

Dr. Vanessa Gavin-Headen - see page A-3



Taren Harper - see page D-3

# Community Salutes Dr. George McKenna's Stellar Achievements at Gala Retirement Celebration

Legendary educator and administrator will step down from the LAUSD Board of Education in December 2024.

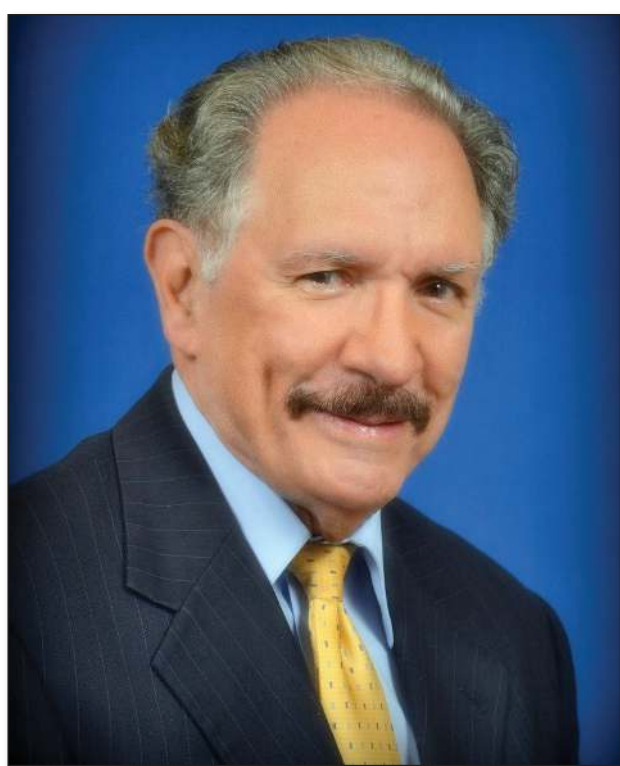
STAFF AND WIRE REPORT

A gala celebration is planned in honor of Dr. George McKenna III, who will retire in December after amassing a stellar career as an education educator and administrator.

McKenna has served more than 50 years in education, dedicating his entire life to enhancing the education of our youth often in the poorest and most needy communities in Southern California.

For the past decade, he has served as a member of the L.A. Unified School District Board of Education. In this capacity, he represented District 1, which encompasses 20 neighborhoods in South Los Angeles and the Westside.

Sherlett Hendy-Newbill - formerly an educator and coach who currently works on McKenna's district staff and was endorsed by him - was elected on Nov. 5 to succeed him on the L.A. Unified Board of Education. "It has been the honor of



Dr. George McKenna

my life to serve on the board of education. I am and will always be an educator. I never asked to be a politician and was elected reluctantly due to the unfortunate passing of my friend, Marguerite LaMotte," said McKenna

last year in an exclusive interview with the Sentinel. "I ran because my community asked, and I simply answered the call to serve as a way to continue my commitment to educating students. I have been able



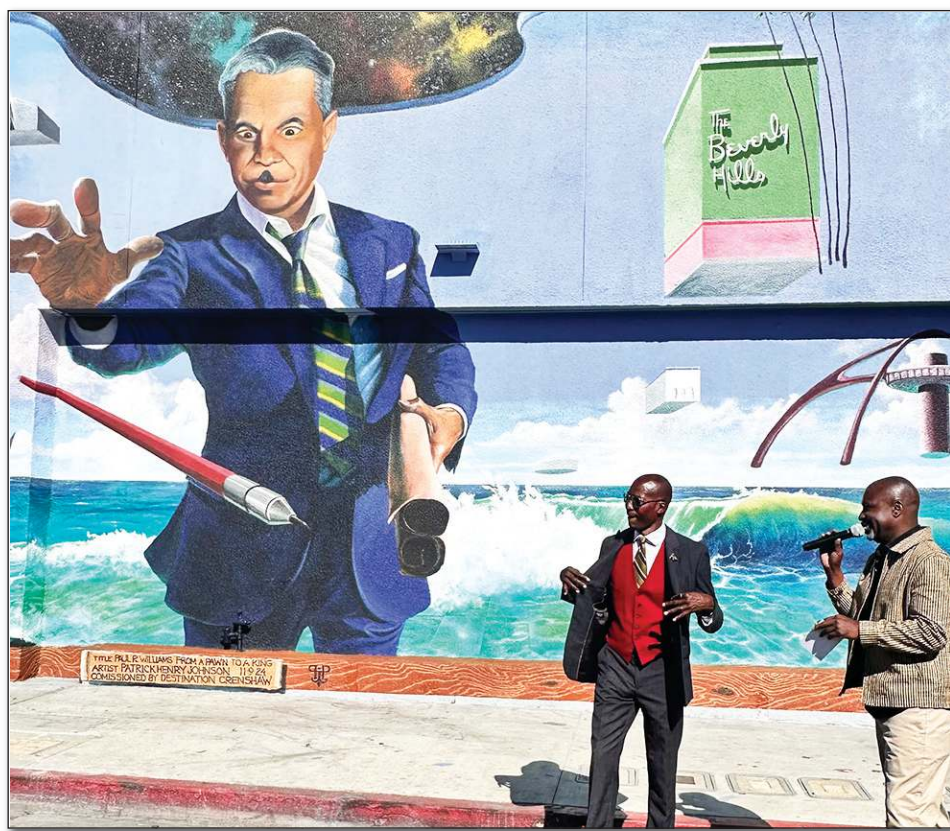
Dr. George McKenna, right, joined LAUSD Supt. Alberto Carvalho in visiting schools in the district.

to make a difference in some ways, and not as much as I would like in others," he noted. "It is time for me to move on and allow the next person to advance the work of representing the students

and families of District 1. I remain grateful to the voters, supporters, educators, students (current and former) who placed their confidence in me to represent them on the Board." Speaking about his long

relationship with McKenna, Danny J. Bakewell, Sr. stated, "George McKenna has been a friend of mine and my family since our days growing up in the same thing [See DR. GEORGE MCKENNA RETIRES on A-11]

# Destination Crenshaw Celebrates Paul R. Williams with Stunning Mural by Patrick Henry Johnson



Council President Marqueece Harris-Dawson, right, commends the talents of artist Patrick Henry Johnson, left.

BY LILA BROWN Contributing Writer

On a crisp, sunny Saturday in South Los Angeles, community members gathered to celebrate one of the city's unsung heroes.

The unveiling of Patrick Henry Johnson's latest mural, "The Pawn Who Became a King," marks another milestone in the journey of Destination Crenshaw—a powerful movement to preserve and uplift the legacy of Black Los Angeles.

This 75-foot-long mural, located at 5870 Crenshaw Blvd, wraps around the corner of the AutoZone Auto Parts store, paying homage to the legendary architect Paul Revere Williams. Known as L.A.'s most influential Black architect, Williams broke barriers and redefined

what was possible for Black professionals in his field.

Painted in Johnson's signature Heroic Surrealist style, the mural features Williams surrounded by some of his most iconic designs. His figure reaches out, grasping the architect's nib that symbolized the tool with which he shaped the city, blending artistry with community impact.

The event was graced by Council President Marqueece Harris-Dawson, who presented Patrick Henry Johnson with a Certificate of Appreciation. In his address, Harris-Dawson emphasized the importance of projects like Destination Crenshaw, especially during times of social unrest.

"The art and design of this project are led by Black women, and many of our key monuments are tributes to Black women. This mural

stands as a testament to the brilliance and resilience of our community," he said.

For Jason Foster, president and CEO of Destination Crenshaw, the day was more than just an unveiling—it was a moment of cultural celebration.

"Projects like this remind us of our power to create spaces of safety, belonging, and pride for Black people in Los Angeles," Foster remarked.

"The first thing that people see when they emerge from the train is this mural. It's a statement of who we are, a symbol of resilience and creativity."

Williams was born in Los Angeles in 1894 and rose to prominence despite the challenges of racial prejudice. A true trailblazer, Williams was the first Black

[See DESTINATION CRENSHAW on A-11]

# Maggie Hathaway Golf Course Renewal Project Breaks Ground

The golf course's upgrade will include a reimagined driving range, a clubhouse, and more.

BY BRIAN W. CARTER Contributing Writer

"We're celebrating the rejuvenation of Maggie Hathaway Golf Course," said Fred Terrell, vice chairman of investment banking at Wells Fargo & Company.

"We're very excited and I think this will be regarded as one of the best Par 3s in the state. You're going to see a before and after in 12 months that's going to be remarkable."

The County of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation, in

partnership with the Fore Youth Golf Foundation and American Golf celebrated the groundbreaking of the Maggie Hathaway Golf Course renewal project.

One year ago, California State Senator Steven Bradford and L.A. County Supervisor Holly Mitchell took part in a public signing for the upgrade of the golf course. Now, a year later, they're here for the groundbreaking, ready to see what they started take shape.

"I had the privilege of serving about a decade in the state legislature with my col-

league Mr. Bradford and ran for the board in 2020 and made the commitment then that I was going to leave the second district better than I found it," said Mitchell.

"A part of that commitment, really based on my own lived experience, was to make sure that our county assets in the second district were the best they could be—the swimming pool down the way, the incredible pools and the incredible county parks are the best

[See MAGGIE HATHAWAY GOLF COURSE on A-11]



The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors approved an investment of \$7.8 million for the Maggie Hathaway Renewal Project.

# SoLa Foundation Transforms South L.A. with Tech and Education Initiatives

BY DANA ELAINE CARROLL  
Contributing Writer

The future of South L.A. is in tech and innovation, and the SoLa Foundation is taking measures to prepare future generations.

As one of the largest digital deserts in L.A. County, South L.A. faces a massive digital divide, creating significant barriers to education, employment, and future opportunities. The SoLa Foundation, the non-profit arm of the SoLa family of organizations, is a key player in bridging this gap through an array of programs.

Daniel Rosa, senior



COURTESY PHOTO

SoLa Foundation: NFL Player Chris Conley partners with SoLa to provide a film fellowship program.

ship Center at The Beehive to train and inspire the next generation. Since then, nearly 5,000 students, ages 8 to 24, have participated in workforce development

wield the latest technology and tools to address real problems.

Other notable partnerships include Live Nation, Howmet Aerospace Foun-

ing candle molds shaped like shoes. With the Tech Center's support, she created a prototype, developed a business plan, and secured vendor opportunities with LAUSD and local markets.

John, another success story, joined the Live Nation Next Gen Fellowship, where he trained in live event production before joining SoLa Studios as a music coordinator, quickly advancing to a full producer role.

This exposure to real-world experience supports SoLa's commitment to nurturing South L.A.'s future entrepreneurs and creators. The success of this program has also led to the development of a model being replicated internationally by Live Nation.

SoLa is expanding its educational initiatives with the Operation Impact mentorship program, matching students with mentors based on shared interests to help build careers and supply local businesses with emerging talent.

"Everything we do is really about expansion," SoLa Studios Executive Director Monty Marsh stated.

"Expansion with what we are doing, expansion in education, expansion in the lives that we're touching, and expansion in the bank accounts that are growing."

Another expansion, scheduled to open in 2025, is a tech center in Crenshaw, which will be housed within a 195-unit affordable housing complex, contributing to the "Destination Crenshaw" ecosystem. The SoLa Foundation collaborates closely with community leaders, including L.A. Council President Marqueece Harris-Dawson and Congresswoman Maxine Waters, for

community development.

Congresswoman Kamagler-Dove secured a \$1 million federal grant for the Crenshaw expansion, and in partnership with Live Nation, the new SoLa Tech and Entertainment Center will provide the same opportunities to more youth, with plans to expand to adult education.

For more information and to explore available opportunities, visit the SoLa Tech Center at The Beehive to see their work in action. Visit the website [www.thesolafoundation.org](http://www.thesolafoundation.org) and follow on LinkedIn and Instagram @thesolafoundation for updates.



COURTESY PHOTO

Congresswoman Kamagler-Dove helps secure a \$1M grant for Crenshaw development.

director of Partnerships, commented, "We're really driven by four pillars of social impact, and it's around access: access to housing, access to jobs, access to capital and ownership, and access to education."

"Our theory of change is that if you're able to open up the channels to those four critical areas, you could make significant progress in curbing intergenerational poverty in South L.A."

In January 2022, the SoLa Foundation opened the Tech and Entrepreneur-

programs focused on fields such as cybersecurity, entertainment, and engineering. The Foundation's College Scholarship Program has awarded 161 scholarships, totaling over \$1.7 million, with 92% going to first-generation college students.

The Tech and Entrepreneurship Center offers diverse curricula and opportunities, powered by partnerships with noteworthy leaders in tech, including Riot Games and Microsoft, hosting events such as hackathons — teaching students how to

dation, and NFL player Chris Conley, who established the Chris Conley Film Fellowship, pairing L.A. and Atlanta students with mentors to create short films. The center offers programs in music, sound engineering, sewing, graphic design, e-sports, and more, providing a broad spectrum of opportunities for youth exploring their skills and interests.

A major focus of SoLa's programs is entrepreneurship. Nia, a 17-year-old student who began at the Tech Center at 14, developed a business mak-



COURTESY PHOTO

Students work on projects in the Material Science and Engineering Lab.



COURTESY PHOTO

The SoLa Foundation trains young people in many skills.

## Mulenga Strengthens Bonds Between Los Angeles and Lusaka through Sister City Committee

BY SHELBY STEPHENS  
Contributing Writer

A humanitarian is often described as someone who has a genuine concern for or helping to improve the welfare and happiness of people. Fitting that definition is Dr. Mwelwa Mulenga, vice president for Energy and Infrastructure for the Los Angeles-Lusaka Sister City Committee and a scholar-practitioner in entrepreneurship and organizational leadership.

Zambia native Mulenga came to America over 20 years ago and became a successful entrepreneur and businessman. He is an active member of the Los Angeles-Lusaka Sister City Committee as Lusaka, Zambia is the first and oldest, founded in 1968, African Sister City to the City of Los Angeles.

In a recent interview with the L.A. Sentinel, Dr. Mulenga discussed his work in America and Zambia, what he is most proud of, and how L.A. natives can get involved with the Sister City Committee.

When asked about the Sister City connection, Dr. Mulenga shared, "Los Angeles and Lusaka are Sister Cities, if you go to Lusaka you will feel at home there. It's a nice place full of good

people, you will feel like you're at home.

"Our Black brothers and sisters were taken away 400+ years ago and every time they set their feet on Lusaka soil, they feel they have come back home. We have a duty to support it, to help, and make the lives of children much easier. We don't get paid for the work we do in the Sister City, we are volunteers. We would love our friends in Los Angeles to join us and continue to support us."

Los Angeles has 26 Sister Cities around the world. In partnership with the Los Angeles African American Women Political Action Committee, the Los Angeles-Lusaka Committee hosted the Africa Day Luncheon on May 25, at the Westin Los Angeles Airport, with 125 plus attendees to encourage advocacy and raise funds for an X-Ray machine for the Children's Unit at the University Teaching Hospital in Lusaka, Zambia.

Dr. Mulenga took the charge for giving back and the lead on building teams in Lusaka, Zambia and Los Angeles, for the Twin Cities on both sides of the world to achieve this humanitarian effort to provide medical equipment, supplies, and



COURTESY PHOTO

Dr. Mwelwa Mulenga presenting certificate of appreciation to Mrs. Mukwandi Chibesakunda, Chief Executive Officer for Zambia National Commercial Bank.

champion the pharmaceutical campaign for Hydroxyurea, a possible solution for sickle cell, to be donated to the University Teaching Hospital (UTH) Children's Hospital.

"I've always wanted to teach. In the final years of my working life, I want to slow down and use my experiences in business and entrepreneurship to teach young people coming up in disadvantaged communities in Africa for example, and here in the United States. I plan to start teaching in areas in business, free of charge," he said.

Dr. Mulenga volunteers for several organizations in the United States and Zambia, including lecturing graduate students in the School of Education at the University of Zambia. He lectures in qualitative research methodology and organizational leadership. He has also lectured, as part of a team of lecturers from Northeastern University, in the Executive Education Program for university executives from the University of San Francisco Quito in Ecuador.

"The Sister City has been important to the relationship of Los Angeles and Lusaka. Our team has worked on some magnificent projects; scholarships for Zambians to come study at Southwest College and arranged electronic

machines, and X-Ray machines. To get involved we encourage people to reach out to us so we can continue to help one another."

Some have answered our call to advocacy and raising funds, equipment, supplies, medical apparel, and medications for the Children's Unit at the University Teaching Hospital in Lusaka. The Los Angeles-Lusaka relationship with the hospital dates to medical supplies presented in 1992, equipment in the late 1990's and other items in 2011.

Dr. Mulenga earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Mathematics from Excelsior College in the State University of New York at Albany, a Master of Business Administration in Finance from the California State University at Los Ange-

ship and leadership. He developed the general definition and general theory of leadership, both which were published in 2021 as "The General Theory of Leadership" defining leadership, understanding how it emerges in individuals, and learning how to practice leadership in organizations and administrative roles.

"There has never been a general theory of leadership until I worked on it. While I was working on my dissertation, which is useful in academic cycles, I couldn't find any definitions of leadership. I told myself when I was done with my dissertation and I'll finish all my doctoral studies, I'll come back and find a definition for leadership that someone can use while doing research," said Dr. Mulenga.

"After I finished school, I started working on how to define leadership in six to eight months to come up with one. Then I worked on the general theory, which also has never existed. I took the two concepts and put them in book form for students who are studying leadership as their textbook, and now over 50 countries are using it as a textbook in academic settings."

Dr. Mulenga's leadership has proven to be instrumental and effective. He is proud of the work he has done and continues to do. The number one disease in Lusaka for children is sickle cell. His work has secured medicine and equipment to fight the disease.

"I'm proud that I live in the United States and able to support the people in Zambia," he said.

"I look forward to being a good citizen of the U.S. but also a very helpful individual for both the people here and in Zambia."

To donate and get involved, email Dr. Mulenga at [drmmulenga@gmail.com](mailto:drmmulenga@gmail.com).



COURTESY PHOTO

Pharmacy technicians receive Hydroxyurea donated by Zambia National Commercial Bank.

we're donating water and paying for water resources in Zambia for a continuous flow of clean water that prevent outbreaks, as well as uniforms and food for the children attending school," he noted.

"In 2021, we donated fire equipment to the city of Lusaka. That was extremely instrumental during the COVID-19 pandemic. Our latest project is with UTH raising capital to buy CT-Scan machines, MRI

les, and a Doctorate in Organizational Leadership, graduating magna cum laude, from Northeastern University in Boston, Massachusetts. He has also attended the Harvard University Kennedy School of Government Executive Education Program in Leadership.

As a practitioner, he has broad corporate experience including that of president, vice-president, and entrepreneurial leadership. As a scholar, Dr. Mulenga lectures and writes on entrepreneur-

### Correction to Article in Nov. 11 Issue



CASA/LA  
Alisa Smith, CASA/LA volunteer



COURTESY PHOTO  
Dr. Charity Chandler-Cole, CASA/LA CEO

In the Nov. 11 article entitled, "CASA/LA Calls for Volunteers to Advocate for Foster Youth," the photo captions were accidentally transposed. Above are the correct captions. We apologize for the mistake.

# From Doctor to Designer – Dr. Vanessa Brings Scrubs to Curvy Women

BY CORA JACKSON-FOSSETT  
Managing Editor

After 25 years as a medical doctor, Dr. Vanessa Gavin-Headen is realizing her lifelong dream of being a fashion designer by creating scrubs for curvy women.

Full-figured health professionals, dental technicians, physical therapists, and more will appreciate her product, which provides a comfortable fit across the breasts, waist, hips and thighs. Based on her personal experience, Dr. Vanessa considers the curves that many Black women possess.



COURTESY PHOTO  
After 25 years as a family medicine physician, Dr. Vanessa retired.

