs an independent body to hold us accountable by examining California's policies and budget with the goal of achieving racial equity and ending systemic racism."

People like John Kim, executive director of Advancement Project California, believe that the structures that hinder people of color were designed to do so and the solution should be to redesign these structures.

"All of the racial inequities we've seen in this pandemic have been decades in the making. We can no longer react to the symptoms of systematic racism or nibble around the policy edges," Kim said. "Passing SB 17 and establishing a State level Office of Racial Equity is crucial to excavating the intersectional nature of structural racism baked into this state's public systems and policies. A fully resourced and appropriately authorized office is a powerful mechanism not only to stem the tide of bad, racist policies but also to generate new pathways to close the opportunity gap for communities of color throughout the state."

Another equity-focused piece of legislation making its way through the legislature is Senate Bill 2, which is essentially identical to

last year's Senate Bill 731. It is meant to bar police officers who have been fired for misconduct or charged with one of a set of specific crimes from serving and protecting in another precinct in California.

As it stands currently, officers that fit into this category can still serve in other counties in the state.

SB 2 is also known as the Kenneth Ross Jr. Police Decertification Act of 2021, as it was named after the unarmed 25-year-old Black man who was fatally shot by police in Gardena in 2018.

"Only one police officer in the history of California has been charged, convicted and sent to jail [for police brutality] and that is Johannes Mehserle who only did 11 months for the fatal shooting of my nephew Oscar Grant," Cephus "Uncle Bobby" X Johnson said during a virtual press conference for SB 2 in reference to the 2009 shooting of Oscar Grant III in Oakland.

Senator Steven Bradford, who introduced SB 2, noted that other professions are held to a certain standard

and law enforcement shouldn't be any different.

"If last summer's nationwide protests and calls for police reform have shown us anything, it's that Californians want more than just a superficial change," Bradford said. "If many professionals licensed in the state of California can have their certification revoked for committing serious misconduct or abusing their authority, then why not police officers?"

Assembly Bill 675 and Senate Bill 424 would create a "homeless hiring tax credit" as an effort to provide homeless people in California "access to meaningful employment."

"I've been unhoused, I've gone through a bout of homelessness and I know what it's like to want to get a job. To want to better yourself, but there weren't a lot of resources out there, but thanks to [Los Angeles] county and this bill-- we're going to be able to bridge a gap between the business community and the homeless community," said Lavena Lewis, the Black business owner of Vena Vena

Handcrafted. "With being homeless, finding employment is key."

And in Washington, Reps. Barbara Lee (D-Calif.) and Rashida Tlaib (D-Mich.) along with Sens. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.), Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.), Ed Markey (D-Mass.) and Chris Van Hollen (D-Md.) proposed a bill coined the "Tax Excessive CEO Pay Act" that set out to put a cap on the pay CEOs receive in relation to the working-class people who work for them.

"Americans across the political spectrum are outraged by the extreme gaps between CEO and worker pay," it read on Lee's press release. "According to a nationwide survey, the typical American would limit CEO pay to no more than 6 times that of the average worker. About 62% of all Americans – 52% of Republicans and 66% of Democrats – favor capping CEO pay relative to worker pay."

This sounds like the first in a slew of equity based legislative pushes so batter up, America. Maybe we'll all be getting a swing soon.

Cal Lawmakers Propose Process to Decertify Convicted Cops

BY ANTONIO RAY HARVEY
California Black Media

Sen. Steven Bradford (D-Gardena), the chair of the California Legislative Black Caucus, and Senate President pro Tem Toni Atkins (D-San Diego) added language with some teeth to Senate Bill (SB) 2, the "Kenneth Ross Jr. Police Decertification Act of 2021."

The amendments to the police reform bill, first introduced in December last year in the California Assembly, are designed to increase standards of accountability for law enforcement officers. They include a statewide process to revoke the certification of a peace officer convicted of violating a person's civil rights or engaging in other misconduct on the job.

"If last summer's nationwide protests and calls for police reform have shown us anything, it's that Californians want more than just a superficial change," said Bradford. "If many professionals licensed in the state of California can have their certification revoked for committing serious misconduct or abusing their authority, then why not police officers?"

Ross, after whom the bill is named, was a 25-year-old African American who a Gardena police officer shot two times and killed on April 11, 2018.

According to the police report, Michael Robbins, the officer who fatally shot Ross was the last officer to arrive on the scene. Yet, he was the only officer who perceived a threat sufficient to discharge a weapon. Ross was unarmed and running from officers when he was shot. He died at the scene.

Although he was involved in prior shootings, Robbins was cleared of wrongdoing in the incident.

"It is critical that California's police officers meet the highest standards of conduct and have the trust of our communities," said Assembly member Rob Bonta (D-Oakland), co-author of SB 2.

"The vast majority of officers want to do what's required to build and keep trust with the communities they serve. I'm proud to co-author SB 2 by Senator Steven Bradford which would bring us closer to achieving that goal."

California is one of only

five states in the nation that does not have the authority to decertify law enforcement officers who have committed serious misconduct.

"On April 11, 2018 my son, Kenneth Ross, Jr. was murdered by a Gardena police officer who shot three other people in previous incidents," Fouzia Almarou, Ross' mother said.

"If Officer Michael Robbins had been decertified after the first shooting, Kenneth would likely still be here, with his son, his siblings, and me," she continued. "I'm going to fight with everything in me to get this bill passed so this doesn't happen to anybody else."

Other states, such as Florida and Georgia, have led the nation in police officer decertification by inquiring into misconduct without regard to convictions for certain offenses.

The recent amendments to SB 2 are similar to Senate Bill (SB) 73, which Bradford also introduced last year. That legislation died in committee last November.

Sponsors and supporters of SB 2 say this time they hope the Legislature passes the police reform provisions they have drafted to strengthen the Tom Bane Civil Rights Act. The 1998 bill authored by California State Assemblyman Tom Bane created legal avenues for victims of police shootings to seek compensatory and punitive damages, attorney's fees, and civil penalties.

The state's primary civil rights law that protects Californians against police abuse, the Bane Act has been undercut by bad court decisions, said Carl Douglas, president of Douglas-Hicks Law, and Consumer Attorneys of California Board Member. Once among the most robust laws protecting civil rights in the nation, Douglas says the Bane Act no longer serves as an effective check against police brutality.

It no longer alerts municipalities of harmful policing practices, gives innocent victims of police brutality an effective civil recourse for justice and accountability or holds police accountable to act in good faith, he said.

In California, racial or ethnic minorities account for 3 out of 4 people killed by police. And, over the last decade over 1,100 Californians were killed by police officers, according to California Department of

Justice data. In 2017 alone, 172 Californians died as a result of police use of force.

The amendments to SB 2



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include: strengthening the Bane Act by stripping some of the procedural barriers that afford police officers immunity; changing the composition of the public safety advisory boards to include another member of the public and removing a law enforcement officer; allowing the California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training to retroactively review certain misconduct related to deadly use of force, sexual assault, or dishonesty for the purpose of decertification.

"The legal standard in California should be that no one—not even police officers—has immunity from the consequences of violating someone's civil rights," Douglas said during the virtual news conference. "Bad court rulings have given police a blank check for misconduct without consequence. As long as we are unable to hold officers accountable, our communities will continue to suffer from no recourse to justice. SB 2 will finally end immunity for officer misconduct, and it will ensure officers who use illegal force can't re-offend."

SB 2 is sponsored by a coalition of community organizations including Alliance for Boys and Men of Color, ACLU of California, Anti-Police-Terror Project, Black Lives Matter Los Angeles, California Families United 4 Justice, Communities United for Restorative Youth Justice, PolicyLink, STOP Coalition, and Youth Justice Coalition.

"California is a national leader in many efforts, but in this one, we are dangerously behind the curve," Bradford said. "Californians are urging us to pass meaningful and systemic reform that will improve the relationship between police and the communities they serve for generations to come. Like so many people in our state, I look forward to working with Pro Tem Atkins, our co-authors, and all stakeholders to have this bill signed into law."

Mask Wearing Tips

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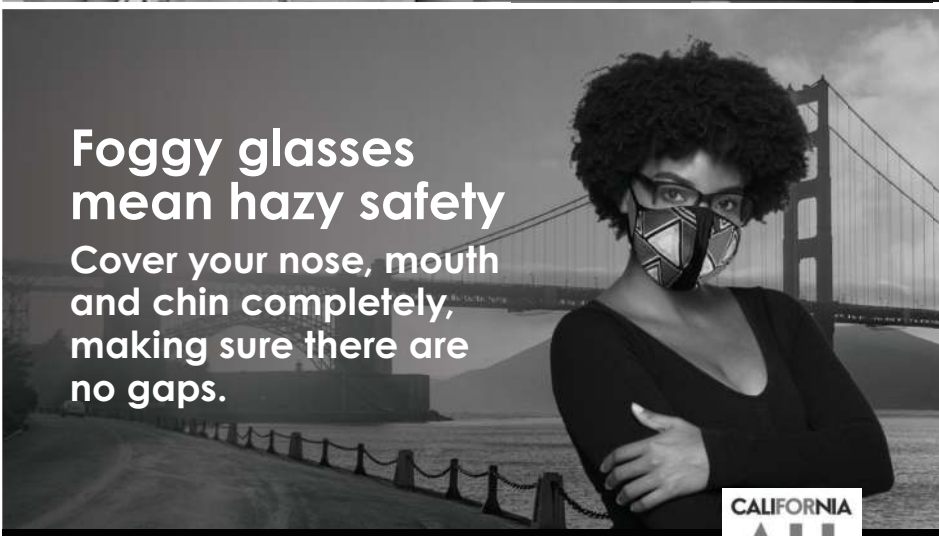
Extra layers mean extra protection

Wear a layered, snug-fitting mask for best protection.



Foggy glasses mean hazy safety

Cover your nose, mouth and chin completely, making sure there are no gaps.



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Two Calif. Women Are Now Leading Efforts to Support State's 3.9 Million Small Businesses

BY ANTONIO RAY HARVEY
California Black Media

Last week, Gov. Gavin Newsom announced that he had appointed Tara Lynn Gray, 57, of Fresno, as director of the California Office of the Small Business Advocate (CalOSBA).

In that role, Gray, who is African American, replaces Isabella Casillas Guzman, who President Biden appointed the 27th Administrator of the Small Business Administration in January. Last week in Washington, with an 81-17 vote, the United States Senate confirmed Guzman's nomination. She is Latina.

In California, Gray is expected to begin working immediately since the Director of the Office of the Small Business Advocate position does not require State Senate confirmation.

Now, working with similar mandates -- one in a federal Cabinet position and the other at the top-level of state government -- Guzman and Gray have become the de facto leading advocates for the almost four million small businesses in California, which, in aggregate, hire more than 7 million people and account for more than 99 % of all Golden State businesses. Together, the women will be responsible



(L-R) Isabella Guzman, SBA Director and Tara Lynn Gray, Director of the Office of the Small Business Advocate

for directing tens of billions of dollars in emergency and ongoing budgetary funding to California small businesses.

CalOSBA is part of the Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz), which serves as the states' main apparatus leading economic development programs designed to boost job growth and business assistance efforts.

Ashley Swearingin, CEO of the Central Valley Community Foundation and former Republican mayor of Fresno, praised Gray's appointment.

"Tara is a tireless and effective leader in California's small business community and the right choice at this pivotal time," she said. "As the State of California continues its recovery, Tara will turn advocacy into action, get results for small businesses, and

ensure our diverse small business owners and entrepreneurs are at the table driving towards an equitable and inclusive economic recovery."

GO-Biz offers a range of growth and support services to California business owners, including permit streamlining, clearing of regulatory hurdles, international trade development assistance, and more, according to the governor's office. The governor has also charged the office to manage more than \$2 billion in COVID-19 relief funding targeted to small businesses, non-profits and cultural institutions across California.

Guzman earned her bachelor's at the University of Pennsylvania Wharton School of Business. As SBA Administrator, she will lead the federal agency with 9,000 employees and represent the interests of

the country's estimated 30 million small businesses. In addition, she will oversee key parts of the Biden-Harris administration's \$1.9 trillion stimulus American Rescue Plan, including relief funding for small businesses like the Paycheck Protection Program and the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant Program.

"Throughout my public and private sector career, I have been dedicated to helping small businesses grow and succeed," Guzman said during her Senate confirmation hearing. "Now more than ever, our impacted small businesses need our support, and the SBA stands ready to help them reopen and thrive."

Before Gov. Newsom appointed Guzman to serve as CalOSBA director in 2019, she served as the SBA's Deputy Chief of Staff and Senior Advisor during the Obama-Biden Administration.

"I have every confidence that under Ms. Guzman's leadership, the SBA will help small business owners hold on to their dreams until the economy comes roaring back," Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) said before voting to confirm the Burbank native's nomination.

Before Gray accepted the top role at CalOSBA last week, she had been serving as the chief executive officer of YADARI Enterprises for the last 17 years. YADARI is a management consulting firm with headquarters in Vallejo.

Currently, Gray is also president and chief execu-

tive officer of Fresno Metro Black Chamber of Commerce (FMBCC), a position she has held since 2017. FMBCC is a community-based organization that advances the interests of African American entrepreneurs in the Central Valley with programs that focus on advocacy and economic development.

Before that, Gray supported small businesses as a counselor at two Northern California small business development centers, taught a small business feasibility and planning class in Stockton, and led a youth entrepreneurship program for nine years with California Black Chamber and Chamber Foundation.

Gray holds a master's degree in Christian Studies from Grand Canyon University in Arizona and a Bachelor's in Business Management from Saint Mary's College in Contra Costa County.

"(Gray's) announcement is yet another proof point of Gov. Newsom's ongoing commitment to equity and inclusivity as we recover together," said Mark Herbert, managing director at the California office of the Small Business Majority, an organization that works with entrepreneurs and policymakers.

In addition to her many professional accomplishments, Gray is actively involved in the social, civic and religious life of Fresno as well as the broader African American community across California. She is member of Black Women Organized for Political Action (BWOPA),

Abundant Life Worship Center, Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, the California Black Chamber of Commerce and Chamber Foundation, and the California Small Business Employer Advisory Council.

Gray, a Democrat, will earn an annual salary of \$175,644.

Betty Jo Toccoli, president of the California Small Business Association, said Gray is qualified for the job she looks forward to working with her.

"Small business has always been integral to the success of California's economy, which is why today is a very special day for small business owners and entrepreneurs across the state," said Toccoli. "Tara will bring a long-standing history of understanding the nuances of small business and advocacy for small businesses to this new role. She is extremely well-qualified for this position and we couldn't be more ecstatic to collaborate with her to ensure an equitable recovery and sustained growth for California's small business community."

As for Guzman, working with the SBA's hardworking employees to create an "ecosystem" that ensures small businesses across the United States are strong is a motivating factor.

"I am excited to return to the SBA and serve as the voice of small business in the Biden-Harris Administration. I am committed to championing the agency's mission and helping equitably build back the economy," she said.

Supt. Thurmond Deploys 3 Million COVID Tests to Speed Up Safe School Reopening

BY BO TEFU
California Black Media

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond expanded an existing pilot testing program, adding 3 million free COVID-19 rapid antigen tests, as part of Gov. Gavin Newsom's plan to accelerate the safe reopening of schools across California.

"Being able to quickly identify who is positive, and who is not, will be critically important for day-to-day operations on a school campus, and will help protect not only students but teachers and support staff," said Thurmond.



State administrators partnered with the California COVID-19 Testing Task Force and the California Department of Education to safeguard the reopening of K-12 schools in underprivileged communities across the state. High-needs schools will have access to antibody tests at no cost so that students can return for in-person instruction. The pilot program delivered rapid antigen tests to 11 school districts located in areas that were the most impacted by the pandemic. The participating schools produced fruitful results that identified individuals who were asymptomatic or pre-symptomatic. The pilot program prioritizes rural regions, low-income neighborhoods, as well as Black and Brown communities that were disproportionately affected by COVID-19 due to limited access to adequate health care.

Thurmond said that it is important to get the rapid antibody tests, "into the hands of those who may lack the access to testing or medical care."

The antibody tests are crucial for the safe reopen-



State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond

ing of schools seeing that individuals can get results in at least 15 minutes, state officials said. Members of the COVID-19 taskforce train and oversee the testing process at participating schools in efforts to expand the pilot program.

State administrators also implemented the Healthy Places Index, a census data-tracking tool that identifies underserved populations inconvenienced by the pandemic. The metric tool was created by the Public Health Alliance of Southern California to boost state outreach in low-income Black and Brown communities.

Gov. Newsom said the pilot program is preparing more schools to welcome students for in-person learning before the end of the year.

"By deploying these rapid tests, California is adding another tool in the toolbox to support schools as they continue on the path to reopen as safely and quickly as possible," said Newsom.

The rapid antibody testing pilot program was launched in January 2021 by the California COVID-19 Testing Task Force along with the California Endowment and the Public Health Institute. The research institutions, part of Gov. Newsom's Together Toward Health initiative, are expected to publish the pilot program's data revealing the test results of more than 40,000 students from 80 elementary schools in 11 school districts across the state.

According to the Public Health Institute and the

Ballmer Group positive cases of COVID-19 can be contained to prevent the fast spread of the virus if detected early.

Gov. Newsom recently signed a bill that gives workers who were exposed to or test positive or for COVID-19 access to paid sick leave. The new legislation was enacted to protect essential workers, including educators and school staff, who at high risk of contracting the virus.

The bill aims to fill the gaps in policies related to state and federal paid sick leave, according to state lawmakers. Gov. Newsom said the new law also gives employees who tested positive or were exposed to the virus, "a little more peace of mind as they take time to care for themselves and protect those around them from COVID-19."

