

Gov. Newsom Elevates 3 African Americans to the Judiciary – Smiley, Byrdsong, and Jefferson

STAFF AND WIRE REPORT

Recognizing the experience and skill of three Black jurists, Gov. Gavin Newsom nominated or appointed them to serve California in a higher capacity.

On Nov. 21, the governor nominated Judge Charles A. Smiley to serve as an Associate Justice of the First District Court of Appeal, Division One. His appointments included Commissioner Latrice A.G. Byrdsong to serve as a Judge in the Los Angeles County Superior Court and Jamilah Jefferson as a Judge in the Alameda County Superior Court.

Smiley has served as a Judge at the Alameda County Superior Court since 2012 and as a lecturer at the University of California, Berkeley School of Law since 2014. He also served as a Commissioner at the Alameda County Superior Court from 2007 to 2012.

His previous positions



Latrice A.G. Byrdsong



Charles A. Smiley



Jamilah A. Jefferson

include deputy public defender at the Alameda County Public Defender's Office from 1997 to 2007 and associate adjunct professor at the University of California College of the Law, San Francisco from 2004 to 2007.

Judge Smiley earned a Juris Doctor degree from the University of California College of the Law, San Francisco. He fills the vacancy created by the retirement of Justice Sandra L. Margulies.

This position requires

confirmation by the Commission on Judicial Appointments, which consists of Chief Justice Patricia Guerrero, Attorney General Rob Bonta and Senior Presiding Justice Jim Humes.

Byrdsong has served as

a Commissioner at the Los Angeles Superior Court since 2023. Prior to this position, she was benefits counsel for Toyota Motor North America through Axiom Law from 2013 to 2023.

In addition, Byrdsong

served as corporate counsel at DaVita HealthCare Partners Inc. from 2012 to 2013, senior attorney at Southern California Edison Company from 2006 to 2012, associate at [See BYRDSONG, SMILEY, JEFFERSON on A-11]

Laura Richardson Wins by Narrow Margin to become the Senator of the 35th District



Laura Richardson

By DANNY J. BAKEWELL, JR. Executive Editor

In a race where the two candidates are separated by less than 1%, it appears that Laura Richardson has emerged the victor over former Compton City Councilwoman Michelle Chambers in a very expensive, and sometimes nasty campaign to succeed State Senator Steve Bradford for the Senate District 35 seat.

After weeks of ballot counting, Richardson narrowly won the race but has maintained her lead since election night. With the race so tight, many Chambers supporters believed she

could close the gap, but that gap closure never appeared and at no time has Laura Richardson lost her lead.

Richardson, a moderate Democrat, is no stranger to public office. She served as a Long Beach Councilwoman before moving on to the California Assembly where she also served as Assistant Speaker Pro Tempore. Richardson was the first African American and South Bay representative to serve in this position.

Richardson then went on to succeed Juanita Millender-McDonald in the U.S. House of Representatives where she served for six years representing California's 37th

Congressional District. However, after redistricting she was defeated by Janice Hahn.

"Two years ago, I began this journey with the goal of using every skill, experience and working relationship to advance the people in the 35th Senate District. From day one, I committed to meetings, discussions, attending local events and neighborhood council meetings to listen and embody the issues and challenges people were facing in the District so that I could ultimately bring value and results. I'm humbled that voters have given me the charge to do the work on their behalf and I am

ready, willing and able to do so," said Senator-Elect Richardson.

"Likewise, I am grateful for the neighbors, community leaders, local Mayors, Councilmembers and Congresswoman Waters who stood by me during the campaign demonstrating to the public that elected officials can work together and achieve common goals on behalf of the residents we serve and that we are poised to work collaboratively to bring the greatest resources, programs and services to the 35th Senate District," she insisted.

[See RICHARDSON, WINS on A-11]

Beyond the Bills: Reparations' Impact on Black Californians

By JOANIE HARMON Contributing Writer

Cheryl Grills, Ph.D., directs the Psychology Applied Research Center at Loyola Marymount University and served from 2021 to 2023 on the California Reparations Taskforce, appointed by Gov. Gavin Newsom.

She is a commissioner on the National African American Reparations Commission (NAARC) and one of the co-founders of the Alliance for Reparations, Reconciliation & Truth (ARRT).

Dr. Grills shares her expertise on the impacts and potential of the ongoing efforts in California toward reparations and the thorny specifics that can undermine the movement's

true aims of equity and well-being for Black Californians.

What inspired the founding of the Alliance for Reparations, Reconciliation & Truth?

Grills: The point of ARRT is really very basic and straightforward. One, to shepherd the ongoing work of implementing the recommendations that we proposed, and to make sure that what is recommended aligns with the intent and spirit of those recommendations and that all of that aligns with the UN standards—and then to educate the public about reparations.