"I remember maybe 20 years ago, I tried on a denim skirt at Old Navy, and I tried on sizes four, six, eight, and 10. None of them fit," she recalled.

"That's what made me realize that there's an issue when there's a curve involved. I had to find something that would fit me, that would address the curve. I knew that if I was having issues, that there were other women who are really, really having issues," she said.

The curvy issue was further highlighted in the medical field where the standard



COURTESY PHOTO  
Dr. Vanessa Gavin-Headen

uniform is scrubs. Citing some of the common complaints, Dr. Vanessa listed "uncomfortable fit" as the top criticism.

"When I talked to other women who were wearing scrubs – especially women with large breasts – they complained and said, 'It feels tight around the top' or they didn't want to wear the scrub top and they wore a t-shirt because it stretched more, so I knew that there was some room for improvement," said the former family practitioner.

Upon retirement, she poured all her energies in launching her company, Valmasi, and she researched ways to address the top concern of women wearing scrubs. As she explained, addressing the pain points of women is her objective and giving women size options that work for them is key.

"People are not the same size and offering the option to choose between curvy sizing and regular sizing helps women buy something that offers a better fit," she said.

When choosing fabric, she found something not used by other scrubs brands, graphene polyester fabric that she described as "antimicrobial, breathable and durable."

"Graphene is made out of carbon hexagrams, and these carbon hexagrams are very, very thin. A thin layer is placed laid on the polyester, and it helps with insulation," she said. "In cool weather, it feels insulating and in warm weather, it feels more breathable. It makes the fabric antimicrobial and durable.

The fact that graphene is made from carbon influenced her company name. "Valmasi comes from the word Almasi, which means diamond in Swahili. I put the V in front of it for Vanessa. I just want women to know that just as diamonds are special, they're special, too, and that's where Valmasi comes from," shared Dr. Vanessa.

As any healthcare provider will tell you; scrubs need to have plenty of pockets. Valmasi scrubs also have many pockets, which is beneficial for those in professions where staff must keep products close at hand, noted Dr. Vanessa.

"My scrubs don't look like regular hospital scrubs. I think if someone was working at a spa or in a hair salon, they could wear

them and say, you know, these look nice enough to wear in my salon and I don't look like I'm working in an emergency room,"

D cup and you wear an extra-large, but it still feels snug, then get extra-large curvy." The curvy option adds a little more room at

designer, but I need you to be a doctor first.' So, I was a doctor and now He has allowed me to take my next step and I'm going to see



COURTESY PHOTO  
Dr. Vanessa, seated, is surrounded by models wearing her scrubs for curvy women.

she said, adding that the product is available from sizes Small to XXL.

"If you wear a large and your large seems to be snug around the hips, with my scrubs, instead of buying a large, you would buy a large curvy and that way there's a little extra room," she explained.

"Or if you're D or double

the bust line or at the hips and thighs.

Valmasi by Dr. Vanessa opens for business online on Nov. 19, and while the owner is ultra-excited, she fully plans to apply the lessons learned in starting a company and aims to share the insight she acquired with others aspiring to launch a company.

Detailing her advice, Dr. Vanessa said, "Number one, whatever your idea is, you have to believe in your idea and that there's an audience for it. Then you go for it!"

"There are days when I wake up and I think about how much work it takes, how much money I have spent, and some of the frustrations that have come through. But I tell myself, this is a good idea, and I think people will benefit.

"Number two, I also feel that this is the path that God put me on. He said, 'Yes, you can be a clothing

that through. You really have to know that this is what you want to do," she stressed.

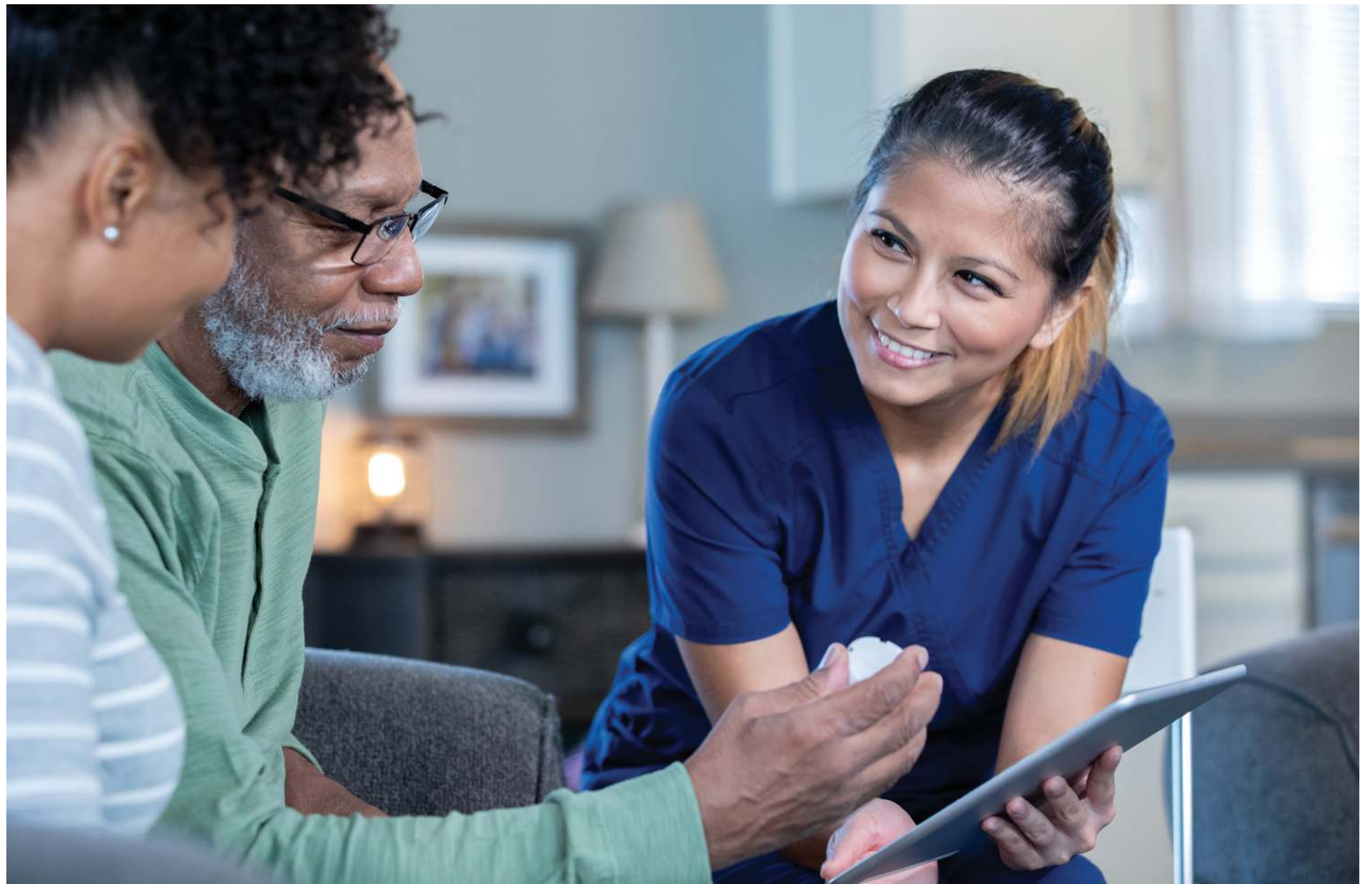
"Also, align yourself with other people who are in the industry, mentors, other business leaders, other people who have done it already. Have people that you can call and ask questions and bounce ideas off of because they've seen it before. There's no reason to bump yourself against the wall multiple times. If you have someone that you can ask, that'll minimize that," she observed.

"That's why I go forward with this every day, and I have to see this through no matter what happens because I feel that this is the path that God put me on."

Valmasi products can be ordered at [valmasi.com](http://valmasi.com). Facebook and Instagram handles are [valmasibydrtv](https://www.facebook.com/valmasibydrtv) and [valmasibydrtv](https://www.instagram.com/valmasibydrtv).



COURTESY PHOTO  
Valmasi by Dr. Vanessa products will be available online on Nov. 19.



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# James Lee and his Mobile Station Celebrates 50 Years Serving in the Community

By E. MESIYAH MCGINNIS  
Staff Writer

Hundreds of customers and community members gathered to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Mobile gas station on the corner of Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. and Buckingham Road, owned by James Lee, a Korean immigrant who purchased the business in 1974, and has lasted in a

have been times where I came in here and just straight up needed something, if it was gas or anything, he'd be like, 'Alright, I got you, as long as you came back and pay it forward,'" said Wheeler.

Longtime customer Howard Mims explained Lee's historical significance. "I mean, first of all, he's Asian, and most times that doesn't work out. But with

Drill Team and students, along with Sentinel Executive Vice President Brandi Bakewell attended to thank Lee. Hutt presented Lee with a commendation from L.A. City Council congratulating him for 50 years of business.

"Congratulations to James Lee. On behalf of the City of Los Angeles and the 10th Council District, we congratulate you and proudly join in celebrating your remarkable 50 years of business with the 10th Council. Your enduring presence has been a testament to resilience, dedication, and invaluable contributions you've made to our local community," said Hutt, who was given, along with other honorees, a surprise plaque



Members of LADP and LAFD, public officials, and community supporters gather to recognize and thank James Lee.



Brandi Bakewell accepts an award presented to her father, Danny J. Bakewell Sr., from Mr. Lee.



Mr. Lee (r) values the connection with his customers over the last 50 years.

predominately Black neighborhood.

Jajaun Wheeler, a community activist with a long-standing involvement in the community, says Mr. Lee is a staple in the Black community.

"He always looked out for me, man. Like there

him, it didn't matter. He has been a big inspiration to the Black people in this community. Although he got it good with taxes and all, he's a good proprietor; he's been pretty fair," said Mims.

Councilmember Heather Hutt (CD 10), LAFD, LAPD, Dorsey High School

of appreciation from Lee.

Hutt emphasized Lee's contribution and longstanding commitment. "The impact of Mr. Lee's business

on the community is recognized, highlighting growth and future inspiration. As you mark these significant milestones, we recognize the positive impact your business has had in fostering growth, creating opportunities, and enriching the fabric of our district. That you con-

a beautiful relationship with the African American community for 50 years, Lee reflected. "I do have most sincere, friendly respect for the people in this community. We respect each other, and they care for us so much," he said.

On March 16, 1992, a Korean American convenience store owner shot and killed a 15-year-old African American girl in South Los Angeles. News spread around the world and created tension between Korean storeowners and Black customers. Despite this kind of divide, the Black and Brown community's relationship with Lee has stood the test of time. According to Lee, during the Rodney King Uprising, when Korean stores were being burned down, the Black community was there for him.

tor of my station. They don't even touch it, not even one piece of glass," said Lee, who calls his customers his supporters.

"They are my friends, I respect them. Because of all them are here, I can be here. And I'd like to give more service to our community I really love. I'm so proud that I've been here the past 50 years. I like to give all thanks to my community," he added.

"He never tried to get over on nobody, and he was just always cool, he was always stand up. Even the people he hired were extension of him, and never disrespectful," said Wheeler.

Lee acknowledged his loyal staff and thanked the community. Before his guests, left, Mr. Lee and his staff gave away free pizza, snacks, and above all, 50 years of love to the community.

continue to thrive and inspire for many years to come on this October 30, 2024."

When asked how he accomplished fostering such

## Diaspora Groceries Supplier Summit Aims to Build Health, Equity, and Innovation

By MYKO LYRIC  
Contributing Writer

The Diaspora Groceries Supplier Summit, held on Nov. 9-10 in Los Angeles, went beyond being just a networking event—it was a movement aimed at reshaping food access, business equity, and community well-



From left are Joseph "Joe" Rouzan III, Kimberlina N. McKinney, Esq., Richea Jones, Harry Smith, and Joe Ward-Wallace.

ness in Black and Brown neighborhoods of L.A.

Co-founded by comedian and actress Tiffany Haddish and her longtime friend and collaborator, Richea Jones, Diaspora Groceries' mission is simple yet profound: to prioritize people over profits by creating a grocery model that addresses the community's needs, promotes ownership, and builds wealth for historically marginalized groups.

The summit was centered around three key pillars: community, equity, and innovation in food systems.

Jones, who met Haddish over 25 years ago, shared insights into the motivations behind Diaspora Groceries.

"I've known Tiffany over 25 years," Jones recalled. "I met her when she was just leaving the foster system. She was in an apartment paid for by the state. No matter how big she gets, she's always going to live off Crenshaw."



Tiffany Haddish, co-founder of Diaspora Groceries.

culture and spoke on his journey of patenting fertilizer, showing attendees the value of innovation within their own communities.

Financial literacy and business scaling were also key focuses, with workshops to guide participants on pathways to capital, relationship-building with CDFI lenders, and ways to grow businesses for long-term success.

The summit featured speaker and CDC Small Business Loan Officer Iman Cotton, who dissemi-

resources for Diaspora Groceries Cares to pour into the community in strategic, impactful ways. Circulating the Black dollar is a foundational pillar of Diaspora Groceries, evident not only in their entire mission, but even in the creation of the



Tiffany Haddish speaks at the event.

summit. A stunning and rather difficult feat was the employment of fully BIPOC vendors for this event.

"The venue is Black-owned, even the valet com-



The vision for the in-person grocery store.

This experience, coupled with Haddish's belief in economic empowerment, fueled her commitment to creating Diaspora Groceries.

"Tiffany believes that ownership is the key to ending systemic racism," Jones added.

The summit's holistic approach toward food access and equity, economic empowerment and community health paved the way for a wider plethora of panels, activations, and networking opportunities. A notable highlight was the "Food as Medicine" workshop, which taught participants how to incorporate nutritious, healing foods into daily life.

The summit also hosted a Black farmer who shared insights on sustainable agri-

nated information on turning business dreams into a reality.

"We planned on helping six businesses grow," said Jones, "but we would love to service 250 businesses across Los Angeles."

A signature event was the Business Builder Pitch on Sunday, where local entrepreneurs presented their ideas to gain critical support for their businesses. CDC Loans and the USDA-funded Southwest Regional Food Business Center sponsored the event, which included a \$30,000 grant for promising businesses.

"We want people to have relationships with these bankers, to get capital and support," Jones explained.

On Saturday night, a VIP reception and fundraiser was held to secure more

pany is too. The caterers, the printers—every dollar we spent on this event was used to circulate the Black dollar," Jones shared.

This initiative embodied the summit's commitment to being a fiscal resource that stands to empower and amplify community investment.

"We're negotiating entitlements on land once used by Founders Bank off Buckingham and MLK," shared Jones, hinting at Diaspora Groceries' ambition to create a physical location that further empowers the local community.

As Jones put it, "Diaspora Groceries is not just a grocery store; it's a way of life, connecting people back to the land and building a legacy of opportunity for future generations."

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2588004-01

# CARB's Environment-Friendly Vote Could Hit Californians With Higher Prices at Gas Pump

By ANTONIO RAY HARVEY  
California Black Media



COURTESY PHOTO  
Liane Randolph

After a 12-hour public comment period and debate, the California Air Resources Board (CARB) approved updates to the Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS) with a 12-2 vote, ensuring its ambitious commitment to reaching zero-emission goals for the transportation sector by 2045.

The meeting took place at Haagen-Smit Auditorium in Riverside. The approval of the fuel standards is expected to trigger an increase in gas prices in the state, but board members are uncertain how much more Californians would have to pay at the pump.

"The proposal approved today strikes a balance between reducing the environmental and health impacts of transportation fuel used in California and ensuring that low-carbon options are available as the state continues to work toward a zero-emissions future," said CARB Chair Liane Randolph.

CARB board members serve as the air quality regulators for the state aligned with climate change programs, and they oversee all air pollution control efforts

in California. From requirements for clean vehicles and fuels to promoting solutions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, CARB creates standards for effective air and climate programs.

The amendments of LCFS are directed to decrease the carbon intensity of California's transportation fuel pool by 30% by 2030 and by 90% by 2045, according to CARB. The provisions also expand support for zero-emissions infrastructure, including for medium- and heavy-duty vehicles, and make more public transit agencies eligible to generate credits.

According to CARB staff, the LCFS program is designed to reduce air pol-

lution and greenhouse gas emissions by "setting a declining carbon intensity target for transportation fuels" used in the state.

The modifications to LCFS arrived after Gov. Gavin Newsom signed legislation to help prevent gas price spikes.

Assemblymember Reggie Jones-Sawyer (D-Los Angeles), a member of the California Legislative Black Caucus (CLBC), voted for the Newsom-backed measure to protect consumers from gas prices spikes, but during the special session he said many people of color in his South Los Angeles district were struggling with high gas prices and were looking for relief.

"I am hoping that in this legislation that we do have the teeth to ensure that people in South Los Angeles will be protected," Jones-Sawyer said. The lawmaker is termed out of office in December.

CLBC members Sen. Lola Smallwood-Cuevas (D-Los Angeles) and Assemblymembers Chris Holden (D-Pasadena) and Corey Jackson (D-Moreno Valley) attended the governor's signing event of Assembly Bill (AB) ABX2-1 at the State

Capitol in October.

"The state has the tools to make sure they backfill supplies and plan ahead for maintenance so there aren't shortages that drive up prices," Newsom said in an Oct. 14 written statement.

lies, but also disproportionately affect residents in rural communities in my district who must travel long distances for groceries, health-care, etc.," Dahle stated. "Californians shouldn't have to forfeit taking their

higher - 65 cents a gallon. Now the air board has backed off its 47-cent price hike estimate. And it refuses to offer a revised forecast," the Oct. 15 document stated.

At present, the LCFS program currently limits the "pass-through costs companies can shift to consumers," according to CARB. This action is done by putting a lid on the price of credits that are high-carbon-intensity fuel-producing.

CARB shared that information provided by third-party product experts explains the current LCFS pass-through to Californians is \$0.10 per gallon of gasoline.

The data, according to CARB, is in line with the self-reported data by high-carbon-intensity fuel producers, which reflects an LCFS cost pass-through to consumers of \$0.08 to \$0.10 per gallon of gasoline.

"(The board's) approval increases consumer options beyond petroleum, provides a roadmap for cleaner air, and leverages private sector investment and federal incentives to spur innovation to address climate change and pollution," Randolph stated.



COURTESY PHOTO  
The state's zero emissions goal could lead to higher gas prices.

Senate Minority Leader Brian Dahle (R-Bieber) expressed his concerns about the vote. In a written statement released after the meeting, he indicated that California residents could see gas prices upwards of 65 cents per gallon.

Dahle referred to the governor's extended session as "Special Session Stunt 2.0."

"(The) decision by CARB will not only make it more expensive for fami-

family out to dinner in order to afford putting gas in the car just to get to work."

In October, California Legislative Republicans (CLR) sent a five-page letter to Randolph estimating that the change could lift gasoline prices 47 cents a gallon, or \$6.4 billion a year

The letter was signed off by 25 Republicans in the California Legislature, including Dahle.

"A separate study placed the pump cost much

## 'We Will Defend Our Constitution' - Newsom, State Leaders, Respond to Trump's Win

By TANU T. HENRY  
California Black Media

Early on Nov. 6 - shortly after 2 a.m. ET in Palm Beach, Fla. - President-elect Donald J. Trump declared victory in the 2024 General Election. He

thanked supporters and pledged to "fix" the United States with the support of "the biggest, the broadest, the most unified coalition" the country has ever seen.

"They came from all quarters," Trump said to applause. "Union,

nonunion, African American, Hispanic American, Asian American, Arab American, Muslim American, we had everybody, and it was beautiful."

The next day, Gov. Gavin Newsom thanked Vice President Kamala Har-

ris for a well-fought campaign and congratulated the President-elect, promising to work along with him.

However, Newsom put a stake in the ground with a pledge he made as well: to defend the Constitution of the United States and stand up for policies and values that may be at odds with Trump's politics but are supported by the majority of Californians.