"Helping employees stay home when they are sick is foundational in our response to COVID-19," said Newsom.

California's is still on its path to overcoming the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the state has vaccinated more than 200,000 education staff and child-care workers since the beginning of March 2021.

The state exceeded its initial goal to conduct 75,000 weekly vaccinations, as part of the governor's plan to allocate at least 10 % of the state's vaccinations to education and child-care workers statewide. California has vaccinated teachers and school staff in 58 counties, according to state officials.

"We will continue working with our local partners to accelerate this effort in communities across the state so that all school staff have access to a vaccine," which is a major step toward the safe reopening of schools in California, said Newsom.

California Black Media's coverage of COVID-19 is supported by the California Health Care Foundation.



Did you know you have safety and health protections from COVID-19 at work?

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Learn more about your RIGHTS and how to contact Cal/OSHA at dir.ca.gov/covid.



Taste of Soul Black Business Spotlight

Perry's Joint: Sandwiches Crafted with Love for the Community

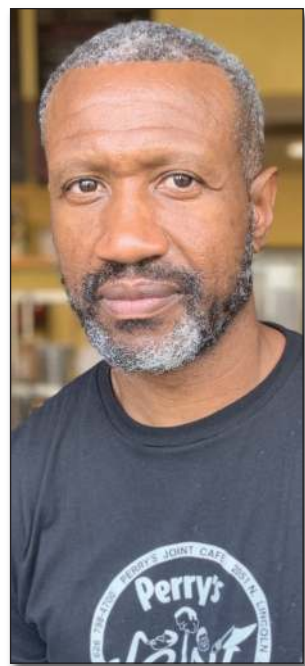
BY BETTI HALSELL
Contributing Writer

Perry Bennett wanted his entrepreneurial business to be the example of what is possible. He envisioned a relaxing environment in the community and created Perry's Joint; a Black-owned eatery that represents the culture. Bennett wanted to make sure that this facility ignited other young minds to create their own business too. Perry's Joint specializes in artisan sandwiches and the store front symbolizes the growth Bennett looks to see within the community.

The beginning of the Perry's Joint story starts in 1993, in San Francisco, CA. Bennett explained what he witnessed growing up in the rough exterior of the inner city. He recalls seeing a few Black-owned businesses during that time, but Bennett felt that the community can strive for better. Utilizing the tourist attraction of San Francisco, Bennett set out to create an eatery that represents the "African American experience."

"My idea was to open a business that could not only represent our experience—I wanted young people to see a different avenue besides selling drugs," Bennett explained. He used himself as an example, to look at entrepreneurship to be a viable outlet for success. Bennett described the combination

of inspiring and representing the Black community, is how Perry's Joint started.



Perry Bennett

He credited his entrepreneurial spirit to his upbringing; since he was 13, Bennett worked in his parent's Ice cream shop, hot dog stand, and food truck business. This gave Bennett the grit needed to open his own eatery; in the midst of earning degree in psychology at San Francisco City College straight from high school, Bennett had officially opened his business by age 23.

Bennett reflected on the most challenging part of operating a business, he said, "The most challenging thing is—and I can speak specifically to being an African American entrepreneur in the restaurant



business, is really just lack of resources." He explained that "lack of resources" refers to everything from having knowledge on how to run the business, to having access to people who can give you the information in operating that said business.

The Perry's Joint owner outlined that lack of resources is the biggest milestone found in building a business in the African American community, when it comes to being an Black entrepreneur, he emphasized that the collective community has to start from below the average starting point.

Bennett recounted a phrase he heard from a USC professor that specialized in business, "Being an entrepreneur is like jumping off a cliff and building an airplane on the way down," Bennett added the hardship of being an Black business owner by stating, "...Being an African American entrepreneur is jumping off the cliff and never getting the resources to build an airplane on the

way down, hitting the ground, and hoping you don't die, and then getting up and trying to start a business."

Bennet encouraged the way around those obstacles is to have a spirit of

the Hey Joe and the Guru, he stated, "Those two sandwiches I really brag on, because those sandwiches—you can't get any where in the world, but right here in Perry's Joint and people love them.

business has done very well in the midst of the pandemic."

Bennett created an environment of rest, when the community is operating indoors again, Perry's Joint will uphold the carefully cultivated spirit that always surrounded this establishment. The official website states this promise, "Whether it's a few high school kids stopping by to grab an after-school snack, a city worker having lunch, or a couple enjoying Tuesday evening jazz, you can always count on Perry to leave your palette satisfied."

Grooming his business for expansion, Bennett has planned for Perry's joint to grow, he said, "I feel like I can grow as big as anyone..." This September, Bennett is slated to open Perry's Joint number two, another location in Pasadena and in five years from this date, the Perry's Joint owner envisions at least 10-20 locations. Bennett's entrepreneurial spirit is coupled with his personal goal of giving back into the community; he shown that the best success is pulling people up as one climbs.

With a heavy focus on the education of the youth in his community, Perry's Joint has dedicated days of business where 100 percent of the proceeds are set to uplift a high school student, providing collegiate scholarships to a number of graduates from John Muir High School.

Bennett said, "A lot of those kids reminded me of a lot of myself and a lot of my friends when I was growing up; I really wanted to connect and be an example for them." Bennett built his business on this



The Guru

endurance, passion to overcome, and an unwavering focus. He said, "...For me I had a focus, and the focus was —however I can do it, stay open this month and make it to the next month..." He emphasized after years of growing and constantly providing the best service to his customers, Bennett created a respectable business.

Initially Perry's Joint was known for hotdogs, ice cream, and candy, and then it evolved into the finely crafted environment that it is today. It was in the fall season of 2004, when Perry's relocated to Southern California, Bennett planted his flag minutes away from the Iconic Rose Bowl in Pasadena, CA, found on 2051 Lincoln Avenue.

Perry's Joint represents the mission of having abundance, the artisan crafted sandwiches are made with the freshest ingredients, the portions are colossal, and every plate is rich with flavor. When biting into one of Perry's Joint signature pile high sandwiches, one can hear the crunch that comes from the fresh produce being held together between two crisp bread slices and thick helpings of meat tucked into every bite.

Specialty dishes from Perry's includes the Hip Bird Sandwich made with fresh slabs of Turkey, mustard, mayo, crispy lettuce, tomato, creamy avocado, and cheese. The Guru sandwich consists of hot pastrami, turkey, fresh lettuce, tomato, onion, crunchy pickles, pepperoncini, mayo, and mustard. In addition to those house favorites, the Hey Joe sandwich is made of hot roast beef, pastrami, toasted hot link, melted cheese, onion, diced peppers, mayo, and mustard.

Bennett expressed his pride in the design of his sandwiches, highlighting

They're just delicious and I am proud of that because it's a one-of-a-kind sandwich, that came directly from the consciousness of me."

The Perry's Joint has withstood the rise and fall of two decades; however, COVID-19 has been the first global pandemic that Bennett's establishment has ever encountered. The business owner explained that his business has been doing really well, Bennett said, "...fortunately I was already 55 percent take-out anyway, so what COVID did was—a lot of people had to work from home and when they started working from home, they still had to eat lunch; they wanted a



Hip Bird

good lunch and fortunately I am good place."

The take-out business for Perry's Joint increased and the overall rate of business increased during this global pandemic. Additionally, the rise in consciousness that happened after the death of George Floyd also raised the awareness of Bennett's business. The Perry's Joint owner said, "I've been fortunate when it comes to COVID and my

philosophy, "I was born, bred, and programmed to be a part of my community."

Enjoy Perry's Joint signature sandwiches from the comfort of the couch, by ordering delivery from Postmates or by calling (626) 798-4700. Operating hours are Monday-Friday from 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. and Saturday 11 a.m. – 4 p.m., visit the Perry's Joint website, for the full menu.

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Ridley-Thomas and Empowerment Congress Discuss 'Reimagining L.A.'

BY CORA JACKSON-FOSSETT
Staff Writer

While Mark Ridley-Thomas has less than six months in his position as the 10th District Councilmember, his roots with the Empowerment Congress go way back, nearly 30 years. So, it's no surprise that he joined with the community group to host "Reimagining L.A.: What's Next?"

The Zoom event, held on March 17, featured a presentation and discussion about the city's funding allocation to address and prevent homelessness as well as re-envision public safety. Ridley-Thomas, who founded the Empowerment Congress in 1992 during his previous stint on the City Council, has frequently partnered with the nonprofit to examine policies and issues that impact the quality of life of stakeholders throughout Los Angeles.

With this gathering of 75+ people, both the councilmember and the organization aimed to bring 10th Council District members up-to-speed about the two pressing issues and solicit input about potential strategies that municipal government might adopt to deal with these community concerns. In addition to Ridley-Thomas, Rhea Mac, co-chair of the Empowerment Congress Committee on Homelessness, served as facilitator; and Charlene Dimas-Peinado, also co-chair of the Empowerment Congress Committee on Homelessness, and Byron L. Smith, Sr., co-chair of the Empowerment Congress

Public Safety and Justice Committee, were the moderators.

"We are here to take another step in educating, engaging and empowering and I'm proud to be on this journey with you," said Ridley-Thomas, as he opened the meeting. He followed his remarks with a PowerPoint exhibit that outlined how the City Council plans to reinvest \$88 million cut from the L.A. Police Department's budget into resources to improve disadvantaged communities and communities of color. Each of the city's 15 council districts will receive funds in the 2021-2022 budget that are in line with the individual poverty rates established by the 2020 U.S. Census.

Focusing on the apportionment to Council District 10, the councilmember explained, "CD 10 received



Charlene Dimas-Peinado is the co-chair of the Empowerment Congress Committee on Homelessness.

a \$4.5 million allocation and the priority I sought to bring to bear was to look at the issue of homelessness." He said that \$1.5 million would be distributed to nonprofit providers to create "Encampment to Home"



Councilmember Mark Ridley-Thomas discusses reimagining L.A. with members of the Empowerment Congress.

initiatives in Koreatown, Mid-City and the Leimert Park/Crenshaw Corridor.

One-half million will go to operating the new South Los Angeles Street Engagement and Coordination Hub that will be located near 18th Street and Washington.

Another \$500,000 will be dedicated to the Stay Housed L.A. program run by the Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles for Eviction Defense Services. The program is designed to assist CD 10 residents in preventing eviction and homelessness and help businesses avoid closing down.

As his history verifies, Ridley-Thomas has advocated on behalf of homelessness prevention throughout his public service career as a state assembly member, a state senator and a L.A. County supervisor.

When he assumed his current position in December 2020, one of his first acts was to sponsor the Right to Housing legislation. The motion called for the City Administrative Officer to report, within 60 days, on a legal framework

to implement a Right to Housing strategy, an assessment to fund the initiative and an estimate of the resources needed in partnership with the county, state and federal government.

In addition, Ridley-Thomas indicated that \$750,000 of CD 10's allocation would be devoted to fighting poverty with a Universal Basic Income pilot and job training program. Also, \$500,000 would be earmarked for the reimagining public safety initiative through a pilot program on unarmed response to 911 calls and reimagining community and arts enterprises in St. Elmo Village.

"All of these resources, as it relates to the homelessness part of the equation, are illustrative of what we think of as the right to housing – what it can and should be," insisted Ridley-Thomas. "We need to be laser-like focused on this challenge, which is just that great and just that deep. We cannot walk away from the crisis that confronts us called homelessness!"

As part of the panel discussion,

Dimas-Peinado asked the councilmember to "explain how the issue of homelessness became the focus of these resources." He replied, "I think if we're going to take seriously reimagining, there's only one issue I can think of that cuts through the issue of public safety, economic justice, issues related to land use, issues related to mental health and public health and that's the issue of homelessness." He also mentioned that in several polls, L.A. voters selected homelessness as the "most pressing issue confronting the city of Los Angeles."



Byron L. Smith Sr. is the co-chair of the Empowerment Congress Public Safety and Justice Committee.

Smith questioned Ridley-Thomas about the next step that people should expect as far as the reinvestment process. He answered that city staff would work on designating the programs and nonprofits to work with and that the Street Engagement and Coordination Hub would be operating soon.

"As we move toward implementation, we will be

soliciting input from the stakeholders in those communities to see what resources we can bring to bear in the area of prevention, intervention and innovation," added Ridley-Thomas.

In the second half of the meeting, attendees participated in breakout sessions on reimagining public safety, homelessness and fighting poverty. CD 10 staff facilitated and provided summaries of the sessions.

Emerson Luke, who moderated public safety, said that his group talked about ways to aid people "who through no fault of their own have found themselves homeless." Dhakshike Wickrema, who assisted the homelessness group, recounted that one area that concerned attendees was "sanitation around homeless encampments and continuing to have money allocated to homelessness in future budgets." According to Porsha Cropper, who oversaw the fighting poverty session, the emphasis was on outcomes that "restore dignity to those who are experiencing homelessness and put them on a pathway to wellness."

Concluding the meeting, Ridley-Thomas expressed his appreciation to all in attendance and said, "We have a lot of work that we can and should be attending to. I'm pleased that the Empowerment Congress will be leading the way to translate policy into budgetary items. This is an enlightened way of making our city better."



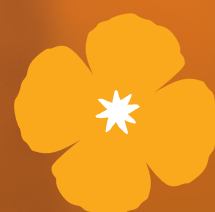
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Sheard Elected COGIC Presiding Bishop, Blake Requests Emeritus Status

{continued from Pg. A-1}

Board, which is its legislative body.

Sheard has also been affiliated with the COGIC denomination for his entire life. The pastor of Greater Emmanuel Institutional Church of God in Christ in Detroit, Michigan, he is the presiding prelate of the Michigan North Central Jurisdiction and has been a member of the General Board since 2012. Sheard is married to Karen Clark-Sheard, a member of The Clark Sisters, and is the father of Kierra and J. Drew II.

“To be elected to serve as the presiding bishop for the Church in which I was born, raised, and have learned and served all my life, is a dream and desire that can only be fulfilled by God’s loving grace and guidance. The opportunity to serve such an extraordinary organization at our highest recognized level of priesthood is beyond humbling,” said Sheard in a statement.

“I am so grateful for the unparalleled support of my loving wife, Karen, who has served diligently alongside me in ministry, and for my children. I could never adequately honor or appreciate



Right Reverend Charles E. Blake, Sr., pastor of West Angeles COGIC in Los Angeles. COURTESY PHOTO

my parents for demonstrating holiness by sheer example. With complete excitement and joy, I look forward to serving the Lord’s people,” he added.

A native of Detroit, Sheard is the son of Bishop and Mrs. John Henry Sheard. He earned both his Bachelor of Science degree in Education and his Master of Education degree in Mathematics at Wayne State University.

In addition to Sheard, 11 bishops were elected to the

General Board including the Right Reverend Jerry W. Macklin, the founding pastor of Glad Tidings COGIC in Hayward, California. Macklin, who also established COGIC’s NorCal Metropolitan Jurisdiction, has served on the General Board since 2004.

Blake appointed Macklin as second assistant presiding bishop, a position he has held for the past 12 years. Sheard has elevated Macklin to first assistant

presiding bishop and selected the Right Reverend Lawrence M. Wooten, Sr. of Missouri to serve as second assistant presiding bishop.

Also elected to the General Board are Bishop Sedgwick Daniels, Bishop Darrel L. Hines Sr. and Bishop Charles H. McClelland, all of Wisconsin; Bishop Brandon B. Porter and Bishop David A. Hall, Sr., both of Tennessee; Bishop Michael E. Hill Sr. of Michigan, Bishop Prince E. Bryant Sr. of Texas, Bishop Loran E. Mann of Delaware, and Bishop Malcolm Coby of Oklahoma. The installation for the presiding bishop, General Board and General Officers will be held at a later date.

During Blake’s tenure as presiding bishop, he attracted a favorable spotlight on Los Angeles and the city’s faith community. He was also responsible for many successes as the denomination’s CEO. Blake’s accomplishments included:

- completion of the first comprehensive financial audit of the records of the denomination in more



Right Reverend Jerry W. Macklin, the founding pastor of Glad Tidings COGIC in Hayward, California. COURTESY PHOTO

than 100 years; renovation of buildings on COGIC’s headquarters campus including the Lee Administration Building, the Mason Home, the main sanctuary and lower level of Mason Temple, the LH Ford Administration building and the Leila Mason Hall;

- major renovations and upgrades to COGIC’s Lexington facilities, including the addition of

land parcels; development of 77 apartment homes near COGIC’s Mason campus • successfully moved the Holy Convocation to the 502,000-square-foot America’s Center in St. Louis, Missouri, from 2010 through 2019, with space for every aspect of the denomination’s ministry.

Young Black Female Pilot Flies First Plane by Herself at Age 16

{continued from Pg. A-1}

Stewart’s fascination grew and Sherie began to foster her curiosity. The elevated obsession started when she was young; Stewart expressed her earliest memories of being called into the cockpit and being introduced to the navigation of the plane when she would go to work with her mother.

Sherie stated that she knew she was hooked when Stewart told her after a couple of trips to the cockpit, that her new passion was aviation. It was right then, Sherie knew that she would have to do everything within her power to get Stewart on the path of channeling her dream.

Stewart’s mom went on to describe when Stewart was in the fifth grade, she expressed her vision of being a pilot or engineer. Sherie called on her good friend, who also worked at United airlines as a first officer on the 777 aircraft, and who also sits as a chairperson for the Organization of Black People in Aerospace (OBAP).

This led to Stewart entering in an apprenticeship with Tony Marshall, a former military pilot. Marshall supported Stewart’s growth by giving her access to a discovery flight. Going further into the aspiration with flying, Stewart was offered acceptance into OBAP Solo Camp.