"Though this is not the outcome we wanted, our fight for freedom and opportunity endures," said Newsom in a statement. "California will seek to work with the incoming president -- but let there be no mistake, we intend to stand with states across our nation to defend our Constitution and uphold the rule of law."

Throughout his governorship, Newsom has introduced and rallied support for a number of progressive policies on a range of issues from criminal justice reform, immigration and trade to the environment, abortion and racial justice. Championing those views has positioned Newsom as the protagonist of the political Left and a punching bag of the political Right, including Trump. The incoming POTUS frequently references California in his criticisms and invokes Newsom by name, or a disparaging nickname ("Newsom"), setting the Governor up as his arch-nemesis in political diatribes.

On Nov. 8, Newsom issued a proclamation calling for a special convening of the California Legislature to "safeguard California values and fundamental rights in the face of an incoming Trump administration."

"The freedoms we hold dear in California are under attack -- and we won't sit idle," wrote Newsom.

Like Newsom, a number of California elected officials congratulated Trump last week but moderated their well wishes with a commitment to fight against the policies that they disagree with. In anticipation, many have



COURTESY PHOTO  
A protestor holds a sign reflecting an opinion about the 2024 presidential election.

even begun to put forth counterproposals and organize their opposition to the incoming President and the policies he has promised to introduce to address various problems.

For example, On Nov. 8, California State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond, who is running for governor, organized a press conference with leaders and advocates in the California education sector to respond to Trump winning the presidential election.

"This week I heard from some educators in Special Education, and they shared with me their fears and their consternation because of what they heard about a threat to end the U.S. Department of Education," said Thurmond. "They said, 'If the U.S. Department of Education is abolished does that mean that they are getting rid of Special Education services for California students?'"

Thurmond addressed those concerns, "Let me be clear," he continued. "We will not be ever getting rid of Special Education services in the great state of California. And we call on President-elect Trump and the members of Congress to reaffirm their commitment to public education."

Attorney General Rob Bonta said the California Department of Justice is working closely with the state Legislature "to shore up our defenses and ensure we have the resources we need to take on each fight as it comes."

"No matter what the incoming Administration has in store, California will keep moving forward," said Bonta. "We've been through this before, and we stand ready to defend your rights and protect California values."

U.S. Rep. Barbara Lee (D-CA-12), who served as a surrogate for the Harris-Walz campaign, said in a statement, "We cannot hide our disappointment."

"This is a dangerous and frightening moment for our democracy," she continued. "I am fearful that the progress we've made over the past four years will be undone," added Lee. "That said, we cannot lose sight of the fact that more than 68 million Americans voted to take our country forward. They voted for progress. They voted for Vice President Kamala Harris."

Lee went on, "We must fight to preserve our democracy and our Constitution. We must fight to preserve our rights."

On Nov. 7, Lateefah Simon, who won the election to succeed Lee in the U.S. Congress, told KQED, a Bay Area news outlet, that "We have to fight like hell to ensure that the people of the United States have health care, that we push back on the Trump administration's promise to gut Social Security."

On Nov. 6, during a television interview with News Nation's Chris Cuomo, U.S. Rep. Maxine **(See RESPONSE TO TRUMP'S WIN on A-7)**

### Section 8 Waiting List Opening

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Applications will be accepted from December 17, 2024 at 10am to January 24, 2025 at 5pm. An electronic lottery will be held after the application period closes to establish the waiting list order.

Incomplete applications or applications submitted after the deadline will not be accepted. Household members can only appear on one application. If an application contains household members that are on other applications for this listing, all of them will be disqualified. Any fraudulent statements will cause application to be removed from the waiting list.

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Max Annual Income	\$48,550	\$55,450	\$62,400	\$69,350

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Applications will be accepted in person, and via first class mail at Van Nuys Apartments Leasing Office, 210 W. 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Los Angeles, CA 90014, faxed to (213) 627-5068 or emailed to [VanNuysApts@related.com](mailto:VanNuysApts@related.com). Applications may also be submitted online at: [www.LiveatVanNuys.com](http://www.LiveatVanNuys.com). Mailed applications must be received or post marked on January 24, 2025. Applications received after this date and time will not be accepted.

Application information and our resident selection criteria is available in person at the Van Nuys Apartments Leasing Office located at 210 W. 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Los Angeles, CA 90014 and at [www.LiveatVanNuys.com](http://www.LiveatVanNuys.com). You may begin submitting applications starting December 17, 2024 at 10am. The open application period will end on January 24, 2024 at 5pm. Please contact Related Management for building info at (213) 627-5286 or email us at [VanNuysApts@related.com](mailto:VanNuysApts@related.com).

If you need help filling out an online application, please contact our Community Manager at (213) 627-5286 or [VanNuysApts@related.com](mailto:VanNuysApts@related.com). TTY (800) 735-2929.

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Applicants may request a reasonable accommodation if one is needed to assist in completing an application by calling 213-627-5286 or by emailing [VanNuysApts@related.com](mailto:VanNuysApts@related.com).

Income limits are subject to change based on changes to the Area Median Income as published by HUD, and the California Tax Credit Allocation Committee.



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# Political Playback: News You Might Have Missed - Nov. 14

By BO TEFU AND ANTONIO RAY HARVEY  
*California Black Media*

## Tony Thurmond Vows to Protect Education in California

In the wake of the general election and Donald Trump winning another term as president, State Superintendent of Public Instruction (SPI) Tony Thurmond is on a mission to protect public education in California.

On Nov. 8, Thurmond,

President-elect Trump and the U.S. Congress to continue federal supporting the funding of the programs.

Thurmond said he has started reaching out to lawmakers in Washington, D.C., and in the California legislature to get in front of Trump's policy plans.

"I'm prepared to sponsor legislation that would call on the California State Legislature and the Governor to backfill that funding to preserve and protect that

exacerbated by viral retail theft incidents, to push a "tough-on-crime" agenda that may drain resources from essential support programs.

Proponents, however, contend that addressing rising crime rates justifies these increased expenses, with Gatto expressing confidence that the legislature can allocate funding to offset any cuts to treatment services.

## California Attorney General Unveils New Guidelines to Safeguard Abortion Access

California Attorney General Rob Bonta has issued a law enforcement bulletin outlining the state's legal protections for individuals seeking reproductive healthcare.

The new guidance emphasizes the right to timely, confidential care, free from harassment or threats, as established by Assembly Bill 1356 (AB 1356), authored by Assemblymember Rebecca Bauer-Kahan (D-Orinda).

This law complements the California Freedom of Access to Clinic and Church Entrances (FACE) Act, which mandates that state and local law enforcement agencies develop policies for handling anti-reproductive rights incidents.

"Abortion care is healthcare; and in California, access to abortion care is a constitutionally protected right," said Bonta.

The bulletin aims to equip law enforcement with the tools to effectively respond to violent or threatening situations at reproductive healthcare facilities, ensuring the safety of both providers and patients.

In response to a national surge in violence and harassment targeting abortion providers, particularly in states that protect abortion access, the bulletin provides guidelines for law enforcement on addressing anti-reproductive rights crimes. The National Abortion Federation reports significant incidents, including arson and death threats, aimed at clinics across the country.

The bulletin also references revised 2023 guidelines from the Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training, which cover law enforcement's role in preventing violence, providing training, and managing protests and events. With these measures in place, Bonta reaffirmed California's commitment to defending reproductive rights and ensuring the state's continued role as a stronghold for reproductive freedom.

## California Voters Reject Proposition 33, Blocking Expansion of Rent Control Protections

California voters have rejected Proposition 33, which aimed to expand rent control protections by repealing the Costa-Hawkins Rental Housing Act. With nearly 95% of precincts reporting, 61.6% of voters opposed the measure, while 38.4% supported

funding for the students of California," Thurmond said.

## California Voters Embrace Stricter Crime Laws with Prop 36

California voters have approved Proposition 36, a ballot measure imposing stricter penalties for retail theft, property crimes, and drug offenses, effectively rolling back aspects of the state's 2014 Proposition 47.

Prop 47 aimed to reduce California's prison population by reclassifying some non-violent felonies as misdemeanors, shifting funds from incarceration to toward drug treatment and victim services. However, supporters of Prop 36 argue that Prop 47's leniency has contributed to increased property crime, homelessness, and drug addiction.

Mike Gatto, a Democratic former state assemblymember from Los Angeles is a proponent of Prop 36 and anticipates that the initiative will curb retail crime in the state.

"The voters recognize that Prop 36 is a sensible measure and that it will be the first step in stopping the retail thefts that make shopping miserable," said Gatto.

Backed by law enforcement, business groups, and a mix of political leaders, including outgoing San Francisco Mayor London Breed, Prop 36 seeks to address homelessness and the fentanyl crisis through longer prison sentences for drug dealers and a mandatory treatment program for individuals with addiction issues.

Opponents say the measure will increase California's prison population and court system costs, estimated in the tens of millions.

Critics, including social justice groups, warn that Prop 36 undermines the progress achieved under Prop 47, which has reallocated over \$800 million to treatment and behavioral health initiatives. Opponents like Californians for Safety and Justice argue the new law preys on public fear,

members of the California legislature, educators, union leaders, and other elected officials expressed their concerns at a news conference about the possibility of the Trump Administration dismantling the U.S. Department of Education (DOE).

"To tear down and abolish an organization that provides protections for our students is a threat to the well-being of our students and our families and of Americans," Thurmond said.

Thurmond said losing \$8 billion dollars in federal funding is at stake. During his campaign, Trump didn't hesitate to take barbs at the DOE.

Closing the doors of the DOE could affect a range of scholastic programs such as Special Education, English as a Second Language (ESL), free lunch, federal grants for college students and Title I, a program that provides support to educate disadvantaged families.

Sen. Aisha Wahab (D-Hayward) and Assemblymember Al Muratsuchi (D-Torrance), the chair of the Assembly Education Committee, spoke at the news conference held in the boardroom of the California Department of Education building.

Muratsuchi said, "We need to get ready now for what is going to start on Jan. 20 (2025)."

"It is the job of every teacher, every school board member, every principal, every elected representative in the state of California who believes in public education," he said. "It is time for us to stand up to protect all of these kids. When we are facing a bully who is targeting our most vulnerable students, we all need to stand up."

Trump has said that he prefers the Choice School initiative, a policy that provides parents and students the choice to use public funds to attend a school other than their district or local public school.

Thurmond and supporters of the traditional public school system are asking

mine public education, with some predicting a backlash against teacher associations and unions that support Democrats.

## California Voters Approve \$10 Billion Bond for Environmental Projects

California voters have approved a \$10-billion bond measure aimed at funding environmental projects across the state. Proposition 4, titled the Safe Drinking Water, Wildfire Prevention, Drought Preparedness, and Clean Air Bond Act of 2024, will allocate funds for a variety of initiatives, including water management, wildfire protection, and climate resilience.

The bond includes \$3.8 billion for water projects such as safe drinking water, water recycling, groundwater storage, and flood control. An additional \$1.5 billion will be used for wildfire prevention, and \$1.2 billion will go toward protecting the coast from sea level rise.

The measure also funds projects to create parks, preserve wildlife, combat air pollution, and support sustainable agriculture.

Liz Forsburg Pardi, California policy director at the Nature Conservancy, celebrated the approval.

"We are inspired and grateful to see voters back the largest climate and natural resources bond in state history," said Forsburg Pardi.

"Voters sent a powerful signal that climate resilience is a priority," she said.

However, opponents say, the bond will cost taxpayers an estimated \$400 million annually for the next 40 years, totaling \$16 billion with interest, according to the Legislative Analyst's Office.



ANTONIO RAY HARVEY/CBM

California Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond, along with lawmakers, union leaders, and educators, appeal to President-elect Donald Trump to commit to supporting public education. November 8, 2024.

## RESPONSE TO TRUMP'S WIN

{Continued from A-6}

Waters (D-CA-43) said it will be difficult to work with Trump.

"He said he is going to get retribution from those who have not worked with him, who don't like him. He is out to get people like me," she said.

U.S. Rep Sydney Kamlager (D-CA-37) said "I want the State Legislature here and the attorney general and the governor to go hard in the paint against

him," referring to Trump. "They will have the backing of the California delegation" in Congress.

Assemblymember James Gallagher (R-Yuba City) and other Republican leaders, on the other hand, celebrated Trump's victory.

"President Trump has accomplished the comeback of the century! #45 and #47!" Gallagher posted on X election night.

Former Speaker of the

House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi (D-CA-11) reminded everyone of one of their most important civic duties.

"We all pray for America's success under the next administration. The peaceful transfer of power is the cornerstone of our democracy," she posted on X. "After every election, we all have a responsibility to come together and find common ground."

it. The proposition would have allowed cities to extend rent control to properties not previously covered, such as newer homes and units with new tenants.

The initiative, backed by labor unions and tenant advocacy groups, sought to ease housing costs for groups like seniors, low-wage workers, and veterans. However, it faced strong opposition from landlords, real estate developers, and property owners, who argued that it would worsen California's housing crisis by discouraging new construction and lowering property values.

This marks the third failure of a similar measure, following two unsuccessful attempts in 2018 and 2020. Proponents of Prop. 33 raised \$50.1 million, while opponents outspent them with \$124.6 million.

## Re-election of Donald Trump Sparks Fears of Conflict for California's Schools and Immigrant Communities

The re-election of Donald Trump is set to create significant challenges for California, particularly in the areas of education and immigrant protections. Trump has threatened to cut school funding for states, including California, that uphold policies protecting transgender students and promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion in schools.

With federal K-12 public school funding in California totaling \$7.9 billion annually, these cuts could have a major impact on the state's education system. Additionally, advocates say, Trump's promise to deport undocumented immigrants en masse threatens the stability of millions of California families, including stu-

dents with undocumented parents.

Gov. Gavin Newsom and Attorney General Rob Bonta have signaled their intent to resist Trump's policies, with Bonta preparing for possible litigation against measures that threaten rights for transgender youth and undocumented individuals. In the past, California has sued the federal government over more than 100 of Trump's actions, particularly during his first term.

Bruce Fuller, professor of education and public policy at the University of California Berkeley, stated that Trump's tax cuts to the rich will be paid for by budget cuts in public education.

"The president-elect's commitment to cutting taxes for affluent Americans means there will be no new funding for public schools," said Fuller. "Watch out for efforts to expand vouchers and tax credits for well-off parents who opt for private schools."

Education experts also worry that Trump's proposed tax cuts for the wealthy could lead to budget cuts for public schools, while his push to expand school vouchers and tax credits could divert funding away from public education. Trump's proposals to reduce federal involvement in education, such as cutting teacher tenure and introducing merit pay, also conflict with current federal law.

The potential deportation of undocumented immigrants is a significant concern for many families in California, where an estimated one in 10 children has an undocumented parent. This has already caused anxiety among students and teachers. Educators fear Trump's policies will under-

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# Kyshawn Gives and DOWN Apparel to Host 3rd Annual Holiday Giveback

By DANA ELAINE CARROLL  
Contributing Writer

Non-profit Kyshawn Gives and apparel company DOWN - Decide Our Way Now LLC are collaborating for their 3rd Annual Holiday Giveback event. The event will take place on Dec. 21, with donations being accepted until Dec. 18, at 7 p.m. The giveaway seeks to serve at least 200 South LA residents.

Their joint mission is to support those in need in the Los Angeles area by providing essential supplies and



Volunteers and community members came together at last year's holiday giveback.

been passionate about giving back. His brand empowers young entrepreneurs, athletes, and creatives

high school, where he volunteered at Midnight Mission and Special Olympics, and it continues today through his work with the community.

Kyshawn, founder of Kyshawn Gives, shares a similar vision. Growing up in Los Angeles, he saw a lack of role models giving back to the community, particularly among young Black entrepreneurs.

Kyshawn stated, "Growing up, a lot of people in my community were stuck in the system, thinking that illegal activities were the only way to make it. But I unlearned that and met people who invested in me and showed me there was another way."

This motivated him to create Kyshawn Gives, a nonprofit focused on providing resources for children in need. The initiatives include

annual backpack giveaways, providing school supplies, free haircuts, and park events for kids.

Kyshawn continued, "I try to focus on adding and multiplying instead of subtracting and dividing. I want to show others that

shared passion for community service. This year marks their third consecutive year working together. Last year, they served over 150 people with essential items like clothing, shoes, hot meals, and toiletries.

Both Cam and Kyshawn stress the importance of community involvement and being aware of others' struggles. Cam's recent backpack giveaway at Compton High School, where over 100 backpacks were distributed, is a prime example of how his brand actively contributes to local needs. Kyshawn's nonprofit continues to serve children who may lack basic resources for school, and he remains

serve at least 200 residents in South Los Angeles, and your donations can make a significant impact in reaching that goal. By contributing priority items like blankets, socks, beanies, T-shirts, hoodies, jackets, shoes, jeans, and sweatpants, you will directly help provide essential clothing and supplies to those in need this holiday season.

These donations not only meet immediate needs but also offer a sense of dignity and care to individuals who may otherwise go without. Your support, whether by donating or helping to spread the word, can bring much-needed hope and warmth to those facing hardship this holiday



Kyshawn Gives and Down provide shoes and clothing to those in need.

spreading goodwill to brighten the holidays for the less fortunate. Cam and Kyshawn aim to make a meaningful impact by distributing items to those who may otherwise go without.

Cam, founder of DOWN apparel brand, has always

through clothing, creating a platform for positive change.

"My brand is about more than just apparel; it's about creating a space for people to feel supported and heard," says Cam. His commitment to service began in



Nearly two hundred people receive items and kindness during the holidays.

they can be part of the solution, instead of the problem."

The partnership between Cam and Kyshawn goes back to their childhood years, and their collaborations are driven by a

dedicated to making a difference. Whether you're able to donate or simply help spread the word, the 3rd Annual Holiday Giveback is an opportunity to give back this season.

As this event aims to

season. Get involved today by donating or encouraging others to do the same.

For more information on how to donate or get involved, visit them on Instagram: @kyshawngives and @decide.our.way.now.

## BHERC Honors Ground-breaking Talent and Community Advocates at Short Film Festival

The festival will feature over 60 short films, screening of three feature films, honoree tributes, panel discussions and the signature opening night event "A Great Day in Black Hollywood."



COURTESY PHOTO  
Deborah Pratt



COURTESY PHOTO  
Janine Sherman-Barrois



COURTESY PHOTO  
Lyndon Barrois, Sr.



COURTESY PHOTO  
Art Sims



COURTESY PHOTO  
Gina Lem You Davis



COURTESY PHOTO  
D. Stevens



COURTESY PHOTO  
Gloria Zuurveen

SENTINEL NEWS SERVICE

The Black Hollywood Education and Resource Center (BHERC) returns on Friday, Nov. 15, with "A Great Day in Black Hollywood," which honors ground-breaking talent, community leaders, and organizations making a difference both in Hollywood and the community.

The event takes place at 7 p.m. at the Regal at L.A. Live,

1000 W. Olympic Blvd., in downtown Los Angeles.

The opening celebration kicks-off their 30th Annual S.E. Manly African American Short Film Festival (SEMAASFF). The honorees include Deborah Pratt, director, writer, producer, and novelist; Janine Sherman-Barrois, producer, writer and showrunner; Lyndon Barrois, Sr. director, animator and artist; Art Sims, motion picture key art

designer; D. Stevens, photo-journalist and filmmaker; Gina Lem You Davis - actress, dancer, choreographer and artist; and Gloria Zuurveen- founder, owner and publisher of Pace News.

Attendees will also get the chance to hear from the festival's participating Class of 2024 filmmakers. Special guests include film director Michael Schultz ("Black-ish," "Cooley High") and Juel Taylor (director of

"They Cloned Tyrone").

The weekend continues Saturday, Nov. 16 and Sunday, Nov. 17 with more than 60 films and panels. All events will be held at the Regal at L.A. Live.

While this is BHERC'S flagship festival and rounds out the 2024 banner year of programs, BHERC President Sandra Evers-Manly stated, "This festival has become so much more. It is a festival of purpose. BHERC is about

making change and anyone who wants to be a part is welcome as we celebrate 30 wonderful years."

The festival will spotlight more than 60 films reflecting offer a variety perspectives from around the world. The genres and subject matters include social justice, historically based events, mental health, romance, drama, faith, sci-fi, horror, fantasy documentaries, animation, action and comedy. Also,

several standout films from past BHERC festivals will also be screened.

Festival and event passes are available online at www.bherc.org. The fee is \$25 for a two-hour block of short films, \$75 for a day pass and \$300 for a full weekend festival pass. Senior and student discounts are available.

Visit www.bherc.org for tickets and more information.

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# Taste of Soul Family Festival Shows Appreciation to Vendors

By E. MESIYAH MCGINNIS  
Staff Writer

On Saturday, Oct. 19, Taste of Soul Family Festival celebrated year 19 of providing millions of attendees with the best cultural experience in ethnic foods, art, street vendors, music performances, and overall family fun at one of the largest one-day street festivals in the country.

On Tuesday, Oct. 29, the Taste of Soul organizers invited over 300 festival vendors to a special appreciation reception sponsored by Wells Fargo at The Beehive in South L.A., thanking them for their entrepreneurial spirit and economic contribution to the festival.



**Vendor Reception Panel** – A panel discussion organized by Wells Fargo featured, from left, Effie Turnbull-Sanders (University of Southern California), Claudia Carrillo (Wells Fargo Merchant Services), Chaz Pringle (Marketing/PR consultant), Marlyn Lainez (Wells Fargo Small Business Banker), Jon Kinnard (Vermont Slauson Economic Development Corporation), China Naylor (PCR Business Finance) and moderated by Mario Holten (VP, Wells Fargo Philanthropy and Community Impact.)

Shack. As they sat together enjoying the food, they shared stories of their festival accomplishments and

nomials about their experiences.

“I first want to thank the Bakewell family for having us all. Give us our big day on their stage and giving us an opportunity to highlight and showcases our businesses in an event that they put together for us,” said returning vendor, Katrina Butts, owner of K. Michelle’s Catering.

Oliver Jermaine, Superior Crack Seasoning, shared his experience as a first-time vendor.

“This was the first time I had to buy a tent for any reason. I make the world’s best spices, and I would sell out of my trunk, he said.

Jermaine shared that while he usually sells out of 13 mom & pop and butcher stores, his margin of profit at the festival was better than he expected. “I 4X-ed the vendor fees and that made it all worth it to me.”

Sentinel Vice President Nicole Williams thanked the vendors, saying, “You should be proud of yourselves. You are a part of history. This is our 19th annual Taste of Soul. We are the largest free one-day street festival on the West coast.”

Although the festival is free, Williams mentioned how vital the sponsor’s role is in providing financial support as she introduced Mario Holten, Wells Fargo vice president of Philanthropy & Community

Impact for the Southern California region. Wells Fargo was the sponsor of the appreciation reception.

Holton shared that the company appreciates the enormous impact the festival has on the community.

“You don’t have a seat at the table, you’re probably on the menu. So, we want to thank the Bakewells and Taste of Soul for creating the seats at the table for all of us, and for having something positive to do in our community,” said Holton.

Each year, Holton leads a panel discussion of financial experts to help share vital information to the vendors.

“Tonight, we just plan to provide the small business owners with the resources that they need by bringing all the CDFs and small business development centers here to provide support in the area of financial literacy,” he said.

The panelists included Chaz Pringle (Marketing/PR consultant), Effie Turnbull-Sanders (University of Southern California), China Naylor (PCR Business Finance), Robert Lewis (BCIF), Jon Kinnard (Vermont Slauson Economic Development Corporation), Marlyn Lainez (Wells Fargo Small Business Banker), and Claudia Carrillo (Wells Fargo Merchant Services.)

The panel shared various tools on financial literacy with the vendors on.

Spikes of PCR Business Finance explained her efforts in supporting the vendors at the Taste of Soul event.

“The last three years just making sure that the vendors are aware that there are

run in our own community that’s just no violence and promotes positivity,” added Holton.

Vendor Rhonda Ray expressed pride in the partnership with Taste of Soul.

“We are so proud to partner with the Taste of Soul. Danny, we thank you. It was great. It was amazing. We have over 25 small businesses, Black owned businesses in our collective in Afro City, and we just had a great time sharing everything with the festival community,” she said.

Crystal, of Soull Good Eats, appreciated the feeling of security, community, and making a financial profit.

“I’m gonna have two booths next year. Maybe three. We’re entertaining, we have family, we have togetherness, all in one space, and we get to highlight and showcase our



Sentinel Executive Vice President Brandi Bakewell with first-time vendor Oliver Jermaine of Superior Crack Seasoning.

heart and soul of the festival. They bring such a financial boost to our community of attendees,” said Taste of Soul project manager, Amira Elswify.

Elswify, along with the TOS staff, met with vendors months before the festival, which included procedure-based meetings prior to the event.

“During that time period, we developed a bond with the vendors. We see their efforts and we want them to be successful,” she said.

The vendors entered the elegant campus where servers offered a soulful cuisine of appetizing offerings prepared by Mel’s Fish

networked.

According to Bakewell Media and L.A. Sentinel Executive Vice President Brandi Bakewell, the appreciation reception provides the Taste of Soul staff an opportunity to thank the vendors for their share of contributing to the economic revitalization of the Black community.

“This is one of our favorite events in the Taste of Soul season because we have an opportunity to thank all of you. Without your popcorn, your cheesecake, your lobster, mac n cheese, [the festival] wouldn’t happen,” said Bakewell.

Two vendors gave testi-



Mario Holten, vice president of Philanthropy and Community Impact for Wells Fargo Southern California Region, speaks to Taste of Soul vendors at the Vendor Appreciation Reception.

resources to help them through their challenges, and then also just to partner with them through their success as well,” she said.

“Taste of Soul is just such a big cultural icon in our community; one of the few things that we actually have, that we own, that we

would have never seen us before. We have a space on the internet, but this is better than the internet,” she said.

Vendors were given special Taste of Soul festival gift bags filled with festival t-shirts and gifts from various donors.

## Kappa Alpha Psi – L.A. Alumni Chapter Hosts 85th Annual Black and White Ball



The young ladies of the Kappa Kourt pose with their escorts at last year’s event.

SENTINEL NEWS SERVICE

The Los Angeles Alumni Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. will host its 85th Annual Black and White Ball on Saturday, Nov. 16, from 5 p.m. to 12 a.m., at the Sheraton Gateway Hotel Los Angeles.

According to a spokesperson, “This epic event promises an evening filled with elegance, recognition, and celebration.

“This year’s esteemed honorees include Mr. James Breedlove, president of Bridge Builders Foundation Los Angeles, who’s receiving the Community Service Award; Judge Mablean Ephraim, who’s receiving the first Honorary Imagine Maker Award; and Kappa Alpha Psi’s very own brother, Dr. Shannon Faulk, receiving the Ted Alexander Lifetime Achievement Award,” the spokesperson added.

Also, the gala will also pay special tribute to the Western Regional Leaders of the Divine 9. The night will culminate in the crowning of the 2024 Kappa Kourt Queen.

This event is traditionally known as the kickoff of the Black Holiday Season. Dress code is strictly enforced with women requested to wear black and/or white floor or tea-length formal dresses.

The attire for men is black tuxedos or tails paired with black and/or white accessories and bow ties or straight ties should be black and/or white. Also, white dinner jackets are not permitted.

For more information or for questions, please contact Michael Pyles, chairman of the 85th Annual Black and White Ball, at (323) 816-7387 or via email at highpraz@hotmail.com.



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# DR. GEORGE MCKENNA RETIRES {Continued from A-1}

neighborhood in New Orleans and we both are alumni of the famous St. Augustine High School and are forever connected as Purple Knights.

“But George has been so much more to me, my family and our community than simply colleagues or associates. George is and has always been ‘My Brother in the Struggle’ to uplift and enhance the lives of Black people. George has served on the Board of Directors of the Brotherhood Crusade for well over 30 years and he has always been the first person I called when we needed to address or support issues that affected the children of our community,” said Bakewell, who serves as chairman of the board of the Brotherhood Crusade and executive publisher of the Los Angeles Sentinel.

“As we celebrate his long and illustrious career, the entire community says,

‘Thank You, Dr. George McKenna,’ for all of your tireless work to educate, motivate and protect the children of our community,” added Bakewell.

Dr. McKenna’s retirement celebration will be held on Sunday, Nov. 17, at 11 a.m., at the Sheraton Grand Hotel, 711 S. Hope St., in downtown Los Angeles. Wendy Raquel Robinson will serve as emcee and the co-hosts are Yolanda “YoYo” Whitaker and Dr. Dechell



FILE PHOTO  
During the COVID-19 pandemic, McKenna joins city leaders in urging the public to get vaccinated.

Byrd. Proceeds will benefit the California Student Achievement Foundation (C-SAF).

C-SAF, a nonprofit organization, was founded by Dr. McKenna in 2015 to empower underserved children to achieve lifelong success. According to its website, “Dr. McKenna intent is for C-SAF to provide leadership and scholarships to public high school graduating seniors desiring to achieve higher educational degrees.”



FILE PHOTO  
McKenna participated in Read Across America Day hosted by Mothers In Action.

The board member has had a storied career in the Los Angeles Unified School District as a math teacher, dean, assistant principal, principal and local district superintendent of Local Area 7. He has worked in schools across the District including Jordan High School, Foshay Learning Center, Cochran Middle School, and Dorsey High School.

As principal of Washington Preparatory High School from 1978-1988, he experi-

enced such significant accomplishments that Hollywood created a movie about him with Denzel Washington playing McKenna. His successes included raising student achievement, strengthening parent and community involvement, launching a peer counseling program among students, and growing the school enrollment from 1,200 to over 2,800 during his tenure.

During his tenure on the LAUSD Board, he devel-

oped historic community partnerships that led to all LAUSD students receiving TAP cards District wide after the pilot that originated in District 1 via the South Los Angeles Transit Empowerment Zone (SLATE-Z), Fender Play Foundation introducing their suite of educational programming for students which led to the development and passing of Proposition 28 in 2022 that now provides statewide funding for Arts education, and passed legislation to expand opportunities for small and micro businesses to contract with LAUSD.

Previously, Dr. McKenna served as a superintendent in Inglewood Unified, deputy superintendent in Compton Unified, as well as an assistant superintendent in the Pasadena Unified School District.

The public is invited to attend the retirement celebration and scholarship fundraiser. Visit [www.c-saf.org](http://www.c-saf.org).

# DESTINATION CRENSHAW {Continued from A-1}

architect to become a member of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) in 1923 and was later inducted as its first Black Fellow in 1957.

His architectural legacy spans nearly six decades, during which he designed over 3,000 structures, including homes for Hollywood icons like Frank Sinatra and Lucille Ball, as well as significant civic and commercial buildings throughout the city.

Gabrielle Bullock, a principal architect on the

Destination Crenshaw project, spoke passionately about Williams’ influence on her career.

“Many of us, especially Black architects, never learned about Paul Williams in school,” Bullock admitted.

“But we stand on his shoulders today. His work was not just about buildings; it was about uplifting communities and creating spaces that reflect our dreams and aspirations.”

Born in Valdosta, Geor-

gia, and later establishing his artistic roots in Los Angeles, Patrick Henry Johnson is no stranger to creating powerful public art. Johnson’s works have adorned neighborhoods across L.A. and beyond. His latest masterpiece, “The Pawn Who Became a King,” uses the checkerboard motif — a nod to Williams’ use of patterns in pool designs and interiors.

The mural’s swirling water, dramatic waves, and bold architectural imagery

are layered with meaning, representing the complexities of Williams’ journey as a Black architect in a segregated America. At the unveiling, Johnson expressed his gratitude to the community and those who supported him throughout the project.

“Creating this mural was the most fun I’ve ever had on a job,” Johnson shared.

“I was driven by a desire to honor a man who not only shaped the physical landscape of Los Angeles but also inspired generations of Black architects to dream big.”

Johnson’s personal connection to the mural is evident in every brushstroke. “I wanted him to appear dignified yet accessible, someone who reached for greatness despite the odds,” Johnson explained.

“My favorite part of this painting is the water. It symbolizes the fluidity of his genius and the waves of change he created.”

Jordan Adero, Williams’ great-granddaughter, expressed her pride in seeing her ancestor’s contributions recognized in such a profound way.



LILA BROWN/LA.SENTINEL  
Johnson is presented with a commendation from the L.A. City Council.

“My great-grandmother, Mama D, was the backbone of our family, standing by my great-grandfather’s side through all his personal and professional endeavors,” Adero told the Sentinel.

“For this mural to be on Crenshaw Boulevard, in the neighborhood my great-grandfather loved, is such a privilege,” Adero said.

“This is a celebration not just of his legacy but of the spirit of Black Los Angeles. He poured his heart into projects like the 28th Street YMCA, the Golden State Mutual Life Insurance Building, and First AME Church. These places are more than just buildings; they are pillars of our South LA community, reflecting his deep love for this area.”

Trenton Whetstone, a public safety officer who once dreamed of becoming an architect, spoke emotion-

ally about the impact of seeing a Black architect honored in his own community.

“If I had known about Paul Williams when I was younger, my life might have been different,” Whetstone reflected. “This mural shows our young people that there’s a place for them in fields like architecture.”

As Destination Crenshaw moves forward, Jason Foster shared exciting plans for the future, including the completion of additional murals by emerging Black artists and the creation of public spaces that celebrate the rich history of Black Los Angeles.

“This project is about more than art,” Foster shared with the Sentinel.

“It’s about reclaiming our narrative and ensuring that the next generation knows the giants upon whose shoulders they stand.”



LILA BROWN/LA.SENTINEL  
DC execs and architects and Williams’ descendants join Harris-Dawson and Johnson to unveil the mural.

# MAGGIE HATHAWAY GOLF COURSE {Continued from A-1}

they can be for a community that I believe deserves the best I can deliver to them.”

“Ms. Hathaway, as I’ve stated, was one of the early Jedi warriors and I’m not talking about Star Wars, I’m talking about for justice, equity, diversity and inclusion,” said Bradford. “You won’t have to be into your late years to know what her legacy is because it will be promoted and amplified every time you come on this golf course.”

He continued, “You won’t have to wait decades later like I did to find out the impact that she has made so, I’m excited about what this means, not only to our young folks, but all of our community to learn the game of golf, learn the legacy and the commitment that she’s made.”

On October 8, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors approved an investment of \$7.8 million from the 2024-2025 Supplemental Budget for the Maggie Hathaway Renewal Project. To date, the Fore Youth Golf Foundation has raised more than \$10 million and continues to raise funds. When completed, this significantly upgraded course will be the jewel of L.A. County Parks’ 20 golf courses, the largest municipi-

pal golf course system in the United States.

“This is going to be a new Gil Hanse designs golf course,” said Terrell, “he’s sitting right here in the front row—he’s the best designer in the world.”

Maggie Hathaway Golf Course, a 12-acre course located at 9637 S. Western Avenue in Los Angeles, will boast a completely renovated Par 3 course by renowned firm Hanse Golf Course Design. This firm, founded by Hanse, are known for their work at the Los Angeles Country Club in Los Angeles and Rustic Canyon Golf Course in Moorpark, as well as many notable national and international renovation and restoration projects.

“I think ultimately what our goal here is to create something that’s fun, playable and enjoyable but also occasionally challenging and how do you do that?” said Hanse. “That ultimately comes down to flexibility within the setup of the golf course.”

Hanse continued, “The most important thing we can do with this golf course is the most difficult thing—we need to make it better, but we don’t want to change it.”

“We want to make sure that this golf course is still

recognizable, enjoyable to the people who have been here for 30 or 40 years not



BRIAN W. CARTER/LA.SENTINEL  
L.A. County Supervisor Holly Mitchell

the people who, may come here because Gil Hanse designed the golf course.

“If we do anything here that makes this golf course less welcoming, less enjoyable, less recognizable for the people who supported it over a long period of time, then we’ve failed and I think ultimately our goal is to do something fun.”

“This course for us represents a place where children will not only learn the game of golf, a game that has not been open and inclusive and supportive of communities like South L.A., but with the guiding

light of the Porters, children here, especially in the next coming years, will be nurtured, will be supported, we’ll be lifted up, will be reminded that they matter and that there is a village of people caring and supporting children in this community,” said Norma E. Garcia-González, director of L.A. County Department of Parks and Recreation.

Glen and Mary Porter, of the Western States Golf Association and founders of local youth programs that utilize Maggie Hathaway Golf Course have helped put the park on the map. It’s out of their programs that golfers like Skyler Graham, who was a previous junior in the Southern California Golf Junior Golf Association, started her golf career at Maggie Hathaway Golf Course.

“It’s absolutely incredible,” said Graham. “I don’t think when I was six-years-old, I could have imagined Maggie getting the facelift that it would be getting, all of the support from our sponsors, our donors, USGA.”

“It’s so incredible to be here and to really be a part of the future of Maggie’s and to continue to support the next generation of golfers from this area.”

In addition to this, Maggie Hathaway premier course upgrade, there are other significant improvements. The existing driving range will be reimaged from 10 to 18 stalls as well as be reversed to be more accessible, along with enhanced practice areas for putting and chipping.

A new building will be constructed that will include a clubhouse, offices, community room, and a public art exhibit that will retell the history of Maggie Hathaway and the course. These much-needed improvements will be enhanced by sustainability elements such as water-saving turf varieties, a new computer-controlled irrigation system linked to an onsite weather station, and new trees and greenery.

The projected course reopening will be at the end of 2025. The clubhouse building, entrance and perimeter enhancements are projected to start construction in late 2025 with an expected completion by late 2026. The entire project cost is estimated at \$15.2 million.

“Together, we embrace Maggie Hathaway’s vision of creating a welcoming space that enhances the physical and emotional well-being of community



BRIAN W. CARTER/LA.SENTINEL  
Golfer Skyler Graham

members,” said Paul Ballam, senior vice president of American Golf. “This project offers a unique chance to profoundly impact the youth of the Second District.”

Ballam continued, “This important community parkland will be overseen by our dedicated agronomy professionals, who will steward environmentally responsible practices that will provide an attractive golf experience and preserve the diverse habitats for native plants and wildlife, ensuring a healthier community for generations to come.”

For more information regarding Maggie Hathaway Golf Course, visit <https://parks.lacounty.gov/maggie-hathaway-golf-course>.



# TASTE OF SOUL

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Annie Judis Publishes Children's Book on Health and Exercise

By JOANIE HARMON Contributing Writer

In her upcoming children's book, "The Beverly Hills Jump Rope Queen," Annie Judis encourages her young readers and adults alike to live a healthy lifestyle.

"Health is wealth," says Judis. "A lot of people take their health for granted when they're young. I try to scare people on my Instagram. I say, 'You don't want to end up 80, and in a wheelchair,' because you will end up in a wheelchair at my age, if you don't move your body."

"In my book ... I tell them that one out of five kids in the United States are obese," she says. "That breaks my heart when I hear that. Just a little cheap rope is all you need to jump five minutes a day - it will change your life."

Judis, who turns 81 this month, achieved her seventh standing in the Guinness Book of World Records this past August, for four minutes of planking. Her previous six records are also for competitive rope skipping, the first of which she set at the age of 74.