Stewart said, “I always loved flying and when I tell people about it—I just feel like its inspiring; there’s not many female pilots. For me to do it, its something different because a lot of people don’t try something different...” She continued to explain the inspiration that her story brings to other people, because her presence in aviation is breaking barriers.

Stewart professed her genuine love for flying is what keeps her motivated; she referred back to her first solo expedition of navigating a plane. She said, “Just flying in a plane by myself, I just thought it was so awesome—it was so fun! After that, that’s when I knew I wanted to do it.” Stewart

continued to elaborate on several other times the passion for flying was evident, but the solo ride of flying the plane by herself solidified the feeling.

The pilot-to-be is looking to fly big commercial planes in addition to flying in the air force. “The plane I want to fly is a C-130, which is the huge cargo planes that they have. Right now, I’m training on Cessna-152, those are the little planes that you start off with.”

Outlining her plan, Stewart said, “Once I get all my licenses, I plan on flying the bigger planes like the 777, that’s what I really want to do.” Stewart keeps her flame of passion burning by connecting to more people in the aerospace community, such as the Sisters of the Skies, a national organization for “women of color cultivating and promoting minority women in the aviation industry through scholarship, mentorship, and most of all emotional support.”

Stewart has been obsessed with the power of being a woman of color in her position. She painted a reality that it is rare to see someone like herself as a pilot. This perspective has also added to Stewart’s determination.

Stewart was accepted to several aviation school; her top schools of choice



L.A. native Cailey Stewart flew her first plane by herself at age 16 COURTESY OF SHERIE STEWART

are California Aeronautical University, University of North Dakota, Kent State University in Ohio, and College of Aviation & Aeronautical Science at LeTourneau University. Due to the pandemic, Stewart has not been able to visit all the campuses, she is keeping her options open.

As a Palisades Charter high school student, she’s studies the general subjects one needs to know to be successful on the ground, but outside of that domain, she’s taking flight through the Long Beach Airport. Stewart is currently receiving private lessons and will obtain her private pilot license soon. Stewart will

have one milestone crossed off her list and she will move on to accomplishing her goal of flying massive aircrafts.

The hardest part in earning a credential in aviation is learning the technicalities of a plane; Stewart mentioned flying is the easiest part, she elaborated on the challenges, “Studying and doing the ground school, learning the dynamics of the plane—it’s a lot of work, having to study the different parts of the plane.”

“I been flying my whole life,” Stewart said. She explained her love for aviation, having worked diligently and preparing herself for the next level

of her career. She also expressed her adventurous nature. Stewart would like to go sky diving as well. When it comes to heights, Stewart described herself as fearless. She said, “It’s just not scary to me, I’m kind of like a dare-devil. I like doing crazy stuff, I want to go sky diving, I like doing stuff like that.”

When Stewart heard that the sky was the limit, she tested those boundar-

ies. Flying her first plane by herself at age 16, with laser beam focus, Stewart is shaping up to make her dreams in aviation a reality no matter the altitude. Stewart closed with this statement, “Event though it gets hard, you don’t give up, even though you don’t see people like yourself, I just keep going because—I mean you’re breaking barriers.”



The pilot to be is looking to fly big commercial planes in addition to flying in the air force. “The plane I want to fly is a C-130 which is the huge cargo planes that they have, right now I’m training on Cessna-152, those are the little planes that you start off with.” COURTESY OF SHERIE STEWART

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How Cedars-Sinai Builds Community Trust in the Vaccine

BY STEVEN VARGAS
Contributing Writer

Gena Smith-Woods, a registered nurse with Cedars-Sinai, worked as one of the front-line professionals administering the COVID-19 vaccine to healthcare staff and community members. She recalled how honored she was to take part in the Southern California non-profit hospital's first drive-thru clinic at Beverly Grove, supporting the community vulnerable to the Coronavirus.

It was more than just giving a vaccine; some community members arrived at the clinic with questions and fears. Smith-Woods was there along with other medical professionals dispelling confusion and providing a safe and comfortable environment.

"I even had a person who was so scared, she literally was crying," Smith-Woods said. "We were



Calvin Johnson, MD



Gena Smith-Woods, MSN, RN, BSN



Stacy Tarradath, MD

African American community is hesitant to receive the vaccine.

"You will continually hear about those experiments and why the Black community will choose not to get a lot of vaccines; to be honest, because of their weariness of being quote-on-quote 'tested on,'" Dr. Tarradath said.

Most of the time, all that is needed to alleviate these concerns is to provide information to the ques-

tion patients have. Dr. Calvin "Cory" Johnson, a professor of Anesthesia and member of the COVID ICU Line Team at Cedars-Sinai, explained that the first step is to acknowledge and validate their fears.

"And there's some truth as to why they feel that way," Dr. Johnson said. "You have to acknowledge; yes, I can understand how you might feel that way. Yes, things like that have happened in the past. However, this is how it's different. The focus here is to protect your health; [there's] no other agenda, no other motive."

Both Dr. Tarradath and Smith-Woods hold the same sentiment, ensuring that the patients they interact with feel safe and informed through open dialogue.

"I think unpacking those conversations in an



PHOTO BY CEDARS-SINAI

there with her. We guided her through and after she got her vaccination, she said I feel so much better and I feel protected. And she drove off and she was just in tears of joy."

At the heart of Cedars-Sinai's efforts by their medical staff to distribute the vaccine is a sense of connection with those who are in their care. They encourage community engagement by partnering with local organizations and entities like churches and the Los Angeles Unified School District. In a time where misinformation and misconceptions about the vaccine are high, they aim to help people make the decision to take the vaccine by meeting people where they are.

According to a nationwide Kaiser Family Foundation survey released in December 2020, 35 percent

of Black adults reported they definitely or probably would not get the vaccine. About half of them cited that the main reason they don't want to receive the vaccine is that they don't trust it in general. This distrust derives not only from the composition of the vaccine, but also a general distrust of American Healthcare.

Dr. Stacy Tarradath, the division chief of Urgent Care at Cedars-Sinai Medical Group, recalled hearing people in and outside of work reference the Tuskegee experiments when articulating why the

open dialogue, and being an African American myself — I think it was sharing my narrative," Smith-Woods said. "My experience in having those vulnerable conversations really started to unpack the fear, where you were able to move with the facts of the knowledge, and all of the research that went into it."

She explained that the conversations should always come from a place of empathy. As she learns more about each patient's concerns, she peels back the layers of questions and fears she witnesses as they

feel safer in getting the vaccine. These connections are particularly important when getting the vaccine to the Black and Latinx communities. According to a study by Health Affairs published in November 2020, Black and Hispanic people are three times more likely to screen positive for COVID-19 and two times more likely to be hospitalized than White people. Even though Black and Latinx families are heavily impacted by the coronavirus, CDC reported that about two-thirds of those that received at least one dose of the vaccine as of March 21 were White.

Dr. Johnson sees these trends heavily impacted by socioeconomic class. He believes that those most affected by COVID-19 are people who don't have fair access to healthcare and those who don't get the vaccine also have logistical obstacles in the way. These obstacles include getting time off of work and finding someone to babysit their children so the parent can get the vaccine.

"I think that we have to bring the vaccine to those communities," Dr. Johnson said. "We've got to make it so that we bring the mountain to the people, not the other way around."

For Dr. Johnson, it's a group effort between him and the patient. "I want them to feel that I'm partnering with them," he said. "We're in this together. The same vaccine that they're going to get is the same one that I got and it's okay to be afraid."

Dr. Tarradath believes some of the fear comes from how quickly the pandemic is moving. Within a year, the U.S. has experienced a surge of cases across major cities and the introduction of three vaccines. She noticed that people had concerns about if it was safe, but she reassured people that elements like the mRNA technology in the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines had been studied before the pandemic. FDA granted Emergency Use Authorization to the vaccines and pushed along its research and clinical trials to get it to the public. Part of the emergency use is closely monitoring its performance during its rollout.

"I also try to explain to them that there is some unknown; that's a fact," Dr. Tarradath said. "And we have to acknowledge it. But, you know, once the vaccines were authorized, they didn't stop monitoring for side effects or any problems that any individual may experience as a result of the vaccine. So, we're still studying it."

The monitoring process can be seen in the rollout of the Moderna vaccine. In January, California's state

to many of us, everyone was looking for information wherever they could find it, and make sure it was valid, and then brought it to the group to help us make sure [that] everyone was protected."

Along with the rest of the team, she pushed through the ups and downs of COVID-19 in Los Angeles. The introduction of the vaccines provided optimism in the development of the pandemic.

"I think the approval of the Pfizer vaccine by the FDA; the emergency approval was where we started seeing the light at

the end of the tunnel," Dr. Tarradath said. Now the goal is to get people vaccinated, especially those heavily impacted by COVID-19. To reach herd immunity, Dr. Tarradath believes efforts need to be made in community engagement, such as sharing articles like this one. Smith-Woods also reiterated that herd immunity isn't only achieved through vaccinations, but also through continual precautionary measures like washing hands and wearing a mask. It's a community effort to get to a potential end of the pandemic.

"I think the biggest thing of the takeaway is that through this pandemic, it has been quite tragic, but in that there's also been beauty that I think we've all banded together as a community and as people around the world to do what is needed for others," Smith-Woods said. "I feel very honored to be a part of



PHOTO BY CEDARS-SINAI

Patrick Smith receiving his second dose of the Pfizer vaccine.

the end of the tunnel," Dr. Tarradath said.

Now the goal is to get people vaccinated, especially those heavily impacted by COVID-19. To reach herd immunity, Dr. Tarradath believes efforts need to be made in community engagement, such as sharing articles like this one. Smith-Woods also reiterated

this time in history that people in the midst of tragedy, there has been joy and hope."

If you have questions regarding the vaccine, feel free to reach out to Dr. Calvin "Cory" Johnson at the following email address he created to connect to readers and the community: cjmdgetvaccine@gmail.com.

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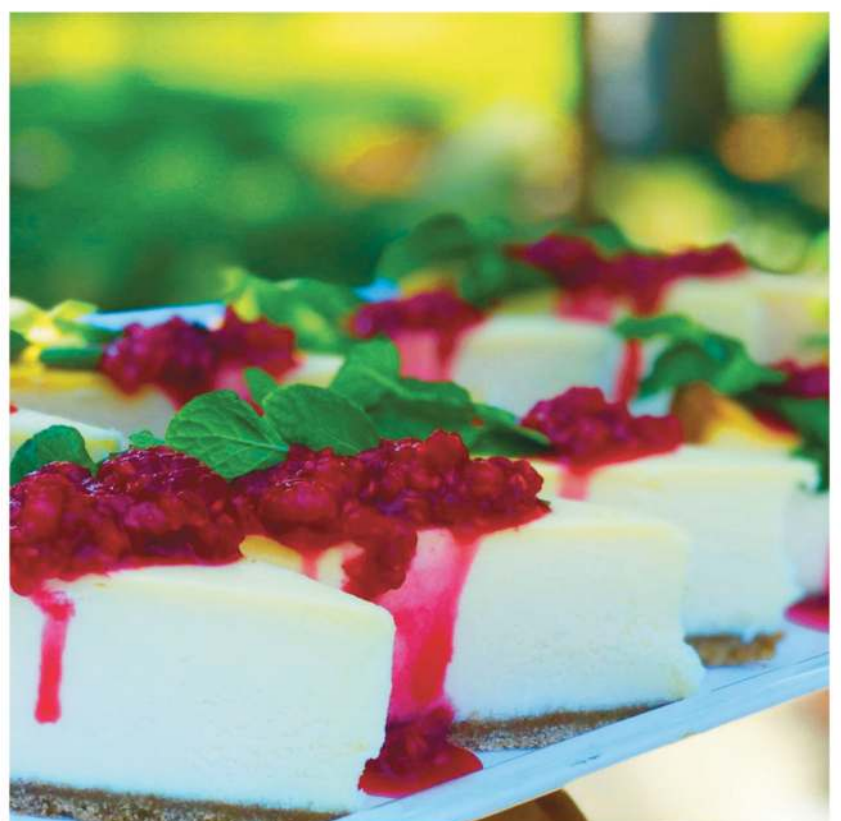
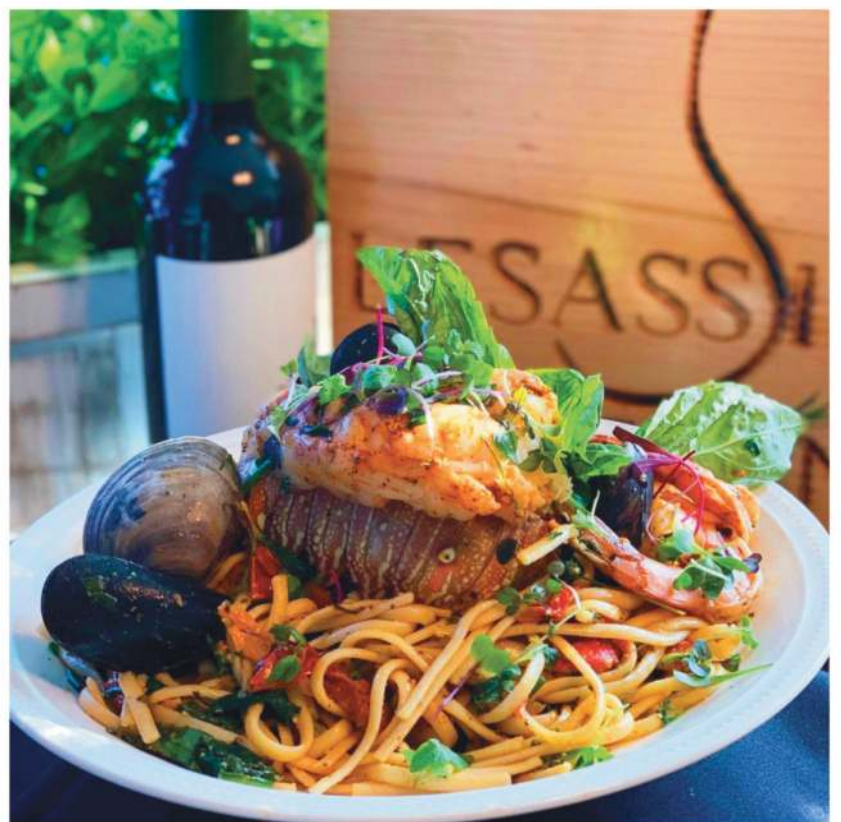
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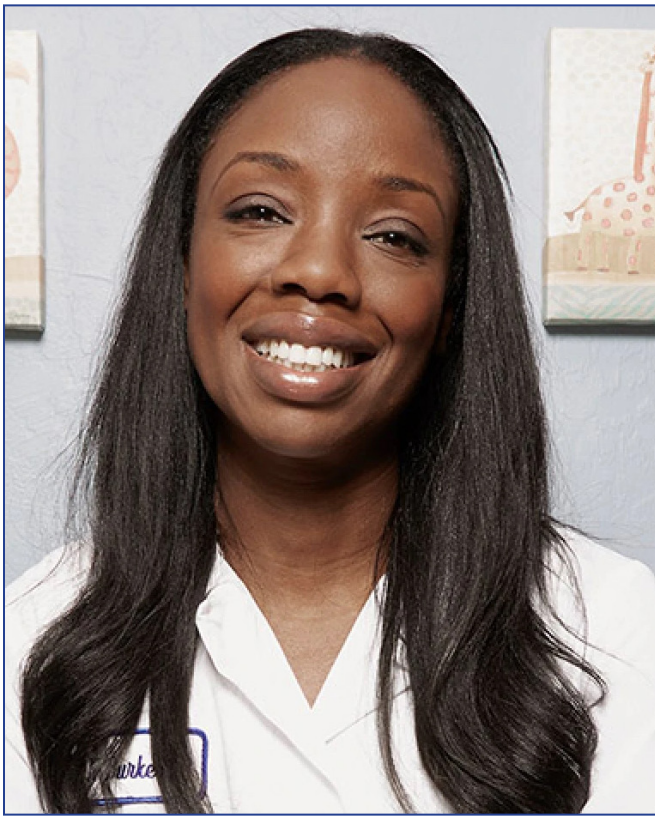
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Women Leading California's COVID-19 Response

Surgeon General Nadine Burke Harris, Yolanda Richardson, Sec. Of Gov. Ops, & Kimberley Goode, Senior V.P. of External Affairs, Blue Shield of California



Surgeon General Nadine Burke Harris FILE PHOTO



Yolanda Richardson, Sec. Of Gov. Ops FILE PHOTO



Kimberley Goode, Senior V.P. of External Affairs, Blue Shield of California FILE PHOTO

BY QUINCI LEGARYE,
ANTONIO RAY HARVEY AND BO TEFU
California Black Media

This Women's History Month, California Black Media is profiling three Black women on the leading edge of California's response to the COVID-19 pandemic: Surgeon General Nadine Burke Harris, California Gov Operations Secretary Yolanda Richardson and Kimberly Goode, Senior Vice President of External Affairs at Blue Shield of California. The profiles explore how these exceptional women have brought their experience, knowledge and leadership abilities to driving California's COVID-19 recovery efforts. It also looks at the challenges they have faced, the successes they have won and how they balance the rigors of their public roles with the responsibilities of their private lives.



Profile: Nadine Burke Harris, the Equity Advocate

Nadine Burke Harris is California's first Surgeon General, a role that consists of a number of high-level internal governmental obligations as well as a significant amount of public-facing responsibility. In addition to advising the governor on health matters, she is also the state's "public health spokesperson," Burke Harris told California Black Media.

"Probably the biggest part of my job is that I translate science into information that people can use to help keep themselves healthy. That's probably my favorite part of the job," she says.