Setting records is nothing new for Judis, a trailblazer of Black Hollywood history. A native of Houston, Texas, she was a run-



JOANIE HARMON/L.A. SENTINEL "Beverly Hills Jump Rope Queen" was written by Annie Judis, who turns 81 this month, to encourage children to start exercising.

ner-up in a local pageant and moved to California to pursue a career in acting and modeling. In 1969, Judis was the first African

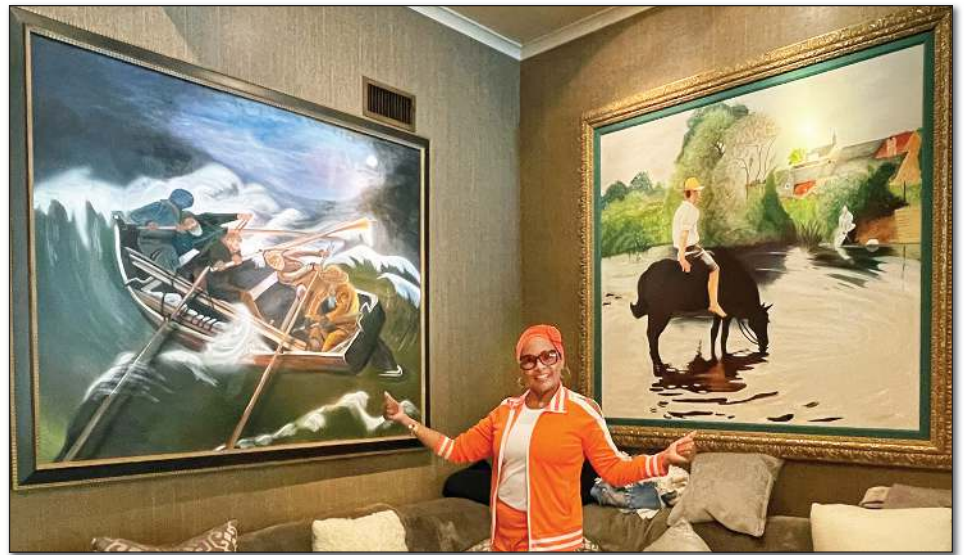


JOANIE HARMON/L.A. SENTINEL Trailblazing actor and model Annie Judis is also a visual artist, skilled in many styles of painting.

American woman on the cover of Playboy. Her acting credits include "The Beverly Hillbillies," "Starsky and Hutch," "The Jeffersons," and many more. On the big screen, Judis starred in several Blaxploitation classics, including "T.N.T. Jackson" and "The Mutthers."

"I feel that the term, Blaxploitation, was a product of its time and was a way for Black filmmakers to create opportunities for themselves in the industry," says Judis. "While it may have had some negative connotations, I am proud of the impact my films had in showcasing Black talent and stories at the time."

Painting is among



JOANIE HARMON/L.A. SENTINEL Annie Judis is a prolific painter of a wide range of subjects, from landscapes to portraits.

Judis' many talents, and her home is full of her portraits, landscapes, and other themes. Several illustrations in "The Beverly Hills Jump Rope Queen" are also inspired by her paintings and the book's messages of inclusion and friendship, with depictions of people with disabilities who can still exercise.

"I wanted to show people that even if you're blind, you can jump rope," says Judis, indicating several paintings in her studio. "His sister would clap her hands, and he would jump when he heard the clap. One lady over here, she's got one leg, and she can jump rope. The guy with one arm... can still jump rope."

A lifelong fitness devo-

tee, Judis works with a trainer three times a week. His routine for her included planking and she challenged herself to go from one minute to two, leading to her newest world record. She was also propelled by the memory of her late husband, Gary Judis, who shared her commitment to exercise.

"I knew I could do two [minutes], but that particular day, I knew I could hold it longer and I went for four minutes," says Annie Judis. "My husband and I would always compete against each other. When I was doing this planking, I was thinking that he was right next to me ... telling me to 'Keep going, keep going.'"

Judis looks forward to beating her own four-

minute record next year, and was recently accepted as a senior contestant to the 2025 Miss California USA Pageant.

After her second Guinness record of skipping rope at age 75, Judis experienced an allergic reaction to a medication and fell into a coma for several days.

"I overcame it, and I think that I'm here because I have more work to do here ... to motivate people, to let them know that you can live a healthy life if you take care of yourself while you're young," Judis says. "It's never too late to start."

"The Beverly Hills Jump Rope Queen" is available for pre-order and will be released on Amazon on Nov. 26.

Volunteer Center Expands Efforts with New Long Beach Pantry



Valero Energy Corporation presents The Volunteer Center with a \$46,000 check.

By NATHAN J. LEE Contributing Writer

The Volunteer Center celebrated the ribbon-cutting ceremony for its newly renovated pantry in Long Beach on Thursday, Nov. 7, marking a major milestone in the fight against food insecurity for the South Bay Area.



SILAS COLE Josh Gezahegn, EdD, president of The Volunteer Center.

The event brought together elected officials, nonprofit organizations, school district personnel, and other key supporters, reflecting a unified commitment to fighting hunger and uplifting local families.

Founded in 1963 as a three-year demonstration

project by the Junior League of Long Beach, the Volunteer Center has grown into a driving force for empathy, volunteerism, and collective action. With a refreshed space and renewed energy, the Volunteer Center breathes new life into its mission.

"We have our eyes on expanding our presence and the impact of our programs in the Long Beach community," said Board Chair Kevin Morrow.

The transformation was made possible by Home Depot's generous contribution of over \$25,000 in materials and a full week of dedicated labor, showcasing a powerful collaboration for



SILAS COLE Certificate of Recognition presented by Vice Mayor Cindy Allen to Dr. Gezahegn and The Volunteer Center.

community impact.

Established in 1984, the Volunteer Center's Court Referred Community Service program serves over 6,500 clients with more than 36,000 hours of service to the community each year. Since 2009, its Food for Kids initiative has provided over 1.2 million meals to students and families in the South Bay region, with 3,100 weekend meals to students and families in need.

Dr. Josh Gezahegn, president of the Volunteer Center, emphasized the transformative power of service, stating, "When you make the choice to volunteer and make a difference in someone's life, that is actu-

ally the biggest gift you can give to yourself and to others. This is a community of services, a community that is coming together to uplift those in need."

Vice Mayor Cindy Allen addressed the crowd, reflecting on the ongoing struggle with hunger.

"It breaks my heart today that we still have

food insecurity," she said. "But we're going to work toward this. And my dream for the future is that no kid anywhere goes hungry."

Dr. Gezahegn announced that the pantry opened in August and has already adopted six schools, with plans to continue expanding until all schools in need are served.

As the Volunteer Center continues to build on its long-standing legacy, the opening of the new pantry symbolizes hope and commitment to eradicating hunger, one meal at a time.

To help the Volunteer Center continue making a difference and for more information check out volunteer.org.

Simon Burriss: Africana Diaspora Black History Month II Crossword

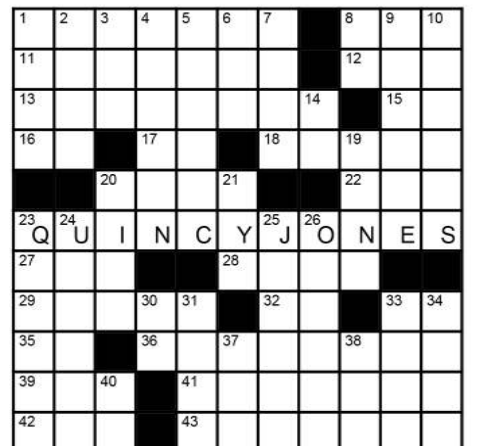
QUINCY JONES: MUSIC TITAN www.simonburriss700.com

Across

- 1. \*\*Quincy Jones'[QJ] birthplace
8. \*\*QJ the music arranger "The \_\_\_" (film)
11. \*Superstar singer \_\_\_ Jackson [MJ]
12. Opposite of west south west
13. \*\*QJ and MJ's 1983 top selling album
15. \*Basketball great Barkley's monogram
16. Negative
17. Family member
18. \*\*"The \_\_\_ Purple" film composer
20. Bell sound
22. \_\_\_ IL (online message)
23. \*\*Theme of this of this puzzle
27. University (abbr.)
28. \* \_\_\_ MMAD ALI
29. \*\*Mr. Jones' Oscar or Tony, for example
32. Detroit, \_\_\_
33. "For GOD \_\_\_ loved the world..." (John 3:16)
35. Symbol for iridium
36. \*\*QJ: Record producer, conductor, arranger, songwriter and \_\_\_
39. Research site
41. \*\*QJ's alma mater: \_\_\_ Univ. WA
42. Health resort
43. Catches in a trap

Down

- 1. Clinton Mount, Tennessee (initials)
2. Slangy greeting
3. "I can read!" (acronym)
4. Help out (2 wds.)
5. "Any athlete loves a nice coach" (acronym)
6. Hair product
7. Old Economics (abbr.)
8. \*\*QJ: Songwriter " \_\_\_ Are The World"



- 9. Salary
10. African animals
14. Briefly, roll over
19. \*\*"The Wiz" actress Home
20. \*Leontyne Price, for one
21. Sports site
23. Game birds
24. Open a gift
25. Accept eagerly (2 wds.)
26. 'Buckeye State' Tax Officer, informally (2 wds.)
30. \*Musician Charles' monogram
31. One teaspoon, maybe
33. "Buy the truth and do not \_\_\_ it" (Proverb 23:23)
34. Valuable rocks
37. Adults
38. Saint Ives (initials)
40. \*\*Hit song " \_\_\_ D" [QJ/MJ]

(ANSWERS ON D-3)

# CBR Hosts Home Ownership Summit for Veterans and Community

BY NATHAN J. LEE  
 Contributing Writer

Join the Consolidated Board of Realists of Southern California on Saturday, Nov. 16, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m., at the historic Sanchez Adobe for 'Highway to Home Ownership,' an event dedicated to empowering the community and honoring veterans with essential homeownership resources.

Seize this unique opportunity to gain vital knowledge and connect directly with experts who can help make your dream of homeownership a reality.

A historic advocate for democracy in housing, the CBR is bringing its mission to life with a transformative event.

Attendees will connect with a powerful network of experts, from banks and insurance providers to brokers and title representatives.

"We try to do everything we can to enlighten the community, educate the community, and share with them the resources," stated Carl D. Brackens, 2nd vice president of the Board.

"We would like to get 200 people to show up." The Consolidated



COURTESY PHOTO  
 Carl D. Brackens, Second Vice President of the Consolidated Board of Realists.



COURTESY PHOTO  
 Lyric Armstrong, president of the Consolidated Board of Realists.

Board of Realists, one of the nation's oldest minority trade associations, has championed housing equal-

ity for decades. They have made lasting contributions, such as the Rumford Act and the Fair Housing Act.

"If you're familiar with the lawsuit against Realtors for discrimination, this is a result of this organization," said Lyric Armstrong, president of the Consolidated Board of Realists.

"We have been fighting and advocating for over 75 years."

L.A. Mayor Karen Bass will make a special appearance, highlighting her commitment to tackling the city's homelessness and housing crisis. This collaboration emphasizes the need for accessible resources and practical solutions for stable, long-term housing.

The event will also provide veterans with crucial information about VA loan benefits, offering 100% financing and the opportunity to build generational wealth. Open to the public, the event will feature resources like first-time homebuyer assistance and credit counseling, making homeownership more accessible for everyone.

Reserve your spot now at highwaytohomeownership.com! Join the CBR at 3725 Don Felipe Dr., in Los Angeles.

For more information, visit [consolidatedboardofrealist.com](http://consolidatedboardofrealist.com).

# Leimert Park Jazz Fest 360: Activism, Social Justice & Live Jazz

BY RODD A. AMOS  
 Contributing Writer

Leimert Park Jazz Festival presents an afternoon of live jazz and thought-provoking discussion on Sunday, Nov. 17, from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., at Lula Washington Dance Theater, 3773 Crenshaw Blvd at Coliseum Street along the Crenshaw Corridor.

The event features a distinguished panel of scholars and musicians who have used their platforms to champion social justice and anti-racism.

"This program, 'Activism, Social Justice & Jazz presented by LPJF360,' is designed for a broad audience that extends well beyond jazz enthusiasts," stated Diane Robertson, executive director of Leimert Park Jazz Festival.

"Jazz has historically been a powerful voice against oppression. This event continues that legacy by addressing issues of mar-



COURTESY PHOTO  
 Dr. Ron McCurdy

ginalization and inequality.

"I chose Lula Washington Dance Theatre as our venue," she continued, "because it has been a cornerstone of the Los Angeles arts community for decades. The space is well-suited for an intimate, impactful gathering like ours, allowing for engaging discussion and immersive musical performances."

"Jazz, with its roots in struggle and resilience, is more than just music—it's a form of activism," explained moderator and professor in Jazz Studies,



COURTESY PHOTO  
 Capri Maddox

Dr. Ron C. McCurdy. "It serves as a metaphor for the words our founding fathers crafted for what our country could become. The improvisational nature mirrors the fight for social justice, pushing boundaries and challenging norms.

"Jazz speaks to the lived experiences of those who have faced oppression, creating a soundscape that reflects hardship and a call to action. Given today's political landscape, every artist is responsible for lending their artistic voice to combat inequality world-



COURTESY PHOTO  
 Dr. Jody C. Armour

wide," he said. The distinguished panel of scholars and musicians weighing in on social justice and anti-racism includes USC Professor of Law Dr. Jody C. Armour.

"Racism is a blight on the glory of American democracy," he declared. "It withers the hopes, dreams, and ambitions of millions of Americans. Left unchecked, it poses the greatest internal threat to this nation's peace and prosperity.

"Art and music," he continued, "can be powerful



COURTESY PHOTO  
 Kenneth Brown

forces of resistance, change, and liberation. Specifically, the fine and performing arts can help unify and bond individuals into collective social actors—they can provide oppositional narratives for the head and beautiful sounds and images for the heart."

Other panelists include Dr. Eddie Meadows, adjunct professor at UCLA Alpert School of Music; Dr. Dawn M. Norfleet, faculty member of UC Irvine Jazz Studies; and Capri Maddox, executive director and general manager of the Los

Angeles Civil Rights Department.

Attendees will be treated to the jazz stylings of The Kenneth Brown Collective performing the music of McCoy Tyner, Dizzy Gillespie, and more. Brown is a native of Inglewood and an alum of the Academy of Performing Arts at Alexander Hamilton High School in Castle Heights in L.A. A catered selection of charcuterie, fruit, and crudités and an open bar offering wine, soda, and water will be available.

LPJF 360 is a presentation of the Leimert Park Jazz Festival, Assemblyman Isaac Bryan, Lula Washington Dance Theater, and Councilwoman Heather Hutt.

For tickets and more, visit <https://bit.ly/3Yt2kTv>, or scan the barcode.



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# LOS ANGELES SENTINEL RELIGION

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2024

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B-3

## Rev. Dr. Michael J. Fisher Pushes Boundaries Inside and Outside the Church

By MYKO LYRIC  
Contributing Writer

Over two decades into his pastoral journey, Dr. Michael J. Fisher joined the L.A. Sentinel to reflect on the blessings and growth opportunities of leading the first Black church in Compton: Greater Zion Church Family (GZCF).

“My struggle to be a pastor still remains today, really, 20 years in the game,” Fisher explained, alluding to his adolescent apprehension in following his father’s footsteps into pastorship.

“When I came in, I was 24 going on 25 and I didn’t want to be a pastor because I felt it would typecast me, put me in a box, come with a lot of rules of what I could not do,” he remembered.

Mentored by the founder of Kwanzaa, Dr. Maulana Karenga, Dr. Fisher came to understand that he would not be a Civil Rights-era type of pastor: he would bring more of himself into the role.

“From the time of Jim Crow [through the Civil Rights Movement], we wanted our leaders to have this prestigious look. The challenge is making [our

community] understand that we’re now in a different fight: It’s not about looking prestigious, but about using our prestige to advocate,” Fisher stated.

This knowledge has shaped his mission as a pastor, solidified his leadership, and increased GZCF’s visibility and impact. As Fisher championed this new vision, church elders and youth alike began to support his mission, recalling the pioneering legacy that created GZCF.

His father built and organized the church, formerly known as Little Zion Missionary Baptist Church, as the first Black church in Compton. As such, it was not completely shocking to find that Michael J. Fisher, son of the founder, had a similarly innovative spirit.

Pushing boundaries and limits has been an undercurrent of Fisher’s pastorate both inside and outside of the church. Serving as a pastor in Compton is demanding as the community frequently faces underfunding and outside efforts to exploit its image. Over the years, he has fought against stereotypes and gentrification efforts and worked to secure opportu-

nities for his congregation.

“It’s a constant fight. [I’m] pastoring marginalized people, an oppressed people who have so many hopes and dreams but just



Greater Zion Church Family and Pastor Fisher

don’t have all the bridges to get them there,” Fisher admitted.

“Everyone is always trying to gun for Compton. The stigma, the gang violence, gun violence, all of that. When I say I’m a pastor for a church in Compton, people say, ‘Oh, how are you even doing that?’ There are microaggressions everywhere I go.”

However, he also addressed the many advantages of being based in Compton.

“The name of ‘Compton’ travels everywhere, and there are places where I’ve been able to get on the stage because they found out my

church was in Compton. I get to ride that cultural prestige where if I just simply said South L.A., [we wouldn’t] get the same notoriety,” noted the pastor. This way,

he is able to amalgamate the renown of Compton with the singularity of his church.

Additionally, Compton’s reputation as a creative hub gives him access to extraordinary talent that enriches the church’s ministry.

“It’s always been the birthplace for creatives. So, I don’t ever have to look far for the best lyricists, the greatest minds, the best musicians. They all come out of Compton.”

Outside his pastoral duties, he has built a significant platform as a mentor and motivational speaker focusing on themes of justice and unity. His commitment to these messages has

taken him around the world, including a speaking engagement in Jerusalem that aired globally. In all spaces, he emphasizes the importance of “justice, caring for the oppressed, not forgetting the marginalized, and, through God, being unified.”

A lifelong passion for music has also been an essential outlet. Performing under the alias J. Kingdom, he has produced pop-infused Christian music that allows him to reach audiences beyond the pulpit. His music, including records with super producer Shep Crawford, have made waves on Billboard charts and brought him local acclaim. With a new album set to release on January 28, 2025, he hopes to share a sound that reflects his growth, trials, and joys over the years.

Of his current music, Fisher joked, “I’m in my Janet [Jackson] era. She’s not dancing the whole concert anymore! But she’s still Janet and she still has hits.”

Through it all, his commitment to mentoring the younger generation remains a priority. He believes that passing on knowledge is crucial to strengthening the



Rev. Dr. Michael J. Fisher

community and he organizes programs to teach young people skills that aren’t commonly addressed in traditional education including a financial literacy program that will teach budgeting, credit repair, and home and land ownership.

His church, a blend of generations and cultures, is a testament to his dedication to creating an authentically-led space where every voice and talent is welcomed and nurtured.

Attend service at Greater Zion Church Family, located at 2408 N. Wilmington in Compton, and follow Rev. Dr. Michael J. Fisher on Instagram: @michaeljfisher

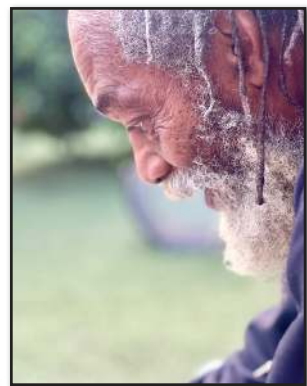
## Patrick Houchen ‘Shaka Man’ – The Musician Whose Healing Touch Defies Belief

By NATHAN J. LEE  
Contributing Writer

Tucked away in the bustling city of Los Angeles, revered Jamaican musician Patrick Houchen, better known as Shaka Man, has crafted a sanctuary he calls Jubilee Palace. Surrounded by lush navel orange trees and vibrant flora, this serene retreat is more than just a home.

Inspired by the historic palace of Haile Selassie in Ethiopia, Jubilee Palace stands as a spiritual refuge where Shaka Man’s deep-rooted heritage and life-changing spiritual encounter guide his mission to heal and inspire others.