When asked what her biggest success has been regarding California's pandemic-related public-health efforts, Burke-Harris focused on the state's equity measures. They include equity metrics within the state's reopening blueprints for counties as well as an equity strategy within COVID-19 vaccine allocation that reserves 40 % of vaccines for socio-economically disadvantaged communities. She also mentioned her role as co-chair of the Community Vaccine Advisory Committee, which is part of the process of determining how California allocates and distributes its vaccines.

"I think our reopening blueprint really demonstrates how seriously California is taking the issue of equity because our whole notion is that we recognize that this pandemic is disproportionately hard on Black communities, and we really want to make sure that when we are reopening that we are doing an equitable reopening," said Burke-Harris.

Prior to becoming California's Surgeon General, Burke-Harris treated children as a pediatrician. She is the founder of the Center for Youth Wellness in the Bayview Hunters Point neighborhood of San Francisco. In her decade and a half working in the community, Burke-Harris saw how certain equity and accessibility issues would impact her patients' ability to receive care.

Burke-Harris says, "There are a lot of little things

that you realize. For example, I was just on a conversation where we were talking about how close a vaccine site has to be in order to be considered accessible. One of the things that I highlighted is that I live in San Francisco, and I have a car, so for me, something that's five miles away is perfectly acceptable. But for the patients that I cared for, I had the experience of seeing how hard it is for someone who's got two or three kids to take three buses across town to get where they have to go. Five miles away may not be accessible. That has certainly informed my role in the state and how I advise the governor."

In addition to her work on the COVID-19 response, Burke-Harris has also continued her previous work on raising awareness about Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and how toxic stress affects children. A training initiative, which she began in January 2020, has now educated almost 20,000 doctors about how to identify and improve healthcare outcomes for people who have experienced ACEs.

As for her biggest challenge during the pandemic, she acknowledged a feeling of exhaustion. Such exhaustion, she says, is common among health care providers and others on the frontline of the COVID-19 response and relief efforts, after a full year of the pandemic.

"It's been a real sprint. My colleagues in government, and especially in health and human services, have been working around the clock responding to this emergency. It's a lot, it's late at night, on the weekends, my family not seeing enough of me. I think that for all of us, just the endurance has been pretty intense," Burke Harris says.

To help recover from the daily pressures of work, Burke Harris values self-care and family time. She makes an intentional effort to practice meditation as selfcare when life gets hectic. As for family time, she enjoys game nights and snuggles from her children to cultivate joy. Also, her kids are quick to tell her when she seems stressed.

Burke Harris says, "I remember there was one point during the January surge that was really intense. I was having dinner with my family and my eight-year-old said, "Oh no, it looks like Mama lost her giggle." In that moment, he just held up a mirror for me, and how much the intensity and the pressure of my work was coming into our family life. It just reinforced for me that no matter what I've got to keep that sense of playfulness with my kids."



Profile: Yolanda Richardson, the Operator

In January 2020, Gov. Newsom appointed Yolanda Richardson as California's new Secretary of the Government Operations Agency. Now, one year into that role, the governor has charged Richardson with spearheading California's vaccination distribution. That's in addition to other COVID-19 emergency response initiatives she leads, including promoting equitable testing and supplying personal protective equipment where needed to keep California's population of 40 million people safer.

Richardson hit the ground running responding to the COVID-19 pandemic four days after being sworn into of-

rice by Newsom. She is responsible for 11 state departments and programs that ensure that the California state government runs smoothly and achieves its goal of overcoming the challenges presented by the pandemic. Richardson's passion for problem-solving was an effective tool in boosting state efforts to build a coronavirus testing laboratory and establishing a vaccine task force. Her 25 years of experience in the healthcare industry has sharpened her expertise and "get-it-done" leadership style as one of three African American women to lead California's efforts in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

A major challenge for Richardson was, "being thrust into a situation," to fight the pandemic and find new ways to "get things done in an environment in which we never imagined," she said.

"The biggest challenge to us has been: How do we keep state government working effectively and continuing to deliver services efficiently," said Richardson.

Despite the unprecedented challenges of COVID-19, Richardson saw an opportunity to support legislation that enabled Californians to make a smooth transition to work-from-home and homeschooling policies. The operation's team also implemented the governor's plans to manage \$7.6 billion in COVID-19 relief funds, \$6.6 billion for state schools, and \$30 million in grants to support local organizations.

"The biggest win was that people did what they needed to continue moving forward during one of the biggest shifts our state has seen," said Richardson.

The state of California has partnered with various community-based organizations, leaders, and businesses, a unique approach to the pandemic, in efforts to promote equity, she said.

"In everything we do, we have to be thoughtful about all of the different situations that we find people in," said Richardson. "I think the state has just done an amazing job of really thinking about being thoughtful and trying to make sure that the approaches and the things that we do meet people where they are."

The state's operations team continues to evaluate progress through data-tracking and managing collaborative efforts with community partners to make sure the state achieves its desired outcomes, she said.

Richardson discussed racial equity in the healthcare system with medical experts and leaders in the Black and Latino caucuses, as part of Gov. Newsom's plans to provide community clinics and health centers with COVID-19 testing and vaccines.

"I'm very passionate about allocating more vaccines to our communities that are mostly populated by Black and Brown people," said Richardson. "I am very much committed to using my voice and the platform I've been blessed with to make sure that I do everything I can to help those in need."

Vaccine hesitancy fueled by misinformation and disinformation about COVID-19 has made it hard for the state to reach vulnerable populations in low-income areas, according to state officials. However, community leaders expressed concerns regarding access to adequate health care, COVID-19 testing, vaccine distribution.

"We're leveraging trusted advisors, using people in the community that the communities listened to the most," Sec. Richardson said. "We're looking at all the different strategies we can employ that are most comfortable and familiar to those in diverse communities so that they can feel comfortable about getting the vaccine."

Among her list of impressive titles, Richardson is a proud mother of two, an enthusiastic dog owner and wife to her husband of 23 years, who are the anchor to her sanity and peace, she said.

"I have an amazing family that is very supportive," Richardson said. "I am very blessed to have a beautiful family that keeps me balanced."

Although balance is hard for any leader, Richardson said her operations team has pushed her to accomplish California's objectives in serving communities statewide. California's leaders still have a long road ahead to achieve

{See WOMEN B-2}

Women Leading California's COVID-19 Response

Surgeon General Nadine Burke Harris, Yolanda Richardson, Sec. Of Gov. Ops, & Kimberley Goode, Senior V.P. of External Affairs, Blue Shield of California

{continued from Pg. B-1}

its goal of overcoming the pandemic and safely reopening the state.

"There's so much to do, we joke and say every day is Monday in the state of California. But I have the most extraordinary colleagues who have been a huge support," said Richardson.



Profile: Kimberley Goode, the Implementer

During a time when an all-out effort is underway to get Californians vaccinated, a few women leaders in California are leading the charge to reach the communities hardest hit by the coronavirus pandemic, including Black families in "hard-to-reach" areas across the state.

Kimberley Goode, the Senior Vice President of External Affairs for Blue Shield of California is one of those Black women in on the frontlines.

Blue Shield of California is the state's "third-party administrator" as California ramps up its push to get its 40 million residents vaccinated. Goode says the company,

with headquarters in Oakland, has taken a number of steps to support the state's goal to get vaccines to all Californians – particularly those who have been disproportionately impacted -- in a way that is safe, equitable and swift. Blue Shield's provider network boasts more than 1,200 vaccination sites in California, including community clinics, multi-county entities, hospital systems, medical groups, pharmacies and others.

"The state makes final allocation decisions. The state makes all decisions around eligibility," says Goode. "Our job is to make sure that the robust network that we've built is able to get that vaccine to the providers who are throughout every community in the state of California – to reach every zip code."

Goode says their distribution efforts target areas in the state where data shows there are higher incidents of infection and death. "Those are the places we really want to double down on and make sure that we have more vaccines there, more quickly," she said. "We make sure we partner with local community clinics, trust

"Our goal is two reach 3 million doses per week by March," Goode added.

A public-relations specialist, Goode's position with Blue Shield of California puts her in charge of communication and outreach on behalf of the nonprofit that generates more than \$20 billion in annual revenue and serves more than 4 million members in commercial, individual, and government markets.

"There is a lot of concern about the impact of COVID-19 on communities of color and, in particular, the African American community," says Goode. "One of the things that should give comfort to people in this process is that there are a lot of people who care about equity, and two state leaders I work with, Dr. Nadine Burke Harris and Secretary Yolanda Richardson – they are two very important voices that are ensuring that equity is at the forefront of the decision-making process, and the implementation of the vaccine distribution."

She has more than 25 years of communications experience with several global companies, including Kellogg's, Prudential Financial, American Express, and Allstate. She

also spent time as the vice president of Corporate Communications and Corporate Affairs at Northwestern Mutual, where she was responsible for leading the company's internal and external communications strategy.

In the summer of May 2017, Goode joined Blue Shield of California to provide strategic leadership in corporate communications, government affairs, and corporate citizenship. She is also responsible for building relationships that help advance the nonprofit health plan's mission.

"If that's not enough titles, I get to work on the communication, education, and equity workstream for the third-party administration work that we're doing on the behalf of the state for the vaccination program," said Goode, who chairs Blue Shield of California's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Leadership Council.

Goode is active professionally and in the community with a number of organizations, including the Executive Leadership Council, the Bay Area Council, Children Now Leadership Council and California Women Lead Advisory Council, Jack and Jill of America, Inc., and The Links, Inc.

At home, Goode says she has been working from home and sheltering in a "four-generation family bubble" with her husband, her two daughters, her 75-year-old mother and her 95-year-old grandmother.

"The silver lining of this pandemic has been that it has really helped me to reflect on what matters most and prioritize my time with my family – to focus on the things that are meaningful. We engage in some old fun activities. We play "Black Panther Monopoly." It's a board game that is a ton of fun. Just having fun with family in ways that we used to take for granted."

But the greatest reward of her work right now, Goode says, is working for a "mission-driven company."

"This is work that enables us to help every Californian," she said. It is very gratifying to know that when I wake up and come to work every day (even though it is in my living room), it is not focused on 'how I can help Blue Shield today.' It is focused on "how can Blue Shield help Californians across the state."

WisePause Wellness --The World's First Virtual Conference on Demystifying Menopause

Full Day Event Features Over 30 Experts to Discuss Hormones, Sexual Health, Stress, Perimenopause and Menopause to Speak to 3500+ Women Globally

SENTINEL NEWS SERVICE

While the subjects of hormones, perimenopause and menopause are less taboo now than in previous generations, many women remain in the dark about this transitional period of their lives. Many don't want to discuss their bodily changes, others don't know where to get helpful information or understand what is even menopause related. Denise Pines, aging enthusiast, Founder of WisePause Wellness and immediate past president of the Medical Board of California, is changing the conversation around these subjects. Her fourth WisePause

Lifestyle event brings in experts from around the globe to discuss common menopause issues as well as complex ones around topics such as nutrition, sex, sleep, hormones, gut health, brain fog and much more. The 8-hour virtual event will be held on Saturday, March 27 starting at 9am PT/12 noon ET.

"My goal is to normalize menopause by starting to educate and empower women through the WisePause platform," says Pines. "I know that as I aged, my body changed in ways that my mother or other elders never explained to me. Perimenopause and menopause and the hormon-

al changes that occur during this time can be vexing, confounding and for some, downright scary. Women have questions and symptoms that they don't want to say out loud. WisePause offers a safe space where experts can address their questions with other like-minded individuals to provide the answers that women have sought for millennia."

Speakers and topics Women in Transition: Finding Balance from Perimenopause to Menopause with Dr. Genester Wilson-King, FACOG, Dr. Pei Vuong and Dr. Laurie Steelsmith, ND; Rituals for Menopause with Barbara Bizioiu; Time to Ask The Doctor



Denise Pines COURTESY PHOTO

Q&A with Dr. Sofia Herrera; Dress for the Body You Have Now with personal stylist Meg Gallagher; Energy Clearing with Alyse Hart, Can I Still Have Heart Stopping Sex with Dr. Gail Jackson, MD, OB/GYN and tantra expert Kamali Minter as well as tutorials in yoga, breath-work, exercise and fitness, makeup, hair thinning and more.

"I want women to celebrate their age, their body changes and know that with the right guidance and information, they can look forward to being healthy well into their 90's," con-

cludes Pines. People are told that weight gain, flabbiness and hormonal ups and downs are normal, but these symptoms can oftentimes be mitigated. WisePause shows them how."

Tea Botanics is the presenting sponsor for this event and Toyota is the national sponsor.

For more information or to register, please visit www.wisepause.com. Registration for 24-hour access to the event is free. For 7-day or 6-month access to the virtual event, the prices are \$20 and \$49 respectively.



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Heather Hutt is Top Vote Getter in CA Democratic Party Delegate Election

Front-runner Heather Hutt continues to outpace the competition, securing more Democratic delegate votes than any other candidate.



Heather Hutt COURTESY PHOTO

{continued from Pg. A-1}

with the most support from AD54 delegates. I'm deeply grateful for the support we earned from these key activists, who join our broad coalition of support from working families, women, young people, seniors, and neighborhood leaders across our district. I look forward to continuing our sprint towards the May 18th primary election."

In yet another testament to her dedication to working families, today, then-Senator Kamala Harris's California Statewide Director Heather Hutt garnered the endorsement of International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 18, as well as UA Locals 250

Local 18 is excited to support Heather's campaign for State Assembly District 54."

In a statement released with their announced endorsement, Rudy Rodriguez, PAC Chairman of UA Local 250 had similar sentiments in his steadfast support of Hutt for Assembly. "The working men and women of UA Local 250 Steamfitters-Refrigeration are proud to give Heather Hutt our strong support and endorsement because she's been a forceful leader on behalf of working people. As a public servant, Heather worked tirelessly to improve wages and working conditions for the hard-working people of California, as well as ensuring working men and women had the resources and PPE they needed during the COVID-19 crisis. Heather Hutt's experience and proven track record are unrivaled in the race for 54th District, and we're excited to support her campaign."

Hutt was born and raised in Los Angeles and has dedicated her life to Democratic activism, public service, and the community. She recently served as the first Black U.S. Senate State Director in California's history, and in her capacity serving Senator Harris, was the principal representative among constituents and elected leaders throughout California. She used her position to stand up for women by bringing together healthcare



Center) Heather Hutt has been an activist and organizer, working tirelessly to ensure civil rights, human rights, women's rights, equality, economic and social justice for all people. COURTESY PHOTO

professionals to discuss implicit bias in health care, especially for women and women of color, as well as advocating for DACA recipients and fighting against the Trump Administration's assault on Dreamers and immigrants.

"In a race where Heather could become only one of two African American women in the California Assembly, it is Heather's experience working in Sacramento and in Washington, D.C., along with her life-long history of community advocacy in addressing homelessness, healthcare, affordable housing, police reform and environmental jus-

tice, which are all major reasons why we need to elect Heather Hutt to fill the vacant seat left by Sydney Kamlager-Dove as she has now moved on to the CA Senate," stated former Congresswoman and Ambassador Diane Watson who previously represented the district and was the first African American woman elected to the California Legislature and Los Angeles Unified School Board.

Prior to her work in the U.S. Senate, Heather championed environmental justice policy changes for Watts and South Los Angeles while serving as the District Director for

California State Senator Isadore Hall. She also organized the Assembly Select Committee on Community Resources Impacted by AB109 Re-Entry as well as the Assembly Select Committee on Human Rights, Diversity and Race Relations.

Through her work as a California Democratic Party delegate and Treasurer of the CDP Black Caucus, Hutt has been an activist and organizer, working tirelessly to ensure civil rights, human rights, women's rights, equality, economic and social justice for all people. In addition, she launched the "VOTE L.A." campaign, L.A. Cities Clean Air-Clean Water campaign, and shaped critical outreach to pass the "Durbin Bill," which provided aid for small businesses. Heather is also the single mother of three sons.

Governor Gavin Newsom has called for a special election to be held on Tuesday, May 18, 2021 for the currently vacant 54th Assembly seat. The California State Assembly's 54th District includes the communities of Baldwin Hills, Crenshaw, Culver City, Ladera Heights, Leimert Park, Mar Vista, Mid-City Los Angeles, Palms, West L.A., Westwood, and Windsor Hills in Los Angeles County.

Red Tier Guidelines Get an Update as Vaccinations Continue, Grocery Stores Set to Close

By BRIAN W. CARTER
Contributing Writer

"Spring officially began this past weekend," said Barbara Ferrer, PhD, MPH, MEd, Director of Public Health. "Like so many of you, I am eagerly awaiting warmer weather and clearer skies. We have a beautiful county, and I encourage you all to enjoy everything it has to offer while remaining masked and physically distanced. For recreational travelers and residents coming to L.A. County, please note, you are required to self-quarantine for 10 days after you return from out of state or out of country travel to protect our community from inadvertent transmission of the virus from travelers."

Angelenos are enjoying Spring and being able to get out and about at some of their favorite locations now that the county is in the red tier of guidelines. Vaccination sites are booting up again after a recent shortage. Mobile vaccine units are targeting vulnerable communities, visiting senior housing sites, senior centers, faith-based organizations and community-based organizations.

In February, Kroger, the parent company of Ralphs and Food 4 Less, announced it would be shutting down two of its stores in Long Beach in opposition to Hero Pay, which would increase grocery store workers' pay an \$4 per hour. Last month, Kroger announced more closures which include a Ralphs, located at 9616 West Pico Blvd., another Ralphs at 3300 West Slauson Ave., and a Food 4 Less at 5420 West Sunset Blvd. It's been stated that these three locations are scheduled to close on May 15, according to a

company spokesperson. Protocols for schools, K-12 grades, have been updated to comply with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the California Department of Public Health. Schools are strongly suggested to socially distance student seating by three feet, wearing masks and keeping six feet between each other during activities.