A seasoned multi-instrumentalist and producer under Jubilee Sound, Shaka Man’s story took a dramatic turn one quiet night as he was cleaning



NATHAN J. LEE/L.A. SENTINEL  
Patrick Houchen, known as “Shaka Man,” reflects deeply at his sanctuary, Jubilee Palace.

near the gate of his property.

“I don’t hear voices,” he emphasized, sharing how a divine message changed his life forever. A voice declared, “Behold, the place where you stand is holy ground,” and directed him to say, “To God be the glory” in all that he did. It was then that Shaka Man realized he had been

given a gift to alleviate the pain and suffering of others.

Shaka Man believes his work is guided by Ezekiel 33, a mission he carries, backed by countless testimonies of his extraordinary gift. One such testimony comes from Lucia, whose life took an unexpected turn in 2021 when she was placed in hospice care.

Diagnosed with stage four colon cancer, she was sent home with little hope of survival. Yet, fate led her to Shaka Man, and what followed defied all medical expectations, bringing a miraculous sense of hope and healing into her life.

“When he prayed over me,” Lucia recounted, “he said he was going to move the cancer somewhere where they could remove it.” Miraculously, her colon cancer shifted to her neck—a phe-

nomenon that baffled doctors.

Colon cancer does not usually migrate to the neck, skipping all other vital organs. Yet, this extraordinary event allowed Lucia to seek holistic treatment, and she was eventually declared cancer-free in her neck.

Even as her stubborn cancer has returned, Lucia continues to visit Shaka Man, who has managed to alleviate her severe pain.

“I’m still here,” she said. “Doctors have told me that I should be gone. I’m a walking miracle.”

Her oncologist, initially skeptical, now acknowledges the unexplainable progress.

Lucia credits her survival to the divine power that works through Shaka Man, along with her holistic medicine approach.

“Through his hands and the prayers he does, I believe

it has gotten me this far,” she said with conviction.

Lucia’s miraculous experience is just one of many stories that illustrate the profound impact of



NATHAN J. LEE/L.A. SENTINEL  
Shaka Man receives a call from a grateful client, sharing words of appreciation.

Shaka Man’s gift. Despite this, Shaka Man resists placing labels on himself.

“If I tell them I’m a Christian, a Rastaman, or a Muslim, I’m putting myself in a

title,” he said. Instead, he proclaims, “I represent the light,” emphasizing that the divine power he channels transcends traditional beliefs.

Guided by this light, which he feels connects him to both the spiritual and physical realms, Shaka Man envisions establishing the Kurukuru Healing Center—a sanctuary where he can share his gift with the world.

Shaka Man’s story is one of faith, revelation, and the mystery of divine intervention. Though he remains dedicated to his music, his newfound purpose has added a profound new dimension to his life.

And while he may never fully understand why he was chosen, he accepts his calling with humility, always giving credit to a higher power: “To God be the glory.”zx

## Guidance from Black Ministers Offers Strength and Unity for the Road Ahead

By JOE W. BOWERS JR.  
California Black Media

With Donald Trump recently elected as the 47th President, many Black Californians are feeling a mix of concern and uncertainty, especially with Project 2025 – a conservative plan poised to impact social services, voting rights, education reform, and environmental protections – areas that support the well-being of Black communities across the state.



At the November meeting of the Inglewood Area Ministers Association (IAMA) held two days after the General Election at the Center of Hope Church, the Rev. William Thurmond, IAMA charter member and a retired pastor, shared how he had comforted family members troubled by the election’s outcome.

Thurmond turned to the Book of Samuel, recounting how Samuel, a prophet and leader, anointed Israel’s kings and guided the people through turbulent political transitions. He suggested that Samuel’s story offers insight into how to view leadership that may seem flawed or contrary to one’s personal values.

Drawing from 1 Samuel 8, Thurmond explained how the people of Israel demanded a king to lead them despite Samuel’s warnings of the hardships that the decision would bring.

Quoting directly, Thurmond shared Samuel’s warning: “This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you: he will take your sons, and appoint them for himself, for his chariots, and to be his horsemen... he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your olive yards... he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his officers, and to his servants.” (1 Samuel 8:11, 14-15).

“Much like that moment in history,” Thurmond said,

“we, too, may need to brace ourselves for difficult times. But just as the Israelites were called to press on, we are called to stay resilient, support one another, and keep our focus on a future beyond this administration.”

His reflections inspired a broader discussion among the IAMA members present, who agreed that when leaders change, the community’s responsibility to each other and to their faith stays unwavering and strong.

“Samuel’s journey teaches us that when leaders change, our calling to stand together in faith and purpose does not,” Thurmond continued. “This isn’t the time to sink into worry or feel defeated.” Instead, he encouraged everyone to find strength in the story, viewing it as a call to rise, support one another, and act with purpose.

### Facing Project 2025 and Trump’s Leadership

In response to Thurmond’s reflections, the ministers shared concerns that Trump’s authoritarian leadership style, marked by divi-

sive rhetoric, along with Project 2025’s proposed policy changes, could pose significant challenges for Black Californians.

They agreed that Trump and Project 2025 could undo hard-won progress and limit access to essential resources. Given these challenges, the ministers emphasized the need for vigilance, unity, and civic engagement.

“We have every reason to be watchful,” said one minister. “Project 2025 aims to undo progress that we fought so hard for over decades. We must stay informed and resilient.”

### Principles for Resilience and Unity

From the ministers’ discussion inspired by the Book of Samuel, a set of guiding principles naturally took shape that could help Black Californians face the challenges ahead. Rather than prescribing specific actions, they focused on values rooted in faith and community – awareness, support, civic engagement, and resilience – that can serve as

anchors in these times.

### 1. Building Resilience Through Awareness

The ministers underscored that staying informed is fundamental to resilience. They encouraged attending forums, joining discussions, and actively engaging with local representatives to stay connected and aware of any policy changes stemming from Project 2025.

### 2. Strength in Community Support

Through their discussions, the ministers concluded that coming together as a community is crucial. During uncertain times, shared support becomes a vital resource. Organizing community events, supporting Black-owned businesses, and participating in local groups can foster resilience and provide resources for those impacted by policy shifts.

### 3. Engaging in Civic Life

Active participation in civic life is more essential now than ever, the ministers stressed. Trump’s presidency and Project 2025 present

serious challenges for Black communities. The ministers expressed that everyone should get involved in local government, vote, and participate in advocacy efforts. Every voice counts and Black Californians can help influence policies that support their communities by staying engaged.

### 4. Fostering Unity and Resilience

Nurturing resilience through spiritual and cultural practices offers additional strength. The ministers suggested regular gatherings, community circles, and cultural events to build hope, foster unity, and create a foundation of resilience during uncertain times.

### Moving Forward with Purpose

As the meeting concluded, one minister shared, “Just as Samuel guided the people through turbulent times, we have the chance to guide each other. This is not a time for fear but a call to face the future with confidence, grounded in faith, community, and purpose.”

• DR. MAULANA KARENGA •

# Daring to Hope and Struggle Beyond Elections: A Radical and Irreversible Refusal To Be Defeated

In turning point times and struggles like these and those yet to come, we must not find ourselves paralyzed with anxiety and apprehension and pining over the terrible turn of events; the odds against us; or the toll these righteous struggles for our lives and future and the future of this country will take on us. Rather, we must remember and hold high the instructive, rich and rewarding lessons of our history, learned in real life and lived experience, continuous striving, and righteous and relentless struggle.

And we must reason and realize that if our honored ancestors in the Holocaust of enslavement could hold on to their humanity; hope and strive for freedom; and find various ways and means to resist and embody a radical and irreversible refusal to be defeated or dispirited, we can, in good faith, do no less in the winter of vengeance and violence promised by this right-wing regime goose stepping and stomping into power.

Indeed, if fascist political thugery is the plan and promise, and Trump moves to become the mob boss of America and mob leader of his lemming-like loyalists, enablers and supporters, they must not find us immobilized by anxiety and apprehension, unaware and unready to resist. For in the face of evil, injustice and oppression, we are morally obligated to resist, to refuse to cooperate or collaborate actively or inactively in our own oppression. Clearly, in such a context, there is no neutrality, no sanctuary or safety on the sidelines or in the rear hiding behind transparent walls of self-deluding lies, promises and hopes of exemption.

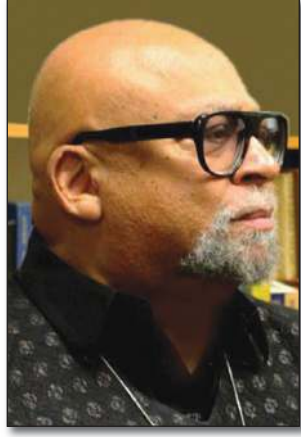
This is the lesson taught by Nana Paul Robeson in the midst of the emerging fascism of WWII. He informed the world and the would-be escapist and neutralists, "The battlefield is everywhere there is no sheltered rear." And Nana Henry Highland Garnet urged the

enslaved African then and counsels the oppressed ones, now "let your motto be resistance, resistance, resistance." He calls across the centuries for us to rise up in resistance, "for no oppressed people have ever secured their liberty (freedom) without resistance."

Whatever other casualties and chaos occurred and are yet to come with the right-wing capture of the reins of state power in these recent elections, no one can claim with an iota of awareness, honesty and truthfulness that Trump and his cohorts are not America, the majority representation of America, unmasked and unrepentantly committed to reversing hard won gains in the interest of freedom and justice and preventing the achievement of new ones. The timid and tepid disclaimers that he and they are not really America rings hollow in the air-conditioned caves of those gleefully planning and promising legalized vengeance, destruction and dismantlement on a large and lustful scale. Here, it appears the would-be autocrat and unhinged actor is gloatingly telling us "Welcome to the Mad Max Thunderdome."

Surely, if we are to work our way through the righteous anger, and understandable deep disappointment in the outcome of the elections, we must craft a Black Agenda, create Black united fronts, build and rebuild our culture of struggle in which struggle is both normal and necessary for constantly expanding the realm of human freedom and justice in the world. And we must build real and mutually respectful, supportive and beneficial alliances and alternative political structures with others who also rise up and resist the limiting party and corporate established order of things. And whatever we plan and do with others, we must continually strengthen our own capacity for resistance everywhere oppression is proposed and practiced.

For as Nana Haji Malcolm taught, "In this country, wherever a Black (person) is, there is a battleline." Indeed, he taught that "whether in the North or



DR. MAULANA KARENGA

South, the East or West, you and I are living in a country that is a battleline for all of us." And as the battleline of struggle is everywhere, there is a parallel and compelling need for us to be always aware vigilant and engaged on every front. Thus, our battle cry must be "Everywhere a battleline; everyday a call to struggle," fighting fiercely, as Nana Fannie Lou Hamer urged us, "every step of the way".

Now, when we think and speak of resistance, we must understand and engage it in its most expansive meaning. Kawaida philosophy teaches that resistance is a triple-meaning process and practice. Indeed, it is a process and practice of opposition, affirmation and aspiration. And we must do all three equally and simultaneously, for they are interrelated, interactive and interdependent. Resistance as opposi-

tion is opposition to the oppressor and oppression in all its forms and in every place and space we find it.

Resistance as affirmation is affirming ourselves every day and in every way that is good, beautiful and strengthening. And this affirming includes personal and collective bearing witness in speech and action to our sacredness and soulfulness, our equal humanity and human rights, and our unique and equally valid and valuable African, Black, way of being human in the world.

And resistance as aspiration is a motivating vision and practice that seeks to not only achieve a just and good society, but also a just, good and sustainable world, initiating, in the Fanonian sense, a new history and hope for humankind. In a word, it is to ultimately accept the task Nana Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune assigns us saying, "Our task is to remake the world. It is nothing less than this."

To rightfully and fruitfully reflect on the country and context in which we find ourselves and on where we go from here, we must first remember. Indeed, all real reflection requires remembering, drawing on what we already have experienced, understood and know.

For us, it is an urgent need to first remember who we are as a people in the history of this country and the world. Indeed, how we understand ourselves shapes and determines how we

assert ourselves in the world. We are fathers and mothers of humanity and thus bring to the table and task before us a library of lessons in life, reflection, struggle and achievement from the longest of human histories.

We are the sons and daughters of the Holocaust of enslavement, one of the greatest holocausts in human history and thus, we have valuable knowledge of savagely imposed genocidal suffering and varied ways to resist it. For we not only survived, but prevailed and turned the radically evil intentions of our oppressors into ashes of failure in their mouths.

Also, we are authors and heirs of the Reaffirmation of the Sixties, the reaffirmation of our Africanness and our liberation and social justice tradition. And thus, we are irreversibly committed to the struggle to be ourselves and free ourselves and radically reimagine and reconstruct this country in the interest of a shared and inclusive good for us and all. Also, we are a critical moral and social vanguard, whose righteous and relentless struggle to expand the realm of freedom in this country became a model and mirror for other oppressed and struggling peoples in this country and around the world.

It is important to note here, that in spite of regular racist attempts to blame their losses, lives and sordid history on us, it is we, as a people, female and male

who registered our resistance to emerging fascism in higher numbers than any other racial or ethnic group in this election. And we did it in the face of multiple efforts to suppress our vote and silence our voice in various ways.

Finally, as we say in Us, "This is our duty then: to know our past and honor it; to engage our present and improve it; and to imagine a whole new future and forge it in the most ethical, effective and expansive ways."

And this too, our ancestors and history teach us, saying: "Continue the struggle. Keep the faith. Hold the line. Love and respect our people and each other. Practice the Nguzo Saba. Seek and speak truth. Do and demand justice. Be constantly concerned with the well-being of the world and all in it. And dare help rebuild the overarching movement that prefigures and makes possible the good world we all want and deserve to live in and leave as a legacy worthy of the name and history of the African."

*Dr. Maulana Karenga, Professor and Chair of Africana 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 and Introduction to Black Studies, 4th Edition, www.OfficialKwanzaaWebsite.org; www.MaulanaKarenga.org.*

• TONY WAFFORD •

## They Chose Barabbas; Now What You Gone Do

On the night of the election, I did not go to any of the watch parties because I didn't want to get caught up in all that emotion, I wanted to keep my thinking cap on. Like the majority of Black people, I was hopeful that our dear sister would win, but I made it a priority to keep my feelings in check, not allowing myself to get too high or too low regardless of what the outcome would be.

Yes, like many of you I was hopeful that America wouldn't show up, but she did. I can hear some of you asking, what the hell are you talking about Tony Wafford? I am so glad you asked.

Unless you're suffering from historical amnesia, America was founded on genocide. Let me share the definition with you, "Genocide is violence that targets individuals because of their membership of a group and aims at the destruction of a people." Like it or not, that's what's in the marrow of America.

If you think I'm overreacting, you ask the indigenous people of this land known to us as Native Americans. they know firsthand what it means to deal with a so called American. I can hear some of you now, "what are you talking about? America gave us the first Black President, Barack Obama." And that was good but is it really that remarkable to pick the best person for a job; and Obama was clearly the best person.

What I am so very proud of is that we, Black people, supported our dear sister contrary to what mainstream (White) media and total BS social media sites saying that Black men were not in support of VP Kamala Harris. Sure, we all know a number of chain hugging Negroes that were in support of their oppres-

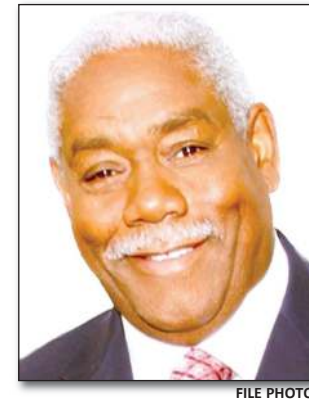
sor, but among Black people they were the exception and clearly not the rule.

That's right, Black men voted 77% in favor of Kamala, Trump only received 1% more of the Black male vote than he got the last time he ran. I don't know about you, but I'm proud of what Black men did to support our sister, and social media, white media or house negros aren't going to fool me into perpetuating Black male pathology. Black women voted 91% in favor of her.

Now let's talk about who really chose (elected) Barabbas (Trump) because it wasn't us. You do know that 60% of white men voted for Trump, is anybody surprised that the average White man would rather collaborate with a psychotic White man than a sensible sane Black woman? After all that female unity talk, Roe v Wade, grabbing you by your genitals total disregard and disrespect for women regardless of their culture, White women showed up just as that. How else can you explain 53% of White women voting for Donald Trump? It's

not about their crotch, it's about their culture. They're white first.

Now let's address this so-called Black Brown



Tony Wafford

unity thing. It seems to me whenever I hear the words Black Brown unity, it's always coming from the mouth of a Black person. Latino men voted 55% in favor of Trump. You may ask yourselves how in the hell can that be. Well it's like this - we've got Oreos, and they've got Coconuts.

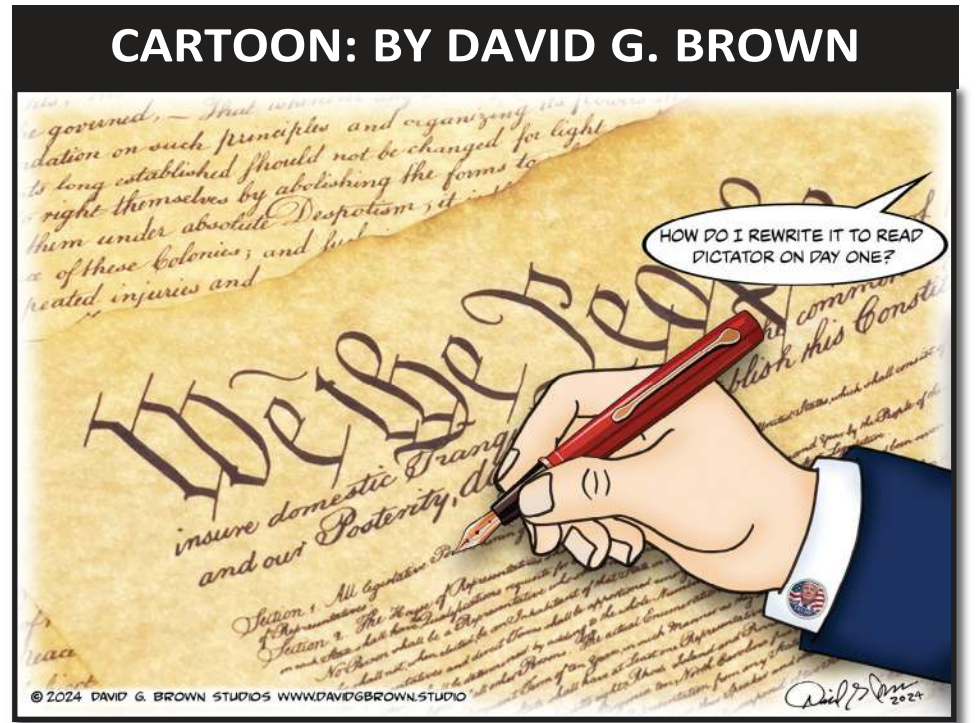
Black people, trust me, the sky is not going to fall over these next four years! These devils are going to do all they can to make life miserable for the most vulnerable (Black, white and Brown) in this nation, but haven't they always done

that? The greater question is how are we going to respond?

The first thing we are going to see is some major white-on-white crime! They're going to do all that they can to savage one another and get those normal whites to fall in line. Then they're going to start to dismantle any and everything that's in place to support the most vulnerable in this country. Oh, sure it's gonna hurt some white people, but they're just going to be collateral damage in the big scheme of things.

What I'm going to do is what Dr. Maulana Karenga says, I'm going to use my culture as both a resource and a reference to guide me through these next four years. I would also encourage you to think about our history. Think about all the things that we've come through to be where we are today. We defied unbelievable odds. We did it before and we can do it again.

You know the great Honorable Marcus Mosiah Garvey once said, "As humans have done humans can do." They couldn't stop us then and they damn sho can't stop us now!



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# Coach Wendy

Life Strategist / Consultant  
Author / Speaker

## When a Plan Comes Together

For those of you who follow my column, you know a couple of months ago, I shared about one of my dear friends since childhood, Dr. Yvonne Cagle, who has amazing accomplishments, and yet there were a couple of things she was still hoping (and deserving) to achieve during her lifetime, but the right team needed to come together in order to help make it happen.

Yvonne was a Colonel (retired) from the California State Guard, a NASA astronaut, an aerospace physician, and an inventor,

among other things. She has also achieved numerous awards and salutations, including the Presidential Lifetime Achievement Award (Gold Medal) from President Joe Biden. Two accomplishments have been on her list, but for various reasons, she has been held back.

But, recently, one of them was achieved and she was awarded the level of Brigadier General for the California State Guard. She is the first to achieve such status with all her other accomplishments. She has made herstory! She has one



more item on her list and we know with the right team, that plan will also come together.

Since I have known Yvonne for close to 50 years, I was very happy to not only be part of the team to help one of her dreams come true but to also have the privilege to participate on the program. When you know someone for almost your entire life and you know their work speaks for itself, especially if you know they were denied because of reasons that were not right and were not under her control, we must

step up to undo wrongs to make sure information is placed on the right side of history books. We may not always be able to fix or change everything, but when it is in our power to do so, we have an obligation to stand up for those who need our help.

Do you have dreams that you long to accomplish? What are you working on that you know if you had the right team behind you, there is nothing that could hold you back. One of the first things that is important is a plan.

A good plan is made up of several components including but not limited to, what is your main goal or objective? What are the strategies and methods necessary to achieve your plans? What steps and resources do you need to take and identify to be successful?

Finally, what is your timeline and how will you evaluate if you are successful? Once you have identified the pieces necessary to

accomplish your plan, the next thing you need to do is figure out who are the best people who can help you on your journey. This may be the toughest part, but you would be surprised how many people would be interested in helping you when they know you are serious about what you are doing.

I would like to challenge you to think about what goals and dreams you may have tossed aside thinking you will never be able to accomplish for whatever reason. Sometimes we give up on ourselves before it is time. Are you willing to give yourself another chance to be who you were always meant to be?

I recently gave myself a self-induced sabbatical and while I was away, I thought about where I was selling myself short in the various areas God had intended for my life. You see when we live up to God's expectations for our lives, it benefits so many other people who God puts in our path.

When we do not plan our work and work our plan, we are doing a disservice to all mankind. Also, sometimes when we do not do what we are supposed to do we could be blocking someone else's blessings.

Andrew Carnegie said, "Teamwork is the ability to work together toward a common vision. The ability to direct individual accomplishments toward organizational objectives. It is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results."

Remember, having a vision is crucial to having your plan come together. To rally a team or others to help you with your dream, plan, or vision, remember, that you must have a plan to have it come together.

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Visit [www.WendyGladney.com](http://www.WendyGladney.com) and [www.forgivingforliving.org](http://www.forgivingforliving.org) to learn more. Wendy is a life strategist, coach, consultant, author, and speaker.

# Success On "The Way"

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## "God Has Spoken" Part 1

On Tuesday, Nov. 5, Election Day proved to be a worldwide date to distinguish itself in the historical annals. I termed it "Day for the Elect."

The new president-elect to become the 47th president of the United States became that nominee against "all odds" despite the obstacles that confronted him. In looking at the results, it appears most would have never believed he would overcome and surpass the difficulties by which he was confronted. No way! He did — and he has.

Could it be mistaken that

no other sovereign phenomenal power pushed him over the top? Yup! God did it. When I heard for the first time multiple billions (\$2 billion—only an estimate) were raised and spent, leaving a deficit, meaning all the billions were spent and over and above the billions spent, and there was none left over, but rather some money was still owed. It's remarkable!

Having said all that, when I heard this, I immediately thought, "Can the Almighty God be overcome or defeated by having or spending any amount of money?" I laid back and



knew consciously and intuitively the answer.

God cannot be tempted with money or bought out. God showed himself to be unsurpassed and unimpressed with money no matter how much. It's laughable. It showed how far away from God some people are. Can they outspend God? No. God doesn't need money.

Remember Nebuchadnezzar had the image made? You remember he was self-absorbed in greed and avarice. After the structure was built, he called all his cabinet members and everyone around to come to the big

party to worship the image.

Here's the trickery. He also called all those who played instruments and musicians and sang and whooped and hollered. If they, along with everyone else, did not fall and bow and worship the image, they would be killed.

Because they did not become seduced and hypnotized by the music at first, they succumbed to the clanging and gyrations and rhythms of the music only to survive the connections and coalitions with Nebuchadnezzar they had sewn together and mended over the years and years.

So, they decided, "I better hang with this program, or I'm going to die one way or another," and lose my following or my life. His followers exposed themselves for who they really were. Some of them lost their footing as worshippers. Eventually, he lost regardless of what he had put together.

The future of our country hangs in the balance. The United States needed a

human intercessor to help whittle through the thick forest and cut through and cut down obstacles. The message came through. God has spoken.

It's not time for our country to go down to dust, to perish, and come under the influence of a corrupt society where babies are murdered before seeing the light of day, and children are mutilated to change their biological gender and told they're girls when born biologically as male gender and where girls take hormones to change their voices to sound like female gender and boys have feminine products in their bathrooms to be used as girls.

It's a lot, and God just said, "I'm tired and won't stand for this to have my creation and me mocked! Yes. I am still God. The same God today, yesterday, and forever. I change not." The time will come, and I (God) will have my day. But not now. When?

We don't know. The Almighty will have His day. That he tells us. It's record-

ed... for the day of the Lord will come. He will return quietly as a thief in the night. And we don't know the year nor the hour of the day or night or the century. We know not.

However, what we do know is that it is an imminent event set to come and only our Father in heaven knows. Keep watch. Watch and pray.

Thanks for reading! Jeanette Grattan Parker is the founder-superintendent of Today's Fresh Start Charter School, 4514 Crenshaw Boulevard, L.A. 90043, 323-293-9826, [www.todaysfreshstart.org](http://www.todaysfreshstart.org). (Ask Dr. Jeanette TM) "Inquiring Minds Want to Know." All articles are copyrighted. All rights reserved © Errors? Or Questions? Please let me know. Join Sundays for music and message at 11:30 a.m. by calling (712) 775-8971, code 266751. References: The Holy Bible. Don't stop praying and hoping. "Today is another great day to do good and be successful."

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hardscap, removal and repair of existing access barriers, building renovations, storm water mitigation, weather proofing, swing space prep, abatement, central plant improvements, site utility work and new construction.

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Before taking certain very important actions, however, the personal representative will be required to give notice to interested persons unless they have waived notice or consented to the proposed action.)

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# Special Needs Network Awarded \$11M to Expand C.O.R.E. Workforce Development Program

SENTINEL NEWS SERVICE

The Special Needs Network (SNN) received an additional \$11 million from the California Department of Developmental Disabilities (DDS) to expand its pioneering C.O.R.E. (Centering Opportunities, Resources, and Equity in Early Intervention) program.

Administered by the Lanterman Regional Center, this funding will enhance SNN's innovative workforce development initiative, aimed at training and placing BIPOC clinicians in behavioral and allied health roles to tackle systemic inequities in California's healthcare workforce.

Additionally, the C.O.R.E. program aims to raise awareness about the critical shortage of clinicians and the importance of providing culturally sensitive therapeutic care to ensure that underserved communities receive equitable, impactful support.

Led by SNN President and Civil Rights Attorney Areva Martin, Esq., in collaboration with SNN Advisory Board Member Dr.

adolescents. "Special Needs Network has shown remarkable leadership and accountability in meeting

unites leading experts in DEI, applied behavior analysis, occupational therapy, and developmental science to provide state-of-

professional coaching, and virtual and in-person learning modules, making C.O.R.E. a premier training initiative in the field.

trained over 300 fellows and placed 200+ graduates in significant healthcare roles. This new funding enables C.O.R.E. to grow further, strengthening SNN's reputation as a trusted administrator of large-scale, impactful programs.

"Our success with C.O.R.E. shows that Special Needs Network can deliver real, measurable outcomes in large-scale initiatives," said Martin, SNN founder.

"This investment empowers us to serve even more communities and lessen educational financial burdens for aspiring professionals."

The C.O.R.E. program underscores SNN's dedication to addressing healthcare inequities by fostering a diverse workforce representative of California's communities. DDS's support ensures the program will continue to meet urgent healthcare needs while setting standards for cultural competency and equitable care.



Staff and participants of the C.O.R.E. Workforce Development Program.

Arysha Vahabzadeh, M.D., and SNN Board Member Dr. Anshu Batra, the program offers a rigorous, 100-hour training curriculum. This multidisciplinary program includes anti-bias and anti-racism training and focuses on building a culturally competent workforce to deliver early intervention therapy to children ages 0-5 and nonverbal

the needs of California's diverse communities," said Melinda Sullivan, executive director of the Lanterman Regional Center.

"With this funding, we're taking meaningful steps to bridge access gaps by empowering practitioners who understand the cultural sensitivities of the communities they serve."

The C.O.R.E. program

the-art training. As one of the nation's foremost experts on race, equity, and leadership, Dr. Shaun Harper heads USC's Race and Equity Center, which certifies C.O.R.E. fellows in culturally competent care.

This team has developed a rigorous 100-hour training program, which includes DEI certification,

With the \$11 million funding, SNN will double the number of C.O.R.E. fellows to reach 500 BIPOC practitioners across California. Each fellow will receive training support and up to \$10,000 in student loan forgiveness after a one-year commitment.

SNN's initial \$7 million investment has already

## The Wiley Center Honors Advocates, Exceeds Fundraising Goals at 45th 'Beyond The Label' Gala

SENTINEL NEWS SERVICE

The Wiley Center for Speech and Language Development, a nonprofit organization that supports individuals with autism from birth to adulthood, held its 45th annual "Beyond the Label" gala on Nov. 9.

The fundraising extravaganza, held in the Bayview Ballroom of the Marina del Rey Marriott, exceeded its

fundraising goals of over \$200,000.

Said Dr. Pamela Wiley, CEO and executive Director, "I extend my heartfelt appreciation to our supporters and Board of Directors who know the work that we do and how we educate our students to go 'Beyond the Label' — autism does not define them and our center prepares our students to live successful and fulfilled lives."

Honorees for the evening included: Actor Joe Mantegna, Parent Advocate Award; Producer/Director Ralph Farquhar, Media Authenticity Award; Wiley Center Student Alfred Brown II, Beyond the Label Award; and the Santa Monica/Westside Fund for Women and Girls, Faye McClure Connecting Star Award. Other celebrity/VIP appearances included Holly Robinson Peete, Mara



From left are Dr. Ashley Wiley Johnson, Ralph Farquhar, Dr. Pamela Wiley, Joe Mantegna, Johnny Gill, Posie Carpenter and Guest.

Brock-Akil, Debra Lee, Director Stan Lathan, CA State Assemblymember Isaac Bryan.

The event was co-hosted

by Vanessa Estelle Williams (actress) and Jovana Lara (anchor, ABC7). Entertainment included the Wiley Center student group, the Drama

Kings & Queens, student Ashley Kelly, the Network International Band of USC and mega-soul star, Johnny Gill, capped off the night.

## 2024 General Election: Black Women Make History as California and U.S. Senators

BY ANTONIO RAY HARVEY  
California Black Media

There is one African American woman currently serving in the California State Senate, Sen. Lola Smallwood-Cuevas (D-Ladera Heights).

It's the same in the U.S. Senate.

In October of 2023, Gov.

ate, two Black women have already won seats. Lisa Blunt-Rochester of Delaware and Angela Alsobrooks of Maryland will be going to Capitol Hill in January after winning their respective U.S. Senate races.

It will be the first time in U.S., history that two Black women have served in the Senate at the same time.

tonight, whose sacrifice and stories I will continue to carry with me," added Alsobrooks.

In Southern California, as of Nov. 9, Laura Richardson leads Michelle Chambers with 107,255 votes in the 39th Senate District seat. Weber has 219, 465 votes (62.4%) so far to Devine's 132, 044 (37.6%).

Weber and Devine are vying for a seat that is currently held by Sen. Toni Atkins (D-San Diego), who will be running for governor in 2026.

"I am extremely humbled and incredibly grateful for the support you've shown me throughout the

"I'll always stand up for our #SD35 communities — not special interests."

In San Diego, Assemblymember Akilah Weber (D-La Mesa), is leading her Republican opponent, Bob Devine, in the race for the 39th Senate District seat.

Weber is running for governor in 2026.

Vice President Kamala Harris, the first Black person

election," Weber posted Nov. 6 on the X. "San Diego has just made history by electing the first African American woman to the CA State Senate south of Los Angeles. Thank you for believing in me. Now let's get to work."

Eight years ago, Blunt-Rochester first made history in Congress as the first Black person and woman elected to represent Delaware. Alsobrooks was a Maryland states attorney and a County Executive in Prince Georges County before running for the Senate.

Harris, the first Black person

elected as U.S. Senator from California, served from 2016 to 2020. Blunt-Rochester pointed out that Kamala Harris had only four months to launch her presidential campaign, highlighting the significant challenge of such a tight timeline.

"From the bottom of my heart, I want to thank Vice President Kamala Harris for stepping up to run when our country needed her leadership, tenacity, and commitment to serve the American people," Blunt-Rochester stated. "Because of the trails she blazed, the lives she touched, the communities she fought for, the stories she uplifted, we are better."



Top row, from left, are Senator Lola Smallwood-Cuevas (D-Los Angeles), Assemblymember Akilah Weber (D-San Diego), and Laura Richardson — candidate for CA State Senate District 35. Bottom row, from left, are Lisa Blunt-Rochester (Delaware), Angela Alsobrooks (Maryland), and Michelle Chambers — candidate for CA State Senate District 35.

Gavin Newsom appointed Sen. Laphonza Butler (D-Calif.) to complete the term of Sen. Dianne Feinstein after she passed away in September 2023. Butler will likely be replaced in January by Adam Schiff, who is projected to win the seat after the Nov. 5 general election.

Now, two more Black women are on pace to become California State Senators.

In the United States Sen-

"It is remarkable to think that in two years, America will celebrate its 250th birthday and in all those years, there has been more than 2000 people who have served in the United States Senate and only three have looked like me," said Alsobrooks in her victory speech on Nov. 5.

"So, I want to salute all of those who came before me, who made it possible for me to stand on this stage

creation of more affordable housing options."

Chambers is a former Compton city Councilwoman who has worked for the State's Attorney General's office.

"Our campaign is about fighting for the needs of working families," Chambers posted on the social media platform X, formerly called Twitter, on Oct. 11.



**Project:** On-Call Environmental Testing, Inspection and Monitoring Services  
Bid Number BRC0000550

**Agency:** Los Angeles County Department of Public Works

**Bid Date/Time:** December 18, 2024 at 5:30 p.m.

Kleinfelder is seeking interested Community Business Enterprise (CBE) firms, for portions of work for the above listed Request for Proposals (RFP), which includes but not limited to the following:

- Asbestos and Lead Management Services: survey of asbestos containing materials (ACM), abatement air monitoring, friability assessment, inspection and testing of lead based paint (LBP).
- Job Site Testing: air and surface sample collection for laboratory analysis, hazardous materials testing and sampling, survey and mapping of molds and fungus, environmental monitoring, methane and landfill gas monitoring, survey of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), mercury-containing materials, and refrigerants/chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs)/Freon, or groundwater testing and monitoring.
- Laboratory Testing Services: Phase Contrast Microscopy (PCM), Transmission Electron Microscopy (TEM), soil core analysis, fill/base and subgrade materials analyses, soils testing for chlorinated solvents, volatile organics, petroleum and hydrocarbons, pesticides, PCBs, and radioactive isotopes, or water analysis for purity/chemical content.
- Ancillary Services: Preparation of abatement cost estimates itemizing identified hazardous materials or preparation of Health and Safety Plans.

All services shall be provided in accordance with all applicable federal, state, and local safety laws and regulations including but not limited to: OSHA General Industry 1910, 10011, OSHA Construction Industry Standard, 29 CFR, 1926, 1101. USEPA National Emission Standards for Hazardous air Pollutants, Asbestos Regulations, 40 CFR Part 61, Subpart M (NESHAP), California Code of Regulations, Title 8, Section 1529, Construction Safety Orders, Asbestos in Construction, All Applicable Certified Asbestos Consultant (CAC) Division of Occupational Safety and Health Standards, South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) Rule 1403.

Kleinfelder will advise and make an effort in assisting interested firms in obtaining bonds, lines of credits, and/or insurance required by the contract documents should it be needed. RFP can be reviewed at Kleinfelder, 660 S. Figueroa St. Suite 1900, Los Angeles, CA 90017. Interested firms should provide a letter of interest, statement of qualifications, published fee schedules, "CURRENT" CBE certification form, and copies of their "CURRENT" County of Los Angeles or Caltrans DVBE, DBE, WBE, MBE certifications to: Richard Stevenson, Phone: (949) 233.0974, or e-mail: rlstevenson@kleinfelder.com.

**ALL SOQ INFORMATION FOR THIS RFQ IS DUE TO KLEINFELDER NO LATER THAN December 12, 2024 BY 5:00 P.M.**

Kleinfelder is an Equal Employment Opportunity Company.



# ENTERTAINMENT

## E. Lindsey Maxwell on the Fight for Black Creative Freedom Amid New Political Challenges



BY KEITH L. UNDERWOOD  
Contributing Writer

As the nation awaits the incoming administration, E. Lindsey Maxwell II, both a government official and an entertainment lawyer, has voiced his concerns about the potential impact a second Trump term could have on Black creatives.

Maxwell, whose clients span the television and sports industries and includes the BET drama series “The Black Hamptons,” discussed the challenges Black voices may face under new policy shifts.



Vice President Kamala Harris embraces Beyoncé on stage at a Houston rally.

Maxwell expressed particular concern about Project 2025, a conservative policy agenda he believes threatens the diversity of storytelling that Black creatives bring to the media. He likened the agenda to recent book bans seen in schools, which, in his view, have begun to stifle Black voices and limit the scope of available narratives.

According to Maxwell, “Project 2025 could continue this trend by promoting traditional perspectives that sideline the diverse stories vital to Black creators.”

Maxwell sees Project 2025 as more than just a policy shift; he considers it a

potential threat to the visibility and representation of Black experiences in media. “The agenda may reshape which stories reach the public and which are left out,” he explained.

For Maxwell, such changes could profoundly alter the entertainment and media landscapes, making it more challenging for Black creatives to share their unique perspectives.

Maxwell observed the contrast in support between Donald Trump, who aligned himself with billionaire backers, and Kamala Harris, whose partnerships leaned heavily on celebrity endorsements.

Maxwell noted that this difference highlighted unique approaches in politi-



E. Lindsey Maxwell

to seek ownership in any partnerships.

“Ownership isn’t just about profit,” Maxwell said. “It’s about having a voice, a say in how stories are told and who gets to tell them.”

Maxwell emphasized that ownership provides more than financial returns; it offers independence and control over narratives, which he views as critical in the face of potential policy restrictions.

For Maxwell, ownership allows Black creatives to retain a seat at the table and safeguard their stories from external influences that might dilute their contributions. “It’s not just about making a living,” he noted. “It’s about ensuring you’re not just a part of the story—you’re leading it.”

Maxwell also discussed the dual role social media plays, acknowledging its power to amplify Black voices while cautioning that it can also dilute influence.

Social platforms, Maxwell said, connect celebrities directly with audiences, but the constant exposure can reduce the impact of endorsements. “Celebrities are almost a dime a dozen now,” Maxwell explained, highlighting how social media saturation has created

a fleeting influence.