Vaccinations are currently being administered to healthcare workers, residents and staff at long-term care facilities, residents who are age 65 or older, education and childcare workers, food and agriculture workers, emergency service workers and law enforcement, people with serious health conditions or disabilities, people who live or work in high-risk congregate living spaces (shelters, jails, and residential behavioral health programs), janitorial, custodial, and maintenance services workers, and people who work in the transportation and logistics.

As of Monday, March 22, the L.A. County Dept. of Public Health confirmed nine new deaths and 516 new cases of COVID-19. There were 750 people with COVID-19 hospitalized with 25% of these people in the ICU.

The Dept. of Public Health made additional modifications to the Health Officer Order. The revisions were issued on March 19, and took effect on March 20, with the following changes:

- *Breweries, Wineries and Craft Distilleries that do not provide a meal, may open for outdoor service only with certain restrictions, including:

- All guests must have reservations;
- Guests are limited to

a 90-minute time limit for their visit;

- Guests must be seated at tables before they place their order, and are not permitted to stand or congregate with others;

- Hours are limited with service for on-site consumption closing by 8:00 pm.

- *Breweries, Wineries, and Craft Distilleries that serve a bona fide meal can be open for indoor dining operations at 25% of indoor capacity and must follow the same modifications required of restaurants

- *Clarity for certain types of businesses that serve the public but are not typical retail establishments, such as non-school learning centers, bank and credit union branches, check cashing services, tax preparation, auto repair, auto dealerships, and dry cleaners. These types of limited services businesses are now permitted for indoor operations with modifications at 50% capacity

- *For mental health, support groups, and spiritual counseling, the number of in-person participants increases from 10 to 12 participants to make this type of support more accessible to those in the community. Public Health still encourages services to be provided remotely when at all possible

- *For office-based work-sites, businesses that must open indoors for essential operations that cannot be done remotely must also limit indoor capacity to 50% of maximum occupancy

- *For youth and adult recreational sports, the County is aligning with State to allow for indoor sports to engage in indoor activities, including training, conditioning, contact practice and competition if they adhere to State requirements

- Limiting any indoor sports activities to 10% of indoor occupancy; observers are not permitted for any youth or adult indoor sports activities, including competitions;

- Regular testing of players, coaches, and staff;

- Development and implementation of a Return to Play Safety Plan and a Site-Specific Safety Plan. Plans must be filed with Public Health 14-days prior to indoor activity;

Public Health identified 1,214,683 positive cases of COVID-19 across all areas of L.A. County and a total of 22,806 deaths. Cases across the Southland: Los Angeles County shows 1,151,894 cases, Long Beach with 51,709 cases and Pasadena with 11,080. According to race and ethnicity, COVID-19 statistics show: American Indian/Alaska Native with 1,939; Asian with 52,910; Black with 42,393; Hispanic/Latino with 576,515; Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander with 4,164; White with 120,062; those of other race and ethnicity with 105,083 and 248,828 under investigation.

"We strongly recommend that those who traveled and during their travels were in crowds, exposed to unmasked individuals in close proximity, or attended gatherings, get tested on their return," said Ferrer. "This is particularly important for those who traveled to places with high rates of community transmission, like Miami, which reported a 9% test positivity rate; this is 6 times higher than the test positivity rate in L.A. County. Please remember how easily this virus can spread and take every action you can to protect yourself oth-



Kroger is closing three more stores, including two Ralphs, one in Midtown and the other in South Los Angeles. SHUTTERSHOCK PHOTO

ers until we all can get vaccinated."

For more information and statistics on COVID-19 in Los Angeles County, please visit <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/>

For more detailed information on COVID-19 vaccination plans in L.A. County and to sign up for a vaccination newsletter, visit: www.VaccinateLACounty.com

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•DR. ROBERT K. ROSS & KELLY LYTLE HERNANDEZ•

JUSTICE REFORM IN LA: On the Cusp

Since the 1970s, in an era now known as the Age of Mass Incarceration, Los Angeles County has operated the largest jail system in the nation. This jail system has drained public resources from the county and exacerbated its deep legacies of racial injustice as the harms of incarceration – fines, fees, toxic stress, family separation, lost work and school days, suppressed wages, increased exposure to infection, and more – disproportionately impact the County’s Black and Brown residents. But over the last year, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors and voters have approved strategies to end LA’s age of mass incarceration.

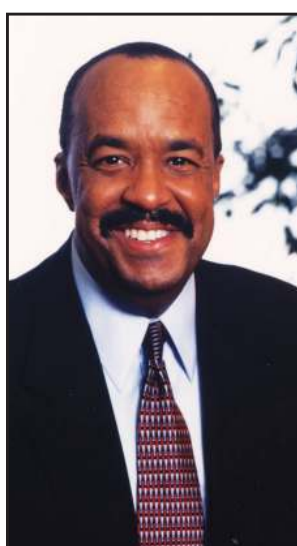
In March 2020, the Board voted to accept the report of the Alternatives to Incarceration Workgroup, a county-appointed body of some two dozen individuals – roughly half of whom were county agency heads and the remaining half were community leaders experienced in fighting for a reimagined justice system.

County Supervisors asked for a roadmap in the pursuit of a “Care as the first option, and jail as the last resort.” The report listed more than 100 recommendations, and prioritized 26 as “foundational” recommendations for early

action. Recommendations are methodically grouped in data-supported “intercept points” where access to the proper services can divert individuals from the voracious jail and prison pipeline.

The Board’s unanimous vote to receive the ATI report, move the foundational recommendations forward, and create a new “ATI” (Alternatives to Incarceration) office was a major step toward de-carcerating LA. The second step was the Board’s decision to plan for the closure of the Men’s Central Jail near downtown Los Angeles and replace it with a system of services and care for the persons, families, and communities most harmed by decades of racist-infused mass incarceration. Thirdly, County voters decisively agreed to support Measure J, which promises to dedicate a portion of the county general fund to services and care for the population. That also will help reduce homelessness.

This trifecta of decisions lay the groundwork for a de-carceration process that is in support of community safety for all. Imagine just five years from now when Men’s Central Jail is replaced by a human-centered “restorative village, providing mental health services, employment, and housing



DR. ROBERT K. ROSS



KELLY LYTLE HERNANDEZ

for our community. The vision is within reach. We just need implement what the county Supervisors have called for, shifting our public resources from criminalization to care, while opening an unprecedented era of racial justice.

However, the resistance to this aspirational vision – closing jails and jail beds and replacing them with a system of services, opportunity, and hope – won’t go quietly. It will require political courage and civic conviction to make historic change. It’s the right thing to do as fiscal stewards of public tax dollars and racial justice advocates. Right now Supervisors, department heads, and community advocates will need to confront three dragons:

The Budget: While

providing effective community-based services is always cheaper than incarceration – developing such a system of care won’t be cheap. Court diversion programs, mental health and substance abused treatment services, and transitional and supportive housing will be costly. With state and county budgets strained by COVID-19, elected officials must be fearless and inventive to invest in this new system. Suggestion: as county leaders were once prepared to bond-finance a new jail to replace MCJ, perhaps we should shift our sights into bond-financing the infrastructure required for this new system of care.

The Narrative: A cadre of prosecutors in the District Attorney’s office launched a rebellion against

justice system reformer George Gascon, labeling reforms “unconstitutional” and threats to public safety. This outdated and disproven narrative claims that the only way to assure public safety is to lock people up. Expect the lock’em up culture – which drove the rise of mass incarceration – to re-assert itself. Suggestion: elevate the voices of those most impacted by hyper-incarceration – the currently and formerly incarcerated as well as their families and communities. Trust what they say, and hold their experiences close as decisions are being made.

Race: Data on racial inequality and the legacy of structural racism that is foundational to hyper-incarceration of Black and Brown men and women are legion. Moreover, the stories of so many African American families negatively impacted by the justice system animate the data and research, making the numbers more compelling. Meaningful transformation of the system will not occur unless racial inequality and disparities are confronted.

The supervisors deserve credit for creating a new Office of Racial Equity to keep “the matter of race” on the front burner as reforms and transformation unfold. Suggestion: Support this office by inaugurating its

work through the lens of ATI, Measure J, and MCJ developments. LA County can emerge as the nation’s leader in advancing anti-racist strategies, policies, and programs.

Political and civic courage has put Los Angeles County on the national map about what a transformed “care first, jails last” system can look like. Trust the voices of the most impacted to illuminate the path.

Dr. Robert K Ross is the President/CEO of The California Endowment, the largest health foundation in the state. He is a medical doctor and former public health director of San Diego County. He served on Los Angeles County Alternatives to Incarceration taskforce.

Kelly Lytle Hernandez is a professor of History, African American Studies, and Urban Planning at UCLA where she holds The Thomas E. Lifka Endowed Chair in History and is the director of the Ralph J. Bunche Center for African American Studies at UCLA. She is also known as one of the nation’s leading experts on race, immigration, and mass incarceration. Professor Hernandez served on Los Angeles County Alternatives to Incarceration taskforce.

•DR. MAULANA KARENGA•

As we close out the month of March, Black History Month II: Women Focus, I am drawn to two ancient teachings concerning the sacred and social significance of women in the world. And I want to use them as foundation and framework for paying homage to African women of the world, of the Movement and especially the women of Us. The first is found in the iconic art of ancient Nu-

Women, Holding Up Half of Heaven: Sustaining the Movement and the World

bia in which the royal couple, Queen Amanitore and King Natakamani, are depicted as holding up half of heaven. Divine beings hold up the other half. For with our ancestors, the Divine is always present, assisting



DR. MAULANA KARENGA

humans in doing good in the world.

So, in reality, women and men hold up the half of heaven for which humans are responsible. In Kawaida, holding up heaven is not only keeping the world functioning, but also holding up our highest values so that the world can function in the most dignity-affirming, life-enhancing and world-preserving ways. And it is in this sense of humans’ awesome work that women share an equal role and responsibility. For it is in partnership as women and men that we hold up heaven, sustain the world,

and give life and length to our liberation Movement.

A second ancient teaching I want to use to frame this homage to Black women is the sacred teaching of the Odu Ifa concerning the indispensable roles and responsibilities of women which were divinely assigned at the dawn of creation. It is written that the Creator chose all humans to bring good in the world and it is for this divine assignment that humans are called to be respected as eniyan, chosen ones, those chosen to bring good in the world. But Olodumare, the Creator, Odu Ifa teaches, also gave women the roles of being co-creators of the world, mothers of the world and sustainers of the world. They and men were sent into the world to make it good. And it teaches us that to accomplish this good world, we need wisdom, moral and practical wisdom, sacrifice, character, the love of doing good, especially for the vulnerable, and the eagerness and struggle to increase good in the world and not let any good

be lost.

In the midst of the rising tide of Black women leadership in the Movement against systemic racism and state sanctioned and vigilante violence, I pay special homage to Black women as a whole in their awesome striving, struggles, victories, and achievements. And I do this, not in any way to deny, diminish or dismiss the equally important role of Black men. For this would not only be wrong and unnecessary, but also it would clearly mimic and metastasize the cancerous conceptions of our oppressor. For us Black people, Africans at our best, we cannot embrace zero-sum conceptions of life. It is together as women and men that we hold up heaven and sustain the Movement and the world.

Again, in this important month of remembrance, celebration and honoring of women, I pay a special rightful and repeated homage to the women of our organization Us and all its formations, from its beginning days in the 1960s to its

celebration of its 55th anniversary of work, service, struggle and institution-building, and unbudging Blackness. I pay homage to those who first answered my call to build a new vanguard organization which would serve seven overarching functions. It was designed and developed to be: a house of houses (a family of families), a community of values, a revolutionary school, a Hekalu (temple and sacred space), a congregation (a spiritual and ethical community), a revolutionary party and a core of a nation-becoming. And I pay rightful and repeated homage to the women of Us who continue to hold up half of heaven and sustain our organization, the Movement, and the world in various and critical ways.

From the beginning, we decided and declared we would be first and foremost a House of houses, a family of families, for we used house and family interchangeably. And the women of Us were at the center of this family building giving it concrete existence, literally bringing life into the organization, the community and the world in various ways, and nur-

{ See KARENGA C-2 }

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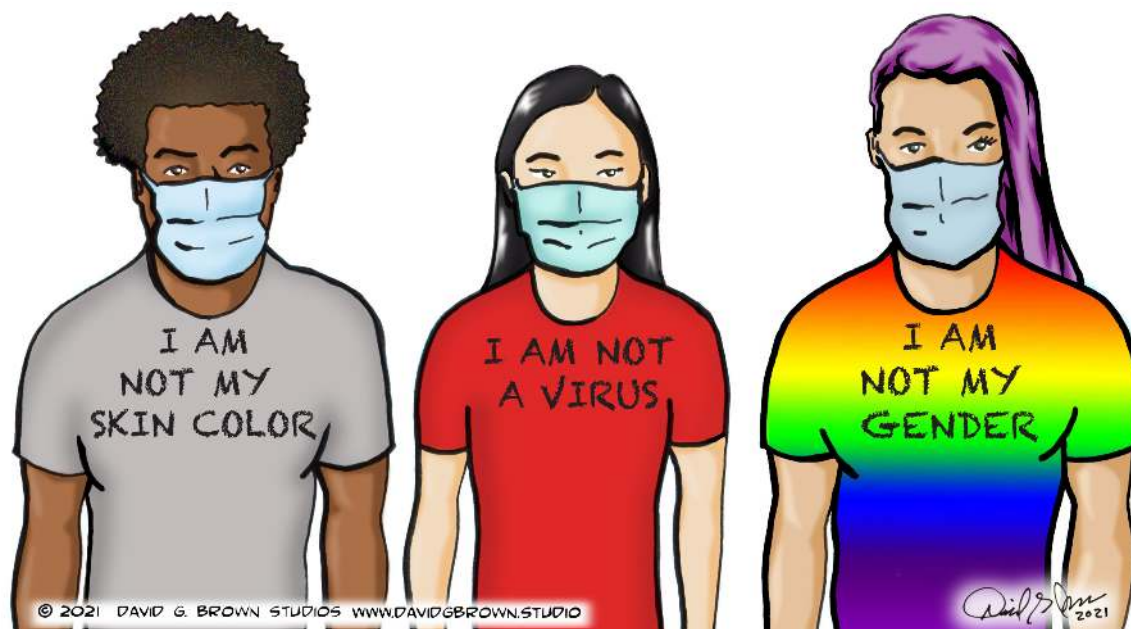
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CARTOON: BY DAVID G. BROWN

ATTACK THE VIRUS NOT OUR NEIGHBORS



• NURY MARTINEZ AND MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS •

Fighting COVID-19 Means Fighting the Cycle of Homelessness

A senior citizen living alone in a hotel room he can barely afford. Families starting down eviction because a parent is one of the millions of Californians to lose their job this year. More than 269,000 K-12 students currently experiencing, or on the brink of homelessness across California, enough to fill Dodger Stadium five times over.

This is the picture of homelessness in Los Angeles today -- a crisis that has been allowed to fester for decades, and has greatly worsened due to COVID-19.

With the COVID-19 endangering the lives of those already experiencing homelessness, forcing those already on the brink out of their homes, throwing even more Angelenos into housing instability because of lost wages and jobs, our homelessness crisis has reached a new low.

And what's clear is that if we don't take action now, the crisis within a crisis will still get even worse.

In July of 2019, well before COVID-19 took

hold, Governor Newsom appointed the new Council of Regional Homeless Advisors, a coalition of elected officials and nonprofit leaders from across the state.

The Homeless Council was charged with mapping a path to reduce homelessness, improve access to mental health and shelter services, and reduce the cost, while boosting the supply of housing options.

In January 2020, the Homeless Council proposed three key recommendations to finally reverse the cycle of homelessness in California: create an enforceable accountability mandate to end homelessness; adopt a unified strategy across the state; and create a single point of authority for homelessness in California.

We believed then, and believe now, that our entire state must come together, agree on a cohesive vision, and hold our leaders accountable. The time for piecemeal solutions is over.

Just weeks after the key goals were proposed, COVID-19 hit our communities. It became impossible



NURY MARTINEZ

for leaders across the state to prioritize homelessness as they worked to stem the bleeding.

Now a year later, the virus continues to ravage our communities, and elected officials across the state are working to chart a path forward for California as the 2021 legislative session begins.

As we all work together to rebuild Los Angeles, it's critical for us to remember: fighting COVID-19 means fighting homelessness. With so many Angelenos



MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS

experiencing homelessness -- and so many more on the brink -- to fully heal from COVID-19, we can't go back to before. We must move forward, and ensure every Angeleno has a place to call home.

That's why the City Council of Los Angeles endorsed Assembly Bill 71, authored by Assemblymember Luz Rivas, which is currently being considered by the State Assembly. The coalition behind this bill includes Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti, Sacramento

Mayor Darryl Steinberg and Oakland Mayor Libby Schaaf, along with leading homelessness advocates and nonprofit leaders from across the state.

This legislation is historic: it would establish a permanent source of funding for fighting homelessness on multiple fronts. Simply by closing a major corporate tax loophole that allows corporations to avoid paying taxes on overseas income, and by resetting the tax rate on major corporations back to what it was in 1980, we can raise the revenue we need to reverse the cycle of homelessness in our state.

It runs counter to our values that corporations are protected -- or, in some cases, have benefited -- from the impacts of COVID-19, while the virus hits low-income communities and communities of color particularly hard, forcing many into homelessness at shocking rates. By taking these simple steps, we can fight for equity across California, and make housing a human right for which all

Californians are worthy.