In earlier years, Maxwell observed, a celebrity endorsement might have had significant sway over public opinion. But today, with audiences constantly exposed to celebrities’ lives online, the impact of a single endorsement is often reduced.

“It used to be that a celebrity endorsement could change minds,” he added. “Now, with so much information out there, it’s harder for any one voice to truly stand out.” This saturation, Maxwell noted, creates challenges for creatives trying to use social media for advocacy.

Despite these challenges, Maxwell urged Black creatives to stay proactive, adaptable, and strategic. He advised them to keep informed about policy changes that impact representation and to focus on building genuine connections through social media.

Authenticity, Maxwell argued, is key to resonating with audiences, even in a highly saturated digital landscape. “Creating meaningful bonds with followers is crucial,” he said, underscoring that authenticity helps sustain influence.

Maxwell encouraged Black creatives to prioritize content that reflects their values and connects with audiences on a personal level.

These connections, he explained, are essential to maintaining relevance and influence, even as social platforms become more crowded. “With every post, build that connection,” Maxwell advised. “It’s what helps you stand out, even when policies and platforms work against you.”

Maxwell also highlighted the importance of empathy, open communication, and resilience as essential values for Black creatives facing future challenges. According to Maxwell, empathy is crucial for bridging divides deepened by recent political and social tensions, especially in a polarized landscape.

“Understanding each other’s perspectives is the only way forward,” Maxwell remarked, stressing that open dialogue is needed to address complex issues of race, identity, and representation.

Resilience, Maxwell

even when challenges arise.”

In his closing thoughts, Maxwell urged Black creatives to safeguard their influence and their stories as the industry shifts under new political pressures.

Maxwell advised prioritizing partnerships aligned with their values, championing ownership, and remaining active in social conversations that impact creative freedom. “We have to protect our narratives,” Maxwell emphasized, viewing this as an essential responsibility in a political climate that may limit diverse storytelling.

Maxwell’s message serves as a call to action for Black creatives to continue advocating for their rights and for their unique perspectives.

As Project 2025 looms, he encouraged creatives to secure ownership wherever possible and to leverage social media strategically. With resilience and unity, Maxwell believes, Black voices can continue to shape an inclusive, diverse cultural landscape.



President Elect Donald Trump speaks with Tesla CEO Elon Musk during a 2017 White House event.

added, empowers creatives to adapt and continue pushing for their voices to be heard, even in the face of restrictive policies. He believes Black creatives, by embodying resilience and empathy, can remain strong advocates for the stories that matter to their communities.

“Resilience is what keeps you going,” Maxwell stated. “It’s what allows you to keep telling your story,

For Maxwell, Black creatives’ strength lies in their dedication to authentic storytelling, especially amid shifting political and social conditions. He believes that ownership, strategic thinking, and advocacy will help them maintain influence in a rapidly changing industry.

His perspective underscores the importance of protecting Black voices as an integral part of media’s future.

## FUTURE ICONS

### Singer and Rapper Noonie Reveals the Art of Being a Multifaceted Creative

BY NATHAN J. LEE  
Contributing Writer

How do you thrive when the world demands you choose just one path? For Victoria Lynn—known to many as Noonie—the answer is simple: you don’t. Instead, you create your own lane.

One minute she is spitting verses that light up hit shows like “Power Book III:

masterclass in embracing every moment, where music and wellness collide in a relentless anthem of passion and reinvention. At 19, Noonie stepped into the entertainment world as V Lynn, choosing the name to protect her family legacy while making a name for herself.

“I was not quite ready to be an artist yet, but I knew that I wanted to be in the



Noonie recording a sound bath session on the beach.

Raising Kanan,” and the next, she is leading soul-soothing sound healing sessions with her company MuvaNayCha Sound Healing & Wellness.

Noonie’s story is more than a balancing act; it is a

industry,” she declares.

Growing up on the streets of Crenshaw and Slauson in South Central Los Angeles, Noonie was surrounded by people deeply connected to the entertainment world. She launched



Noonie posing at The H.E.R. Experience.

her career in public relations, earning recognition and valuable industry experience, but her passion for music pushed her to keep creating and evolving.

The duality of Noonie’s world is striking: the high-energy, fast-paced music industry versus the calm and serene world of healing. On one side, she is a talented singer and rapper whose songs land coveted sync placements in major TV series. On the other, she runs a wellness company that offers sound healing, Reiki, and personalized herbal teas.

Balancing these two identities often brings a sense of anxiety.

“The barriers between these two worlds create a bit of stress for me,” she admits.

“I feel like if somebody sees their healing coach or their yoga teacher or something on a red carpet or at these different events, it just gives them a different feel of me and a different energy about me.”

Despite the anxiety that comes with balancing two vastly different worlds, Noonie has learned to embrace her multifaceted

identity.

“People often say, ‘V, you’re always putting your eggs in all these baskets,’” she reflects. “But God has given me these baskets for a reason.”

Music has always been Noonie’s foundation. Her journey began with singing in a Baptist church choir, despite being raised Catholic. Those early days were a training ground for the voice that would later shape her career.

Her path took unexpected turns, from choir harmonies to sync licensing, to rapping. “I just only found out that I could rap when we got a placement for a TV show, and they were like, we need a female rapper.”

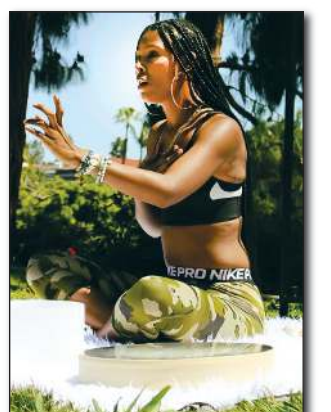
One of her proudest moments was transforming Cardi B’s “Money” into a gospel anthem for Lee Daniels’ project “Praise This.” Her ability to traverse genres—from gospel to rap—demonstrates her range and adaptability, solidifying her place in the industry.

For those entering the industry, Noonie offers this

powerful advice: “Get so close to God that you can hear His voice over your own.”

It’s a guiding principle that keeps her grounded in the face of overwhelming expectations and limitations. She urges aspiring creatives to silence the outside noise and resist being boxed in by others’ judgments.

“Write down your strengths and make yourself strong in them so that if anybody challenges you on any of these levels of what you’re presenting, you’re going to be able to stand tall.”



Noonie leading a bound bath and yoga session for the community.

# Captivating and Compelling 'Cross' Is a Must-Watch Series

BY ZON D'AMOUR  
Contributing Writer

Season one of the highly anticipated and critically acclaimed crime drama, "Cross" has been released on Prime Video. Based on the legendary Alex Cross novels written by James Patterson, this series was

Cross' grieving process in the show, actor and executive producer Aldis Hodge told the Sentinel, "Showing a Black man being vulnerable, grieving and accessing his emotions helps other young brothers coming up understand what masculinity actually is. Sometimes we get a skewed perspec-

the series. For fans of actor Ryan Eggold's previous work in the NBC series, "New Amsterdam," his portrayal of Ed Ramsey in "Cross" is definitely a departure from his former role as a virtuous doctor.

When asked if it were challenging to play such a duplicitous role Eggold

Cross up against a villain that could match wits with him, and also match him in terms of charisma and the ability to push buttons and read people as well as Cross can, we did that with Ed Ramsey."

Watkins continues, "I also wanted to have Cross in jeopardy. When you're building a hero character, you have to be careful not to create a superhero, so you have to show flaws, and real human characteristics, and one way to quickly do that is to put them in jeopardy. So, we planned for another storyline that's active the entire time, but you don't realize the stakes until later and deeper into the season. You realize these stakes are life and death as well, but it's on a personal side, and we called that our stalker storyline."

The showrunner goes on to say that intertwining two separate storylines was



FRAZER HARRISON/GETTY IMAGES  
Lead actor and executive producer, Aldis Hodge attends the "Cross" Global Premiere.



VIVIEN KILLILEA/GETTY IMAGES FOR PRIME VIDEO  
(L-R) Ben Watkins, Alona Tal, Samantha Walkes, Aldis Hodge, Eloise Mumford, Isaiah Mustafa and Ryan Eggold attend the "Cross" Global Premiere at NYA WEST in Los Angeles.

created by Ben Watkins.

In a tour-de-force role, Aldis Hodge stars as "Alex Cross," a Washington, DC homicide detective and forensic psychologist tasked with stopping an elusive serial killer and solving another murder mystery that hits close to home.

What differentiates this show from other procedural crime series is the character development and the writers' intentionality with the inclusion of Cross' home life. Not only is Cross entrusted with leading high-profile cases at work, but he's also balancing the responsibilities of fatherhood while processing immense grief following the passing of his wife.

When asked about the importance of highlighting

ive of what [masculinity] is supposed to be or what we think it is, which is all brute force, 'I'm not gonna cry, I'm not gonna show you.'

"But what happens there is you stunt yourself emotionally and you're not able to access who you truly are, therefore you can't move through the world in your honest nature."

Hodge continues, "So when it comes to showing how Cross moves through things, the fact that he has to fight for himself, and he doesn't shy away from it, shows that it's okay, in fact, it's necessary, and it's not a weakness by any means. It is actually a strength."

The meticulous character development also extends to the villains in

tells the Sentinel, "Yes. To go from a character whom I loved, Max Goodwin [in "New Amsterdam"], who was all heart and empathy, and someone I lived with for five years, to shed all of that and jump into this role that was a character who completely lacked empathy, who was cold, remorseless, ruthless, and manipulative, as an actor, that challenge was exciting."

Near the end of the eight-episode season, there's a shocking plot twist that the audience won't see coming. Explaining the thought process behind giving Cross a personal and professional villain, Watkins revealed, "I always knew that we were going to do two stories, one we called 'Fanboy' to put



VIVIEN KILLILEA/GETTY IMAGES FOR PRIME VIDEO  
Actors Aldis Hodge and Isaiah Mustafa attend the "Cross" Global Premiere.

difficult and he wasn't sure if it could be done but upon completion, "...It turned out to be one of the highlights of the season," said Watkins.

While the revelation of the secondary storyline may be perplexing to some, what makes it more fathomable, is remembering that at the crux of "Cross" is a story about family and

friendships, in particular the brotherhood between Cross and his best friend, fellow detective John Sampson. Actor Isaiah Mustafa gives insight into the preparation that he and Aldis did prior to filming that translated seamlessly on screen.

"Aldis and I, we did a

really did bond and we were able to bring that to our characters. And it's not something that we talked about doing, it was just something that happened organically and that's how you got that friendship and that bond on screen," said Mustafa.

Concluding, "Cross" is a riveting series that should be lauded during awards season. From the directing to the cinematography and of course the acting, the ensemble was well cast. Actress Eloise Mumford gives a standout performance with a mastery of non-verbal acting in her role as Shannon Whitner.

Outlining reasons that make "Cross" worth watching, Mumford said, "If you love the adrenaline rush of being on a roller coaster with all of the ups and the downs, twists and the turns, then this is the show for you."

"And underneath all of that, it's a story about the power of love and the strength of family. It's soulful in a way that just adds to the complexity of both the thrills and also the heart. I'm really excited for people to see it."

Watch season one of "Cross" on Prime Video.

# Chimmy: From Cleveland to the Stars

BY MYKO LYRIC  
Contributing Writer

Chimera Patrice, known to fans as Chimmy (pronounced Shimmy) is a powerhouse vocalist whose voice has elevated the performances of music's modern-day icons, including Beyoncé and Kanye West.



Chimmy Patrice

COURTESY PHOTO

Peas, and she was also touring regionally with Conya Doss.

"[Touring] opened my eyes to travel and background singing," she reminisced, "We would drive to so many shows, I loved being on the road. I thought, if I'm having fun regionally, I'd have so much fun traveling the world."

handpicked by Beyoncé.

"Watching [Beyoncé] work taught me so, so much. I learned a lot about how to speak to people: she's kind, but we knew we had to bring it," Chimmy remarked. One morning, in particular, stood out to Chimmy: as she was going into the wardrobe for an upcoming performance, her and Beyoncé crossed paths and Beyoncé looked at her, smiled, and said "Good morning."

Although that's simple etiquette for most of us, Chimmy shared, "I've worked with artists who don't even do that. [Beyoncé] laughed because I turned back so surprised. I had no idea she was talking to me."

While Chimmy loves the teamwork and intimacy of background singing, she's also developing her solo artistry, writing songs about love, personal experiences, and relatable stories.

Songwriting, she says, is "80% stress-free; the rest is just me putting that stress on myself."

Looking forward, Chimmy envisions a career that blends background work with established icons and performing her own music worldwide.

"If I had to pick an artist to tour with, it would be Sting or Patti [LaBelle]," she admitted. "They could not have dropped an album for 20 years, and it'd still be a sold-out arena."

For now, Chimmy finds joy in seeing the raw talent of artists like Ari Lennox and Summer Walker. As she puts it, "I come from the era of

'Oh, you can sing? Do it now,' and she's determined to keep pushing that authentic talent forward.

With a voice that's

taken her across the world and the talent to stand on her own, Chimmy Patrice is carving her place in music, honoring her roots

while building a dream.

Align yourself with Chimmy on Instagram: @chimmy\_p and TikTok: @chimmyy.p

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THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2024



AMANDA SCURLOCK/L.A. SENTINEL

Senior Taren Harper is a multi-sport athlete who is a volunteer Pop Warner cheer coach and a member of the ASB.

By AMANDA SCURLOCK  
Sports Editor

Crenshaw senior Taren Harper enjoys connecting with people and serving others. She also enjoys

physical activity, competing in flag football, cheerleading, and track and field. Time management helps her commit to all her obligations.

"I've been good with

## Student Athlete of the Week: Taren Harper

my time since a young age because I always like to be active," Harper said. "Outside of school, I always need something to do to keep me occupied."

In flag football, Harper made 15 carries for 155 yards and one touchdown this season. On defense, she made three interceptions with 47 interception return yards. Harper also defended 14 passes.

"I always wanted to play football, I grew up with all brothers," she said. "Playing football with my brothers was a thing growing up, and then it feels good to actually be playing out there now."

In track and field, Harper does the 100m and 200m along with the long jump, high jump, and triple jump.

She noted how squatting, deadlifting, and conditioning drills helped her train.

"That's my favorite part of track, the field events," Harper said.

While she initially struggled to learn the techniques of the triple jump, she excelled and earned a scholarship to Arizona State University.

Harper also enjoys tumbling and flips when cheerleading. She is also a junior coach for a Pop Warner cheerleading team. After flag football and cheerleading practice, Harper teaches routines to the young cheerleaders.

"They're babies ... it helps me with my patience," she said. "When it hits six o'clock, the minis

will be already warming up and I'll leave the school at eight, nine o'clock."

For Harper, being a student athlete means being proficient in time management and having a strong knowledge of the sport.

"Grades first, that's what it means to me, forget the athlete part," Harper said. "It's always grades before anything."

Advanced Placement government is the class Harper enjoys the most. The passion and skills that her teacher possesses are what Harper likes about the class.

"Even though her work is hard and challenging, she explains it," Harper said. "She will walk around, help you and she would read

over your stuff."

Harper is the commissioner of technology and historian for ASB. The position allows her to showcase her photography skills.

"I run yearbook, I run the ASB page," Harper said. "I love taking pictures, videos, everything and I get to edit a lot of things."

In the future, Harper wants to be either a certified nephrology nurse or a registered nurse.

"All my family, they're nurses: my great grandmother, my grandmother, my mom. So it has to be me next," Harper said. "I feel like it's good to save people's lives because what if that was you? I want them to save my life."

## Westchester Flag Football Bests Stern in Playoffs

By AMANDA SCURLOCK  
Sports Editor

The Westchester Lady Comets flag football team advanced to the CIF City Section Division II quarterfinals after defeating the Stern Titans 26-7. Comets junior quarterback Tyler Giddens was happy to see her teammates have fun while they compete.

"Because we do work as a team, that if one person has an attitude, it just spreads. It's like a virus," Giddens said. "You have to learn how to sometimes take leadership in positions but you also have to know that you have to let people have fun too."

Freshman Bellamarie Luster scored one touchdown in the effort. Senior Vaniya Yoakum earned the second touchdown of the game.

"We have to make sure



AMANDA SCURLOCK/L.A. SENTINEL

Westchester junior Tyler Giddens (3).

that we're always in the right play. We got to make sure that we don't run before the play is called," Yoakum said. "Sometimes the quarterback, [Giddens], she likes to throw the ball a lot, but we got open."

Junior Dionii Scott put the Comets on the board in

their first possession of the game, ensuring that they never trailed.

"We came a long way. We had a lot of freshmen come in, so we had to work with it," Scott said. "They actually became a good part of the team."

Westchester finished

third in the Western League after Venice and University. The Comets split their two-game series with both teams. Ultimately, Westchester lost three games during the season.

"Some challenging moments for us was losing some games, it really hurt," Scott said. "The games we lost, we knew we could do more but we just didn't give it our all that game. That's what really hurts the most."

Along with having a young team, this was the first year that Giddens played at quarterback. The support from her teammates and lessons from her coaches helped her thrive.

"You know how to throw but you don't know how to throw until you get in the game," Giddens said. "With the help of my coaches and the girls too because even when I have a

bad throw, they're still going after the ball."

Coming into the game against Stern, Yoakum knew she wanted to secure the victory for herself and her teammates.

"It's my senior year, I need to make a reputation for my self," Yoakum said. "We come a long way and we're starting to love each other, work with each other more and it's going great."



AMANDA SCURLOCK/L.A. SENTINEL

Westchester junior Dionii Scott (5).

## Fremont Beats Manual Arts 36-16 in Playoffs

By AMANDA SCURLOCK  
Sports Editor

The Fremont Pathfinders football team defeated the Manual Arts Toilers 36-16 in the first round of the CIF City Section Division III playoffs.

Fremont Junior Andrew Williams scored four touchdowns in the contest. Manual Arts senior Dominique Lamb scored twice.

The Toilers made two turnovers early, the second

leading to Williams scoring a touchdown on a 14-yard run. A failed extra-point attempt left Fremont with a 6-0 lead.

"When I'm running and I feel like somebody is contesting me, I instantly get into a defense mechanism," Williams said. "I lean forward and I run harder."

Manual Arts retaliated in the second quarter when Lamb rushed in for a touchdown on a second-and-goal. They took the lead with a successful two-

point conversion.

Fremont scored two more times before halftime, one being a 53-yard rush from Williams. The Pathfinders were up 22-8 going into halftime.

"We were up but we still had to fight, we still had two quarters left," said Fremont junior Daniel Battle. "We had to put more effort in."

The Toilers came into the second half strong, converting a fourth down on the ground and scoring on a



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Manual Arts quarterback Dominique Lamb (right).

first-and-goal.

"My mindset going into the game was going hard, all I wanted to do is win," Lamb said. "If I believe, my teammates believe and that's what we did."

Fremont went quietly into the fourth quarter only to end the game with big plays. Quarterback Jahdiel Roberts connected with Williams on a fourth-and-long to score.

The next Manual Arts offensive drive was short lived as senior Jerrin Dorton committed an interception. Fremont rushed down the field; Battle made the last touchdown of the game from 13 yards out.

stopped them," Battle said. "We started stopping them in the second half and then they didn't score after that."

Manual Arts finish their season with a 4-7 overall record and a 2-2 Exposition League record. This season marked the first year Lamb played at quarterback.

"Coach Horn has groomed me to be a great quarterback," Lamb said. "The last three seasons, he has pushed me to my limits and always taught me to go hard and do my best."

Fremont, who has the 13th seed in the Division III playoffs, will head into another away game as they battle the Los Angeles Romans on Nov. 15 at 1:30 p.m.



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Fremont junior Andrew Williams (14) is defended by Manual Arts sophomore Christopher Quezada (3).

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CROSSWORD ANSWERS FROM B-1