AB 71's aims are ambitious -- and appropriately so. This new funding could prevent 28,000 people from falling into homelessness, find interim housing for 25,000 people, create affordable housing units for 43,000 people, and provide navigation, case management, and employment support to 50,000 people.

These are the thoughtful, comprehensive, and ambitious -- but achievable -- goals we need to reverse the cycle of homelessness. The people of Los Angeles, from the San Fernando Valley to South Los Angeles -- those experiencing homelessness, and the many more who are on the brink -- deserve nothing less.

Nury Martinez is President of the Los Angeles City Council and Mark Ridley-Thomas is Chair of the Los Angeles City Council Committee on Homelessness and Poverty.

• ALBERTO RETANA AND APRIL VERRETT •

Making Los Angeles Whole: Radical Recovery for All Angelinos

After World War II, the United States led an effort to rebuild war-torn Europe. After hate decimated New York City on 9/11, the world stood at the ready to help the city rebuild. After systemic racism was once again laid bare by the 1992 Civil Unrest in Los Angeles, our city leaders made deep commitments to Rebuild LA. Our public investment and personal commitment to the people who had been traumatized by years of conflict and division helped in the physical, economic, and emotional reconstruction needed after each of these traumatic events.

The twelve months of this pandemic have taken an emotional and psychological toll on all of us, but the economic pain has harshly targeted certain communities. When our city became the national epicenter of COVID-19, our most vulnerable community members bore the brunt of the crisis. Most upper-income earners remained largely unscathed and indeed increased their wealth while other families, neighbors,

and fellow Angelenos continue to pay the price for this pandemic, and have been fractured by its profound impact on all facets of life.

With the passage of a new, massive federal COVID relief package, our city will receive some \$1.3 billion in funds aimed at helping our communities recover from the economic fallout of this deadly pandemic.

With so much money flooding in, we have a unique opportunity to remake our city in a way that reflects our values. We have an obligation to address historical inequities that have divided us for generations, and to ensure a more equitable Los Angeles going forward.

LA's history has contributed to the inequality we see today. Decades of discriminatory policies in housing, racist policing, as well as zoning and planning decisions have isolated poor Black and Brown neighborhoods from the rest of Los Angeles. The policies of the past have created the inequitable impacts of our present COVID-19 reality.

According to research conducted by Advancement Project CA, South LA and East LA zip codes rank among the highest in the state for risks for infection, deaths, and a longer economic recovery, much less economic improvement. Meanwhile, 10 of the richest neighborhoods in Los Angeles County combined, representing about 323,000 people, have about 700 fewer confirmed coronavirus cases than just the city of Compton (95,000 people) alone, underscoring the vast



ALBERTO RETANA

differences in how this virus is being experienced across communities.

Government is a key driver to address systemic inequality. Thus far, our city has failed to meet the challenge. While the COVID 19 pandemic has exacerbated many of those inequalities, our rebuilding efforts coming out of this pandemic will shape our city for generations to come.

That's why community and civic leaders have developed a proposal to help ensure the city does not make the same mistakes we have made for decades.



APRIL VERRETT

We call on the City of Los Angeles to direct a \$1 billion dollar investment over the next two years towards poor and working-class families hit hardest by COVID, and develop a formula targeting 80% of the resources towards communities hardest hit by COVID. Those funds should be accountable to the people so that we see results for dollars spent.

We should also use this opportunity to reimagine our city budget, and not simply replace what was there before. While city employees need full pay for full work, we adamantly believe the LAPD does not require additional funding. This is an opportunity to invest in additional mental health services that can reduce the need for police on the streets, and create a more humane response to community issues. Imagine the positive impact on public safety and the economy if this city invests in careers for our youth, housing for all and economic opportunity for disadvantaged women.

The COVID vaccine has tapped into our collective humanity and desire to care for our communities. We have seen people stepping up to help their neighbors, to provide charitable donations, and volunteer at vaccination clinics--demonstrating that there is more awareness than ever about the need for more equity and equal opportunity for all of us.

We are at a critical moment in our city's history, one that comes from tremendous hardship and suffering. But one that also provides a great opportunity to build back better.

We must seize this moment to invest in imagination and needs, not backfilling the past. Let's rebuild Los Angeles in a way that reflects our values and extends opportunity to all Angelinos.

Alberto Retana is president and CEO of Community Coalition and April Verrett is the president of S.E.I.U. Local 2015.

Women, Holding Up Half of Heaven: Sustaining the Movement and the World

{continued from Pg. C-1}

turing and building our future in the intellectual and moral formation of our children and also helping to shape Kawaida into the radically transformative thought and practice it is. We pay homage to the women of Us for co-building the community of values Us strove and strives still to be, based on and developed through the Nguzo Saba (The Seven Principles) representing the best of African thought and practice. Moreover, we pay rightful and repeated homage to the women of Us who were at the center of our efforts to build and be a revolutionary school, culturally grounded, politically conscious and morally committed to teach revolution through thought, speech and action.

Us also defined itself as a hekalu (temple) and kutaniko (congregation). We said our houses and Hekalu were sacred places where we teach and practice our highest ethical and spiritual values, values that protect, preserve and promote human life and the well-being of the world, and women were/are guardians, collaborators and guides in this thought and practice. We said our congregation was a community of faith, work, service and struggle committed to revolution, national liberation, and nation building.

To carry out these tasks, Us conceived and constructed itself as a revolutionary party, an organization dedicated to learning, teaching and practicing revolution. And the women of Us were at the heart and center of Us' education, mobilization, organization and confrontation in the interest of radical transformation of ourselves and society. And finally, Us saw and defined itself as a "nation becoming, the core and consciousness of a national community struggling to reconstruct itself in its own terms, image and interests." We, as women and men, understood and asserted ourselves as a vanguard organization in the process and practice of "laying an essentially cultural and institutional framework and foundation for an emerging self-conscious nation of people, committed to the dignity-affirming, life-enhancing and world-preserving views, values and practices of our ancestors. Finally, we pay rightful homage the women of Us who literally saved the or-

ganization from the destruction the state had planned for us. When the FBI with its Cointelpro and the local police came to capture and kill us, the women of Us assumed the role of leadership to preserve the organization and the work they and the men of Us had done to build and sustain the organization and the Movement. When the state increased its suppressive strategies and practices, putting Us, the men, in captivity on trumped-up charges, driving us under guard and forcing us into exile to escape capture, imprisonment and deadly raids, the women of Us emerged as visible leaders, expanding their administrative, security and public roles. And as Matamba (women warriors), they trained in the martial arts and weaponry

in commitment to the practice of self-defense taught by Queen Nzingha Mbande and Min. Malcolm X. And they did this, as they self-consciously declared to, "carry on the revolutionary struggle in the absence of the men" and also when they returned. In a word, they said, it was a commitment to practice Ujima, collective work and responsibility to continue the liberation struggle til victory was won. They had earlier begun to challenge and expand the concept and practice of their roles assigned in the early days of the organization. Now during the crisis, they insisted on the revolutionary practice of Ujima, raising the level of thought and practice to make revolution, national liberation and nation building a living

reality, inclusive in its practice and promise, and truly prefiguring the good world we, together in love and struggle, dared to imagine and achieve.

Dr. Maulana Karenga, Professor and Chair of African Studies, California State University-Long Beach; Executive Director, African American Cultural Center (Us); Creator of Kwanzaa; and author of Kwanzaa: A Celebration of Family, Community and Culture, | The Message and Meaning of Kwanzaa: Bringing Good Into the World and | Essays on Struggle: Position and Analysis, www.AfricanAmericanCulturalCenter-LA.org; www.OfficialKwanzaaWebsite.org; www.MaulanaKarenga.org.



WINDOW

Forgiving for Living

Fair Play, Means Fair Pay



As we close out Women's History Month there has been much attention paid to the progress women have made over the years. The stone-cold reality is, women are still underrepresented at every level in the workplace, and women of color are the most underrepresented group of all, lagging behind white men, men of color and white women. The Webster dictionary defines progress as, to

move forward, to develop to a higher, better, or more advanced stage. Based on this definition Black women are not making progress because we are not moving forward, faring better, or moving up higher in the workplace; in fact, we are falling behind. Black women are caught in the dangerous and deadly cultural crosshairs of sexism and racism.

We as Black women are often disregarded in

the promotion and pay raise process, leading to ongoing issues of pay disparity. The Census Bureau shows that Black women earn 62 cents for every dollar earned by white men, a figure that is less than the 82 cents the average woman earns for every dollar earned by men. When looking at the total workforce in the U.S., Black women account for 7% of the population, but make up 12% of minimum

wage earners. McKinsey & Company, the international consulting firm reported that men currently hold 62% of manager positions, with women only holding 38%. In the C-suite, only 1 in 5 executives is a woman, while fewer than 1 in 30 is a woman of color.

I must include a footnote here that the death of George Floyd and the rise of the #BlackLivesMatter Movement caused a shift in placing African Americans in key positions, but these positions are limited to areas in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). Although this is good, we cannot stop here.

Currently, there are a record 40 women leading Fortune 500 firms, just three are women of color, none Latina and only one is Black. That Black woman is Rosalind Brewer, the former Starbucks Chief Operating Officer and graduate of Spelman Col-

lege was recently named the CEO of Walgreens. Ms. Brewer was recently quoted as saying "Black women often get mistaken as the help instead of the person in charge, they even think we are in the wrong place when we are in charge."

In order to level the playing field, to make sure girls today will have a more equitable tomorrow, employers must acknowledge that there is a pay gap between men and women doing comparable work and that inequity must change, and change quickly. If the playing field doesn't level out soon, women, especially Black women will leave corporate America. This trend may already be happening evident by the fact that Black women are the fastest-growing group of entrepreneurs among women, having grown by more than 600% in the last decade. I am one of them.

It is important that this generation of women, as well as the next generation, know that they belong in the work rooms and boardrooms and we have something special and unique to offer the workplace and the world. Workplaces must provide women with the requisite resources, relationships and responsibilities that will provide the exposure, education, and experience to fairly compete.

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'Women Warrior-Pioneers' 'Resurrection and Revival of The Conscience' 'The Mothers of Modern Gynecology' part 2

Revival: A time of awakened interest; reviving what belonged to an earlier time, but now, coming into new importance and significance previously denied for such a time as this. (askdrj)

New York Mayor Bill de Blasio agreed with The Public Design Commission and approved the decision to place Dr. J. Marion Sims statue in the cemetery where he was buried. The scriptures are clear: ...all those who accept Jesus Christ as Savior must not identify people by race, or income

level or slavery (Galatians 3:26-28). Everyone who comes to Jesus Christ is identified by the oneness of "faith" and faith alone in our creator and His Son, Jesus Christ. There is no partiality, nor is there another passageway or intermediary, nor mediator into His divine kingdom. One might ask, "How can this be?" Unfortunately, acts are committed on people because of their skin color or other reasons of prejudice. We are speaking about spiritual things. You recall when Jesus was asked about the

seven brothers...(who had no children and all of them died. The wife (according to custom) was passed on to the next brothers and sequence? The question was asked about the wife who had been married many times; Jesus told them (Matthew 12:23; 22:25-30), "There is neither marrying nor be given in marriage at the resurrection." When the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom (Matthew 27:51) that broke down the middle wall partition. No more separation, racism and turning up noses. We have immediate access to His grace through His resurrection. The bible does not condone slavery or abortions. You remember Shiphrah and Puah, the midwives: (Exodus 1:15) who were important enough for their names to be memorialized in the Bible). The Pharaoh ordered them to kill the Hebrew babies. They bravely defied the Pharaoh's orders and refused to kill the babies! Who has given authority to kill babies? Not God Almighty! There is a highly intelligent adversary who lurks around to immediately snatch away consciences, the moral compass which tells right from wrong. (abstract-askdrj)

"This week, "Hidden Brain is returning to our archives to grapple with the troubling history of medical experimentation on African Americans and how that history connects to the unequal medical care African Americans still receive today. Black patients continue to receive

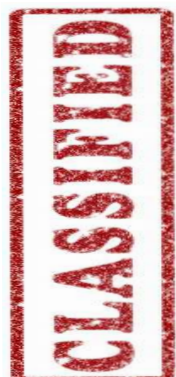
less pain medication for broken bones and cancer. Black children receive less pain medication than white children for appendicitis. One reason for this is that many people inaccurately believe that blacks literally have thicker skin than whites and experience less pain. The failure to recognize the pain of black patients can be tracked far back in the history of American medicine. Dr. James Marion Sims, a 19th-century physician, has been dubbed the father of modern gynecology. He's honored by three statues across the United States, one of which describes him as treating both empresses and slave women." This week, we consider what — and whom — this inscription leaves out. Invisible in his shadow are the enslaved women on whom he experimented. Today, they are unknown and unnamed except for three: Anarcha, Lucy, and Betsey. We speak with Dr. Vanessa Gamble, a physician and historian, to investigate Dr. Sims' complicated legacy. He perfected a surgery that continues to help women today, but he practiced this technique through experimental surgeries on unanesthetized enslaved women. Hidden Brain also spoke with poet Bettina Judd. She helps us connect the experiences of Anarcha, Lucy, and Betsey to the ways black patients are treated today." "The present work examines beliefs associated with racial bias in pain management, a

{See PARKER C-5}

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UNDER DIRECTION OF THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS, DEPUTY EXECUTIVE OFFICER AND ASSISTANT DEPUTY EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF LEGISLATIVE AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS, THE SELECTED CANDIDATE WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR:</p> <p>-INTERPRETING AND EXECUTING SOUTH COAST AQMD RULES/ REGULATIONS AND POLICIES/PROGRAMS AS THEY RELATE TO THE COORDINATION AND DISSEMINATION OF READILY UNDERSTANDABLE INFORMATION TO VARIOUS MEDIA OUTLETS</p> <p>-ISSUING PRESS RELEASES AND ACTING AS THE MEDIA SPOKESPERSON FOR THE AGENCY</p> <p>-PREPARING OP-ED COLUMNS FOR NEWSPAPERS AND WRITING TALKING POINTS FOR GOVERNING BOARD MEMBERS AND THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER WHEN THEY ARE BEING INTERVIEWED BY MEDIA OUTLETS</p> <p>-ATTENDING AND NETWORKING WITH OTHER MEDIA ORGANIZATIONS AT CONFERENCES, COMMUNITY EVENTS, PUBLIC WORKSHOPS, HEARING AND</p>	<p>TOWN MEETING, ETC.</p> <p>-SUPERVISING THE MEDIA OFFICE AND ITS STAFF MEMBERS</p> <p>DEADLINE TO APPLY - APRIL 1, 2021, 5:00PM PST.</p> <p>TO APPLY, PLEASE VISIT OUR CAREERS PAGE AT: HTTP://WWW.AQMD.GOV/CAREERS</p> <p>VICE PRESIDENT OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AT WEST LOS ANGELES COLLEGE</p> <p>WEST LOS ANGELES COLLEGE ANNOUNCES AN OPENING FOR A VICE PRESIDENT OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS. THE VICE PRESIDENT OF ACADEMIC AFFAIRS REPORTS DIRECTLY TO THE PRESIDENT AND IS A MEMBER OF THE SENIOR STAFF. S(HE) SERVES AS THE CHIEF INSTRUCTIONAL OFFICER OF THE COLLEGE AND IS RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL OPERATIONS OF THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM, INCLUDING PLANNING, POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND BUDGET MANAGEMENT. DEADLINE TO APPLY IS APRIL 9, 2021, AT 4:30 PM. FOR MORE INFORMATION THE APPLICATION AND SELECTION PROCESS, VISIT THE LACCD ONLINE JOB ANNOUNCEMENT WEBSITE AT HTTPS://LACCD.CSOD.COM/ATS/CAREERSITE/JOBDETAILS.ASPX?SITE=6&ID=975</p> <p>FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REGARDING THIS POSITION, PLEASE CONTACT: VICKY NESIA AT NESIAVC@WLAC.EDU</p>	<p>DIMENSIONAL FUND ADVISORS CAREER OPPORTUNITIES</p> <p>DIMENSIONAL FUND ADVISORS, A LEADING GLOBAL INVESTMENT MANAGER, IS LOOKING FOR MOTIVATED CANDIDATES TO JOIN OUR HIGH PERFORMING TEAMS IN SANTA MONICA. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT HTTP://CAREERS.DIMENSIONAL.COM</p> <p>320</p> <p>PROFESSIONAL SERVICES</p> <p>COMPUTER & WEBSITE SERVICES</p> <p>"WE COME TO YOU" HOME & BUSINESS PC REPAIR, PC NETWORKING, VIDEO CAMERAS,WEBSITE DESIGN</p> <p>CITY WEBSITE SERVICES</p> <p>8611 CRENSHAW BLVD. INGLEWOOD, CA</p> <p>WWW.CITYWEBSERVICES.NET</p> <p>330</p> <p>BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES</p> <p>TAP INTO A MULTI-BILLION DOLLAR INDUSTRY</p> <p>LEARN HOW YOU CAN CREATE YOUR OWN FINANCIAL INDEPENDENCE WITHIN THE WATER INDUSTRY BY WORKING AT HOME.</p> <p>CALL 323-559-5537</p> <p>HERE IS THE KEY: HTTPS://WWW.MED2G0H2O.COM/?v=GqY50zEP</p>	<p>***FREE PERSONALITY TEST***</p> <p>YOUR PERSONALITY DETERMINES YOUR HAPPINESS.</p> <p>KNOW WHY? FIND OUT HERE: HTTPS://WWW.SCIENTOLOGY-INGLEWOOD.ORG/PERSONALITY-TEST/</p> <p>OR CALL (310)419-8200</p> <p>NO MATTER THE PROBLEM, SOMETHING CAN BE DONE ABOUT IT! THE STAFF OF THE CHURCH OF SCIENTOLOGY INGLEWOOD AND THE COMMUNITY CENTER WISH YOU EVEN GREATER HAPPINESS THIS YEAR.</p> <p>OUR HELP IS YOURS.</p> <p>HTTPS://WWW.SCIENTOLOGY-INGLEWOOD.ORG/ OR CALL 310 419-8200</p> <p>860</p> <p>ELECTRICAL</p> <p>ELECTRICIAN ON DUTY ANY ELECTRICAL REPAIR AND TROUBLESHOOTING</p> <p>SENIOR CITIZEN DISCOUNT UPGRADES</p> <p>24 HOURS SERVICE (213) 595-2912</p> <p>C-10 #571792</p>



‘Women Warrior-Pioneers’ ‘Resurrection and Revival of The Conscience’

‘The Mothers of Modern Gynecology’ part 2

{continued from Pg. A-1}

critical health care domain with well-documented racial disparities. Specifically, this work reveals that a substantial number of white laypeople and medical students and residents hold false beliefs about biological differences between blacks and whites and demonstrates that these beliefs predict racial bias in pain perception and treatment recommendation accuracy.

than other nationalities.(askdrj) [Hidden Brain is hosted by Shankar Vedantam and produced by Maggie Penman, Jennifer Schmidt, Rhaina Cohen, and Renee Klahr. Our intern is Chloe Connelly, and our supervising producer is Tara Boyle.

Assemblymember Holden’s ‘George Floyd Law’ Clears First Policy Committee

SENTINEL NEWS SERVICE

Assemblymember Chris Holden’s police reform legislation, AB 26, passed the California State Assembly Committee on Public Safety. AB 26 establishes clear guidelines for police responsibility and accountability when witnessing excessive force by another member of law enforcement.

“We are calling for responsibility and accountability,” said Assemblymember Chris Holden. “Instituting these core values is paramount to building public trust that has eroded between law enforcement and communities across California.”

California law requires police officers to intercede when observing another officer using force that is beyond that which is necessary,

but there are no universal measures used to determine that an officer has in fact interceded. In the case of George Floyd, a lawyer for one of the accused junior officers argued that there was intervention because the junior officer asked the supervising officer if they should turn Floyd on his side.

AB 26 provides a selection of techniques to establish that an officer has in fact attempted to intercede. The bill also expands on current law to disqualify a person from being a police officer if they used excessive force that resulted in great bodily injury or death or to have failed to intercede in that incident.

If AB 26 becomes law, police officers would be required to intercede when witnessing excessive force under the updated guidelines

and report the incident in real time to dispatch or the watch commander. The officer’s due process will be protected as the employing agency would review evidence and determine if the offending officer met the standard for intervention. Retaliation against officers that report violations of law or regulation of another officer to a supervisor would be prohibited.

Last year, Governor Newsom’s Policing Advisors released their recommendations which included legislation to “Require officers to intervene to prevent or stop other officers from engaging in excessive force, false arrest, or other inappropriate conduct.”

The legislation will be next heard in the Assembly Appropriations Committee.

Public Notices

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT File No. 2021044550 The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: KELLI KELS KREATIONS, 522 W 127TH APT 210, Los Angeles, CA 90044 County of LOS ANGELES

Public Notices

LOS ANGELES, CA 90008 County of LOS ANGELES Registered owner(s): TELISA ANNETTE PRESTON, 4231 DON TOMASO DRIVE UNIT 1A, LOS ANGELES, CA 90008 This business is conducted by an Individual

Public Notices

The registrant(s) started doing business on N/A. I declare that all information in this statement is true and correct. (A registrant who declares as true any material matter pursuant to Section 17913 of the Business and Professions code that the registrant knows to be false is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000).)

Public Notices

business on 12/1994. I declare that all information in this statement is true and correct. (A registrant who declares as true any material matter pursuant to Section 17913 of the Business and Professions code that the registrant knows to be false is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000).)

Public Notices

or design and construction of housing, support spaces and Public Service Programs (Affordable Housing, Low Income and Homeless Housing). The Request for Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) documents and The Procurement Process for the project will be announced at a later date via email.

Public Notices

the petition and shows good cause why the court should not grant the authority. A HEARING on the petition will be held in this court as follows: 04/15/21 at 8:30AM in Dept. 11 located at 111 N. HILL ST., LOS ANGELES, CA 90012

Public Notices

from the date of mailing or personal delivery to you of a notice under section 9052 of the California Probate Code. Other California statutes and legal authority may affect your rights as a creditor. You may want to consult with an attorney knowledgeable in California law.

Public Notices

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT File No. 2021046541 The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: 1. GRATEFUL HANDS STYLES & HAIR COLLECTION, 2. GRATEFUL HANDS BEAUTY SUPPLY STORE, 6545 S. VICTORIA AVE APT. 6, LOS ANGELES, CA 90043 County of LOS ANGELES

Public Notices

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT File No. 2021051868 The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: STOGIES CIGAR AND TOBACCO HUT, 4215 DON TOMASO DRIVE UNIT 1, Los Angeles, CA 90008 County of LOS ANGELES

Public Notices

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT File No. 2021045506 The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: BOLDEN SIGNATURE SERVICES, 12224 WALL STREET, LOS ANGELES, CA 90061 County of LOS ANGELES

Public Notices

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT File No. 2021030485 The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: UNLIMITED VENDING, 12718 KORNBLUM AVE, HAWTHORNE, CA 90250 County of LOS ANGELES

Public Notices

Any Contract awarded as a result of this solicitation may be funded in part or in full by the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration. Bidders will be required to certify that they have not been suspended or debarred from participation in federally-funded contracts.

Public Notices

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF: MICHELE ANTHONY HADNOT CASE NO. 205TPB06981 To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the WILL or estate, or both of MICHELE ANTHONY HADNOT.

Public Notices

THE PETITION FOR PROBATE requests that DAMON RAY be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent. THE PETITION requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act.

Public Notices

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT File No. 2021035156 The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: ABOVE THE RAIL BOARDSHOP, 4231 DON TOMASO DRIVE UNIT 1A,

Public Notices

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT File No. 2021042119 The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: LYNN ROSE PHOTOGRAPHY, 8726 S. SEPULVEDA BLVD D-A51, LOS ANGELES, CA 90045 County of LOS ANGELES

Public Notices

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT File No. 2021031392 The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: VISIONERING DESIGN, 4360 W SUNSET BLVD, LOS ANGELES, CA 90029 County of LOS ANGELES

Public Notices

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT File No. 2021031392 The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: VISIONERING DESIGN, 4360 W SUNSET BLVD, LOS ANGELES, CA 90029; State of Incorporation: CA This business is conducted by a Corporation

Public Notices

THE REGISTRANT(S) STARTED DOING BUSINESS ON 12/1994. I DECLARE THAT ALL INFORMATION IN THIS STATEMENT IS TRUE AND CORRECT. (A REGISTRANT WHO DECLARES AS TRUE ANY MATERIAL MATTER PURSUANT TO SECTION 17913 OF THE BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONS CODE THAT THE REGISTRANT KNOWS TO BE FALSE IS GUILTY OF A MISDEAMOUR PUNISHABLE BY A FINE NOT TO EXCEED ONE THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$1,000).)

Public Notices

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF: ONGREE PRUITT CASE NO. 21STPB01997 To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the WILL or estate, or both of ONGREE PRUITT.

Public Notices

THE PETITION FOR PROBATE requests that WILLIE C. PRUITT be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent.

PROBATE

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF: ONGREE PRUITT CASE NO. 21STPB01997

To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the WILL or estate, or both of ONGREE PRUITT. A PETITION FOR PROBATE has been filed by WILLIE C. PRUITT in the Superior Court of California, County of LOS ANGELES.

GOVERNMENT

Notice Of Request For Qualifications (RFQ) It is hereby given notice that private owners, Oneismus Holdings, LLC and Think Big Investments, LLC, for commercial properties in the city of Los Angeles, issue a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) from design build entities.

Scope of services consist of a re-purpose structure and/



LOS ANGELES SENTINEL SPORTS

THURSDAY, MARCH 25, 2021

www.lasentinel.net

D-1

Lakers Legend Elgin Baylor Passes Away

BY AMANDA SCURLOCK
Sports Writer

Legendary basketball player Elgin Baylor passed away from natural causes on March 22, he was 86-

White teenager attempted to kidnap him. He compared his speed to that of a rabbit, which soon became his nickname.

Living in the time of segregation, Baylor and his

the first being Bill Russell.

The next year, he takes the Seattle Chieftains to the championship game of the NCAA Tournament. During his entire college career, Baylor averaged



Earvin "Magic" Johnson helps clear streamers from a statue honoring Minneapolis and Los Angeles Lakers great Elgin Baylor after its unveiling outside Staples Center in Los Angeles on Friday, April 6, 2018.



Elgin Baylor stands next to a statue, just unveiled, honoring the Minneapolis and Los Angeles Lakers great, outside Staples Center in Los Angeles on Friday, April 6, 2018.

years-old. His acrobatic style of play impacted several NBA greats that came after him. His talents saved the Lakers franchise from bankruptcy, allowing them to move to Los Angeles in 1960.

Baylor was born on September 16, 1934, to Uzziel and John Baylor and was the youngest of five children. Soon after his birth, the Baylor family moved from Virginia to Washington D.C..

Baylor was a Baptist for his whole life, him and his wife, Elaine, attribute their strong prayer life to their success.

"I always believe that whatever I did in life, I always prayed. I believed that I served a loving and forgiving God," Baylor said in an interview with the Sentinel in 2018.

At the age of eight, Baylor realizes his nimbleness and speed when a

two older brothers would sneak into a Whites-only park at night to play basketball.

"The Black kids didn't have a playground with swings, swimming pool, tennis courts and volleyball like the White kids did," recalled Elgin. "We played basketball with a tennis ball because we didn't have a basketball. We would sneak into the White kids park at night to play on their nice courts and the police would run us off."

He played for Phelps Vocational High School and for a club team called "the Stonewalls." He then transferred to Spingarn High School and averaged over 36 points per game as a senior. Baylor started his college career at the College of Idaho and transferred to Seattle University.

By that time, he was the second-best college basketball player in the country,

31.3 points and 19.5 rebounds per game. In 1958, Baylor enters the NBA Draft and goes first overall to the Minneapolis Lakers.

The franchise offers him \$25,000, which was the highest rookie salary at the time. He took a team that finished 19-53 the prior season to the NBA Finals, averaging 24.9 points, 15 rebounds and 4.1 assists per game during the season. During the Playoffs, Baylor scored 25.5 points, 12 rebounds, and 3.3 assists. His performance saves the financially ailing franchise.

Being a reluctant aircraft passenger, prayer aided Baylor through many plane flights, especially a plane flight through a brutal snowstorm in 1960.

"Once, we crash-landed in a cornfield in Iowa in a DC-3. I'll never forget. It was snowing and the plane

started shaking and the wind was rocking it. We started going lower everybody was praying, making promises to God even though they hadn't been to church in so long," Baylor said.

Despite his success, Baylor endured discrimination. In his youth, White police officers harassed his family. With the Lakers, a hotel in Charleston, West Virginia refused to give Baylor a room. This led him to sit out an NBA game in protest.

Baylor got drafted into the military after his rookie season; he was required to complete six weeks of basic training, six months of active duty and six years of summer assignments. Active duty interrupts his ability to compete throughout the 1961-1962 season. He was only able to play 48 games, but averaged 38.3 points that season.

Baylor knew how to get the Lakers to the NBA Finals, but the franchise did not have an answer for Russell and the Celtics. His rookie season is the inception of the storied Lakers

vs Celtics rivalry. Baylor's Lakers would meet the Celtics in six NBA Finals series with the Celtics going undefeated. Despite taking the franchise to seven NBA Finals, Baylor did not lead the Lakers to a

championship title in any of these series.

He retired early in the 1971-1972 season, the Lakers ultimately won the NBA title and rewarded Baylor with a championship ring. After 14 seasons, Baylor averages 27.4 points, 13.5 rebounds, and 4.3 assists per game.

Baylor made 11 NBA All-Star games and has the second most All-NBA First Team honors in the Lakers franchise with 10. On November 15, 1960, Baylor scored 71 points in a game against the New York Knicks.

From 1974-1979, Baylor was the head coach of the New Orleans Jazz, he then worked with the L.A. Clippers as general manager for over 20 years. Baylor sued then owner Donald Sterling for age discrimination after being fired but ultimately lost the court battle.

Baylor was inducted into the Naismith Basketball Hall of Fame in 1977 and his no. 22 jersey was retired on November 9, 1983. In April 2018, the Lakers honored Baylor by giving him a statue in front of the Staples Center.

He leaves behind his wife Elaine, his three children Alison, Alan and Krystle and his oldest sister Gladys.

Facebook photo of Elgin "Rabbit" Baylor.

Elgin "Rabbit" Baylor was an 11-time NBA All Star who averaged 27.4 points and 13.5 rebounds during his NBA career.

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Student Athlete of the Week: Maxi Duncan

BY AMANDA SCURLOCK
Sports Writer

Tennis player Maxi Duncan recently accepted an offer to attend Harvard next fall and will be a member of the Crimson women's tennis team. She chose Harvard over Purdue, Columbia, USC, North Carolina State, UCLA, and Brown.

Duncan is one of the top 20 best junior tennis players in the nation.

Duncan visited UCLA, Columbia, Brown, and USC prior to making her decision. The recruiting process involved her interviewing with coaches via Zoom and doing virtual tours.

"I visited with my dad; once we got on campus, it was very clear that that's where I wanted to be," Duncan said. "Seeing all the buildings, all the classes, and all the eating places and everything, I immediately

fell in love."

Duncan hopes to be either an English or Economics major while pursuing her dreams of being a pro tennis player.

COVID-friendly recruiting procedures has pros as well as cons according to Duncan. Certain aspects of the different programs could not be presented to her, she had to fully understand what she wanted out of a team without knowing everything about some of the programs.

"I wasn't able to meet the team of the schools," Duncan said. "It was more difficult, but a lot of the schools had really great vertical tours that we got to look at, so they definitely worked around it."

The COVID-19 pandemic affected her athletic life more than her academic life. Finding competition was difficult as many of the major tournaments were

cancelled due to the pandemic. However, Duncan found ways to compete.

"There's a couple of UTR tournaments that I was able to play," she said. "I was pretty lucky to be able

to play them."

Prior to the pandemic, Duncan would train with a small group of kids. Now she trains alone and focuses more on fitness. Duncan is a lefty who enjoys playing on

hard courts.

"I'm used to playing hard court most of the time," she said. "The ball moves quite quickly, which I like."

She plays in both singles and doubles tournaments. During the pandemic, Duncan won 16 consecutive matches and won three tournaments.

A challenging moment for Duncan was playing in her first tournament since the Pandemic began. Although she became the champion of the tournament, she faced many difficulties during some matches.

"That was the hardest just not having to play a tournament in a long time ... I was able to get to the finals and I didn't really play very well," Duncan said. "I was able to overcome it and get the victory."

Duncan attends CalPac Charter School, an NCAA-accredited online middle



Decorated tennis player Maxi Duncan aspires to either be an English or economics major at Harvard.



ENTERTAINMENT

EJ speaks... and Everybody Laughs, A lot...

The comedian and content creator brings lots of laughs with skits, conversation and situational humor.

By BRIAN W. CARTER
Contributing Writer

“Unfortunately, everything is funny to me—this is code for I’m childish and I need to grow up and please don’t sit beside me at the funeral, because you will not mourn.

“We will laugh,” said content creator, brand ambassador, author and comedian, EJ of Ejspeaks.

And I believe her and would be in tears laughing at what is supposed to be a somber occasion. Luckily for me, I didn’t have to sit next to this funny lady at a funeral to bust a gut, just get through 2020. I discovered EJ last year, surfing social media when I found a skit with her complaining about the heat and have been an admirer ever since.



COURTESY PHOTO

An Arkansas native, born and raised, EJ attended high school, college and received certification in Criminal Justice. Although headed in one direction, she stated, “neither school, nor program, would be successful—I was all over the place.” EJ shared she had aspirations for acting, writing and storytelling.

“Why I allowed myself to waste my time and the resources of school, is still a great mystery,” said EJ. “This is code for I have a



COURTESY PHOTO

Content creator, brand ambassador, author and comedian, EJ.

great deal of student loan debt.”

Starting the journey into content creating and comedy was a natural direction for EJ, although she did share there were some other factors involved.

“I began making Youtube videos because I was afraid to sleep alone,” said EJ. “My husband and I had just moved to a new location, I had just had baby #2, and my husband was working graveyards.”

She continued, “Basically, I was a wuss, a scaredy cat, if you will—any noise alarmed me, any slight sound from the upstairs or next door neighbor could have easily prompted me to call to the police. So, since there was no way I could actually sleep in fear, I started making Youtube channels.

“I went through a few changes, tweaked a few things along the way, and comedy was just something that really worked for me. I’ve been creating content

(good, bad and indifferent) for a decade now, and it has been quite the journey.”

EJspeaks has something for everybody but is geared towards people of an adult persuasion. Her content ranges from skits, to hot topics to talking about everyday situations, but always laced with pure comedy. She talked about her content, keeping things clean and the challenges of staying in your created lane.

“I just wanted to tell stories and make people laugh,” said EJ, “I wanted to cuss like Kirk Franklin, but I didn’t see the value in it. I wanted to make videos about funny stereotypical stuff, but I just couldn’t. I never saw my mother drink, smoke, or go to a club. She wasn’t vulgar and she never cursed until she got in her 50s and to be honest, she’s not very good at it-at-all.

“I am, what she showed me—that’s it.”

She continued, “I have found that being clean

keeps me in a lane of my own, and not overcrowded by all the other types of content. But I also feel like that’s what has taken so long for the world to catch on. I also feel like I boxed myself in, by continuously creating clean content, to the point that if I did create something stereotypical or something with profanity, that my core audience would feel betrayed.”

In one of her videos, EJ shared how her daughter and friends don’t actually say the word “pandemic” by substituting another “p” word in its place. She

“I say the same thing, every time, if you want to do something, just get started. There will always be someone with more followers, more views, a better camera, a better aesthetic, BUT THAT’S LITERALLY NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS. You are responsible for creating the life you want to live—it will not create itself on your behalf.”

She outlined four important points for content creators to remember: finding out what you are good at, putting it into action, continue doing it

She continued, “FJ and I make an awesome team, and he understands that this is me building the life I want to live. He has never made me feel like I had to have one or the other. It does take planning and sacrifice, and it takes a million reminders on my phone, but we get it done.”

EJ made 2020 a lot easier and a whole lot funnier as we all navigated the “paleontologist” with the hand-washing, barren grocery stores, social uprisings, the worst president ever and a lot of crazy people. She shared that the outpouring from people across social media made a difference in her life as well.

“Not everyone will tell you how your work has helped them, or how you’ve gotten them through some rough times, but I receive messages like this daily,” said EJ. “It keeps me going, especially on the days when I want to quit.

“And even for those who may never message me, thank you for the screen time, the shares, the tagging of friends to my videos.

“I am swollen with thankfulness.”

To find out more about EJ, please visit www.ejspeaks.com. You can follow Ejspeaks on Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and Youtube.



COURTESY PHOTO

EJ talks hot topics with her husband, FJ.

spoke about 2020 and how the “pastrami” helped her brand produce revenue and what future content creators need to know.

“Being in the ‘Paramount Studios’ (pandemic) really showed me that creating content could be super profitable and rewarding,” said EJ. “Again, I had been creating content for 10 years—the money was there, but barely.

“I had discovered my niche was content, but being laid off gave me time to create even more, and to do more tweaking to my brand, and to even challenge my stagnant productivity.

and let the world know that you are doing it.

Oftentimes, doing skits and conversations with her husband, FJ, this funny gal balances her talents with being a wife and mother. She shared how she manages wearing all her hats while still having time to entertain us.

“Honestly, it is the trickiest thing ever,” said EJ. “Most days, I think ‘Do I really need to feed my kids, or can I create more content?’ (This is sarcasm—a mere joke. DO NOT CALL THE COPS!). Thankfully, my husband has been there every step of the way.”



COURTESY PHOTO

FRESH NEW BHERC SPOKEN WORD COMPETITION ‘LIFT EVERY VOICE’ ANNOUNCES CALL FOR ENTRIES

BHERC harnesses the skill and vibrancy of its younger team members to create a new “Signature” program that gives way for and elevates the voices of extraordinary writers and spoken word artists around the globe.

SENTINEL NEWS SERVICE

The Black Hollywood Education and Resource Center (BHERC) along with the capable hands of its NextGen members, with pride and great excitement, announces a Call For Entries for the inaugural BHERC “Lift Every Voice” (LEV) program. This fresh and new Written and Spoken Word Competition introduces a modern pathway for expressions of the “Spoken Word” artistic medium to increase its visibility on the world stage. Beginning April 2, 2021, thru April 23, 2021, 11 PM PDT, anyone who is age 16 and above is eligible to submit. Spoken word artists, poets, creative writers, and all who desires to share their ability to tell stories; to analyze the world or situations decisively and creatively with their words; those who want to offer that knowledge in a way that is available to large and diverse audiences are encouraged to apply at www.BHERC.TV.

About the Competition
An original creation of

BHERC, “Lift Every Voice” (LEV) is managed by member Robert McCune and is an important opportunity to create recognition for poets and spoken word artists, especially the younger generation. With the intent to tap into the power of words and ideas, and to engage and nurture a younger generation, LEV intends to create a bridge to understanding the issues -- both legacy and contemporary -- that many people face today. “‘Lift Every Voice’ is an opportunity for writers and performers to speak for themselves, their families, and the world they live in. Considering the impact of the current climate of the world, and how it has proven to be debilitating, frustrating, resulting in tragedy for so many, this show provides a platform highlighting an area of artistry that is often overlooked.” stated Robert McCune, LEV program director. This program also allows BHERC LEV to call out across the globe in search of talented spoken word artists who are ready to let their words be heard.

BHERC wants them to be seen and heard and all forms of prose are accepted. However, what makes this program “fresh” and “next level” is the addition

- Contestants must be age 16 and up, (minors will need parental permission)
- 3 original or newly written works, (different subject and style)

finalists will compete in different writing and performance challenges each week. Eliminations will take place weekly, where only the top-scoring will move on towards the cash prizes.

During the competition, contestants will be judged on their written works, the performance of those works, and how well their works encompassed their challenges for that week. “‘Lift Every Voice’ puts the voicings of many stories of joy and sadness, survival, healing, and triumph across the globe front and center. No one can tell these stories with more poetic agility, visual acuity, and agitated vocal percussion than spoken word artists, poets, and creative writers. They are the voice of the people. The voice of humanity!” elated Sandra J. Evers-Manly, president and founder of BHERC. Each week Judges will mentor the contestants and go through their creative process, share a bit about the finalists and how they are handling the competition. Contestants will be

expected to give testimonials, embrace competition contrary to their fellow writers, and try to gain as much exposure as possible.

BHERC believes in the promise and power of youth and young people and has invested in their power to bring about change thru the support of programs that include the Youth Diversity Film Festival, Fight Back with Film, the Artistry in Motion animation program, and mentoring workshops and panels with entertainment industry executives. BHERC also provides scholarships and grants assistance to college students and emerging artists. “Lift Every Voice” is a natural and evolutionary addition to the family of programs that serve to empower the youth of today.

The BHERC “Lift Every Voice” Call For Entries, opens Friday, April 2, thru Friday, April 23rd, 2021 11 PM (PDT) at www.BHERC.TV. Apply today! For additional information log on to www.BHERC.org or call 310 284-3170.



of the online, character-driven, multi-episode competition.

What is Different About This Competition

- Character-driven, this multi-episode competition
 - (10) Finalist selected to compete for cash prizes
 - Finalists/creative writers meet several challenges each week
 - Finalists are asked to provide new original works with each challenge.
 - They must perform original works for all challenges.
 - Eliminations will take place weekly
- Eligibility/Requirements**

Judging Criteria
• Contestants will be judged for the following: Originality, Creativity, Performance, Presence and Connectivity.

- Timeline**
- April 16th application deadline for 1st phase (100 contestants will be chosen)
 - April 30th phase 2 contestants Announced (submit a 60-second video performing a submitted work)
 - May 14th Final (10) contestants announced
 - Competition Start Date TBA
- The competition will span ten weeks, in which



RELIGION

THURSDAY, MARCH 25, 2021

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E-1

TUTU CONNECTS WITH GOD'S PEOPLE THROUGH GIFT OF PASTORAL CARE

The Rev. Nontombi Naomi Tutu enjoys new role at All Saints Episcopal Church in Beverly Hills

BY CORA JACKSON-FOSSETT
Religion Editor

Surprising herself is one way to describe the Rev. Nontombi Naomi Tutu's approach to ministry. After years of ignoring God's call, she finally became ordained in 2016, and has been astounded by her deep love of pastoral care.

While admitting that she has always enjoyed speaking and preaching in public, Tutu believed she was an introvert and was never inclined to get close to people. But, since joining the staff of All Saints Episcopal Church in Beverly Hills and being assigned as the minister of pastoral care, she realized that God had blessed her to spiritually bond with hurting people.

"It felt like a gift to me that people were allowing me into their lives in times of real difficulty and darkness, that I could sit with people at hospital beds, when they were dying, or even celebrating the birth of a child," recalled Tutu.

"That is such an honor to be able to be with people at those times and I had not realized that until I was actually doing the work. Since then, I have come to truly love pastoral care and the opportunity it gives for a truly meaningful connection with people."

Interesting enough, Tutu was always drawn to preaching and accepted invitations to speak in pulpits throughout her adult life. However, being the daughter of the renowned Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu of Cape Town, South Africa, as well as physically resembling him, led her to resist the tug of her heart to enter the ministry.

"From the time I was born, I always heard how much I looked like my father," she said. "So the last thing I ever wanted to be was a priest because I've got my father's nose, I definitely don't want his job. I wanted to have my own way in the world. I didn't want people to say that I was following in my father's footsteps."

Tutu first felt God's call as a young adult, but refused to acknowledge it. Her belief at the time was, "No, that cannot be right. This is not at all what I want." Yet, she admitted that she possessed the gift of preaching. "So I continued to do visiting preaching, but very clearly my position was, 'I'm just visiting. This is not who I am,'" she remembered with a laugh.

Eventually, she accepted the call of God, especially after she removed her feelings of giving up her individuality

ed the call of God, especially after she removed her feelings of giving up her individuality



Rev. Nontombi Naomi Tutu

"That scared me initially, but it also gave me such a sense of freedom to say, 'Let me trust that if God wants me to be speaking, then God will be present and let me be open to that.' So I love preaching. Preaching has always been a place for me where I truly feel I am being blessed," she said.

Tutu came to All Saints in September 2020 after serving at the Cathedral of All Souls in Ashville, North Carolina. Getting acquainted with the membership during a pandemic has been challenging, still she said, "I have been very warmly welcomed by the congregation, even in the limited ways that we are able to meet because of COVID-19."

In addition, Tutu said she and the parishioners have been rewarded with the recognition that the church is not the building, but the people.

"Remember, we come out of a tradition that didn't have buildings and people worshipped in the catacombs, in each other's homes and in the wilderness," expressed Tutu.

"Not being in the building is not a limitation of our faith. In fact, it's a new way

of showing our faith and affection for one another. I think it's a gift of this pandemic to make us stop focusing on the church as a building, but the church, which is really the people of God!"

Looking towards the future, Tutu said that she aims to grow in the field of pastoral care, so that people will feel assured that they can consult with her concerning any situation they are facing. "I will be there in times of joy, in times of struggle and in times of pain. That is one of the things that I pray to God that He will give me the gift of being a good pastor," she declared.

Another prospect on her mind is spreading the message to institutional church leaders that they must work harder to address the needs of Black women and young people. "I belong to a predominately White denomination in the United States. I'd like to remind Episcopalians that we are part of the Anglican Communion and the vast majority of the members are Black women," Tutu stressed.

"We cannot be a part of this Communion and continue to shut down the voices of Black women. I would like to be a part of the 'shaking up' of the institutional church!"



COURTESY PHOTO

Pastor Shane Scott receives the first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine at the pop-up clinic at Macedonia Baptist Church in Watts.

Macedonia Baptist and Drew CDC Host COVID-19 Pop-up Clinic

Charles R. Drew University and Children's Hospital Los Angeles also co-sponsor the community event

BY MONICA ELLIS
Contributing Writer

During this unprecedented time of economic and racial unrest, the situation is compounded by daily media reports that COVID-19 is disproportionately impacting Black and Latino communities and these ethnicities are receiving COVID-19 vaccines at a dra-

matically lower rate than other communities.

Macedonia Baptist Church, Drew Child Development Corporation, Charles R. Drew University and Children's Hospital Los Angeles united to make a difference by committing to increasing vaccination access to those in underserved neighborhoods by sponsoring an innovative pop-up clinic.

On March 18, over 300 South Los Angeles Early Childhood Education (ECE) providers received

the first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine at the clinic located at Macedonia Baptist Church.

From 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., ECE providers lined the blocks leading to the pop-up clinic that was fully staffed with more than 20 health care professionals including seven nurses practicing the social distancing policy.

Before the event, each participant registered online. Immediately following their vaccination, the participants were placed in

an observation area for 15-to-30 minutes. After clearance, the individuals were provided with a vaccination card denoting their second appointment date of April 8, (21 days later) at Macedonia Baptist Church.

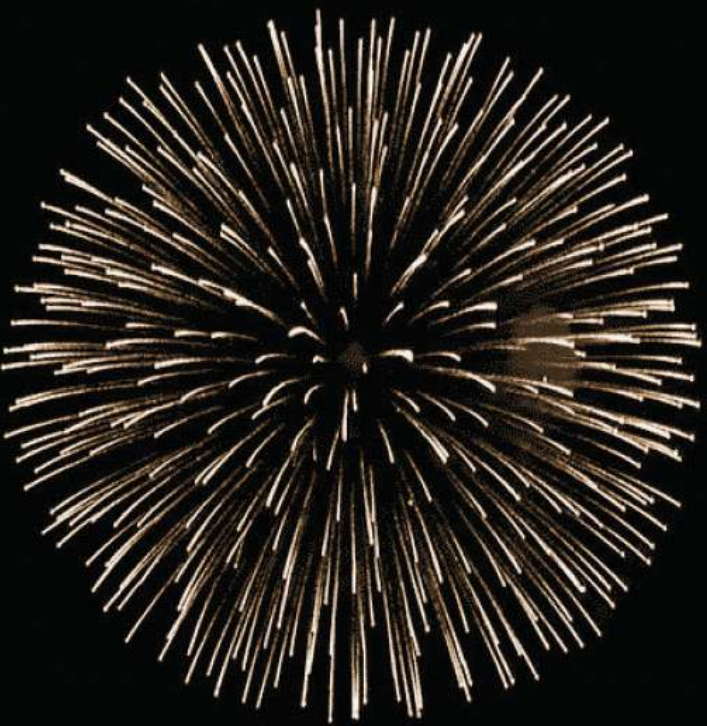
Macedonia Pastor Shane Scott and Jackie Clarke, chief financial officer/chief operating officer of Drew Child Development Corporation, also received their vaccinations. Stressing the importance of being vaccinated and eliminating barriers to the

COVID-19 vaccine, Clarke said, "Vaccination is a safe and effective way to prevent disease and save millions of lives each year. When we get vaccinated, we aren't just protecting ourselves, but also those around us."

On Saturday, April 24, Drew CDC will present its 8th annual It Takes A Village Community Awards. The virtual event will honor leaders who contribute extensively to the community.

For more information, visit drewcdc.org.

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LADWP Promotes Transportation Electrification through Leimert Park EV Shuttle Wrap

Creative design promoting EVs developed in collaboration with LACI and community partners

SENTINEL NEWS SERVICE

Electric vehicle (EV) shuttle buses in Leimert Park are helping the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) expand its outreach about the benefits of EVs and transportation electrification. In partnership with the Los Angeles Clean Tech Incubator (LACI), Circuit and other community partners, LADWP designed exterior wraps for EV shuttle buses currently offering free rides for residents of Leimert Park. The advertisement sponsored by LADWP debuted on both of the Circuit EV shuttles operating in Leimert Park in January

2021 and will be featured on the vehicles through the end of the month.

The Circuit shuttles are part of a pilot program in Leimert Park – the fourth pilot launched under LACI’s Zero Emissions Mobility and Community Pilot Project Fund, which provides clean and affordable transportation solutions as well as benefits of the green economy through workforce development and job creation. LACI was founded as an economic development initiative by LADWP and the City of Los Angeles.

“It is vital that the growing electric vehicle community in Los Angeles is an equitable one,” said Cynthia



PHOTO BY ART MOCHIZUKI

Electric vehicle (EV) shuttle bus in Leimert Park

McClain-Hill, president of the Los Angeles Board of Water and Power Commissioners. “The Leimert Park EV shuttle is a small part of the Department’s efforts to raise awareness about how EVs can benefit the South L.A. community, as well as all Angelenos. The Department was proud to collaborate with the local community to create messaging that is authentic and relatable. We look forward to more collaborations like this to promote EVs and other money-saving programs for our customers throughout our community.”

In designing the creative wraps, LADWP aimed to promote zero emission transportation in the area, raise awareness about the Department’s EV incentives and celebrate the heritage of Leimert Park. The Department collaborated with pilot

program members to ensure the design complemented and reflected the community. Community partners included We Love Leimert, KAOS Networks, Ride On! Bike Shop/Co-op, CEDC/IMHP, South LA Cafe and SankofaCity.

The effort is part of an

overall focus on ensuring equity throughout the Department’s electric transportation programs by providing outreach and information on the Department’s rebates and programs to traditionally underserved communities, which are disproportionately impacted by

pollution from the transportation sector. In addition to increasing outreach to promote awareness and education about EVs, the Department currently offers an additional \$1,000 rebate, up to \$5,000, for eligible commercial Level 2 charging stations installed in underserved communities, and is working on increasing the rebate for income-qualified customers who purchase used EVs. LADWP’s current used EV rebate program provides up to \$1,500 toward the purchase of a used battery electric or plug-in hybrid vehicle.

The Circuit EV shuttle service is available Wednesdays from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. and Thursday – Saturday from 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. Circuit offers both flag down and on-demand (via a mobile app) service within the designated pilot coverage area. Residents can also text ahead for a ride at (310) 737-2299.



PHOTO BY ART MOCHIZUKI

Electric vehicle (EV) shuttle bus in Leimert Park

Photo of the Week



Gavin Newsom @Gavin... · 3/10/21
 Last night, we shared the story of **Catarah & Shoneji** —owners of **Southern Girl Desserts** in Baldwin Hills that received a \$15,000 grant from CA that helped keep their business open and running during #COVID19.

Today, I stopped by to say hello! Their optimism for CA was contagious.



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