The Alliance sees as one of its areas of focus is to make sure people have some understanding of some fundamentals and

from there, we can have informed discussion where we don't have to agree but we need to be principled in how we engage in the discourse. You have a lot of people who don't know the history; who don't understand racism, structural or otherwise; who don't recognize the lingering harms from enslavement and post-enslavement racism; and who don't understand what the charge of the taskforce was, which was to look at enslavement and post-enslavement harm.

How does the historical context of California play into the discussion?

Grills: We were, in some instances, worse than other states in terms of how we would enforce the rules of other states. If you were of African ancestry and

came to California [and] your owner lost track of you or came of your own accord, California bent over backwards to ensure that you were re-enslaved in the state you came from.

People seem to think that California is so progressive on all fronts, when that is just not the case. There's the Ku Klux Klan and how prominent they were, and how ... dangerous they were to Black lives, but [people] think of that in terms of the South.

What they don't realize is that some California at some points in time was worse than the South in the actions of the KKK and [its] infiltration into state, city, and county government ... who then made

[See REPARATIONS' IMPACT on A-11]



Dr. Cheryl Grills is a co-founder of the Alliance for Reparations, Reconciliation & Truth (ARRT).

Door-Knocking Awareness Campaign Launches in Watts to Promote Free Lead Testing

SENTINEL NEWS SERVICE

Councilmember Tim McOsker, in partnership with the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, Mayor Karen Bass, the Watts Labor Community Action Committee, and the East Side Riders Bike Club, will launch a door-to-door water testing awareness campaign aimed at engaging residents across Watts. The initiative seeks to inform the community about free water testing for lead, following findings from the Better Watts Initiative study.

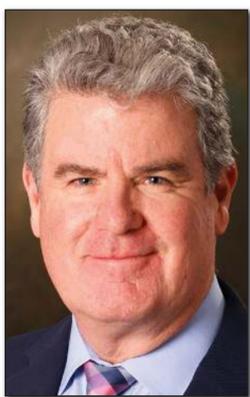
The Better Watts Initiative (BWI) study, released in August, revealed concerning levels of lead in certain water sources in Watts, emphasizing the urgency of protecting public health. In response, the East Side Riders Bike Club (ESRBC) has initiated a door-knocking campaign to ensure residents are aware of potential lead risks and the resources available to address them.

"We're proud to be partnering with the East Side Riders Bike Club to go door-knocking in Watts, making sure every resident knows about LADWP's free water quality testing," said Councilmember Tim McOsker.

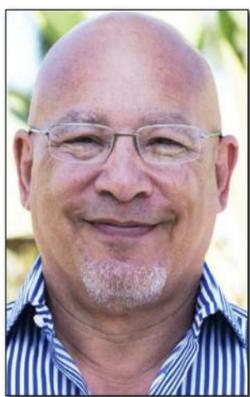
"Everyone deserves access to safe water, but equally important, they



Mayor Karen Bass



Councilman Tim McOsker



Tim Watkins

deserve the peace of mind knowing that their water is truly safe. Together with community partners, we're working directly with residents to ensure they're informed and empowered to take action for their health and well-being."

Immediately after the study's release, McOsker introduced a motion in the City Council calling for a comprehensive plan to identify and address sources of lead exposure in Watts. The motion also called for clear communication strategies to keep residents informed of progress and mitigation efforts.

"This initiative continues urgent action to ensure Watts residents are aware of the resources available to them," said Mayor Karen Bass.

"Thank you to Councilmember Tim McOsker,

the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, the Watts Labor Community Action Committee, and the East Side Riders Bike Club for your partnership, ensuring Watts residents know about free water testing."

In collaboration with the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP), the Mayor's Office, McOsker's Office, and the Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles (HACLA), extensive water testing is being conducted across Watts' housing developments. The door-to-door campaign complements these efforts by expanding outreach to the broader Watts community.

"Since August, we have been collaborating with HACLA, the Mayor's Office, Council District 15, and the Better Watts Initiative

to provide a comprehensive testing program of public housing sites in Watts," said LADWP CEO and Chief Engineer Janisse Quiñones. "This includes preparing over 2,000 test kits and arranging for 3rd party testing in state-of-the-art laboratories. Now, we are expanding efforts to offer free water quality testing to the greater Watts community and are conducting extensive outreach efforts to residents to get free water quality testing at their points of use."

City leaders have cautioned residents about companies offering water testing services and charging fees. Residents are reminded that all testing associated with this campaign is free and performed using high-precision, state-accredited drinking water laboratory tests. Any solici-

tation for payment is not affiliated with LADWP or this outreach effort.

"Our goal is to safeguard the health and future of the Watts community through the eradication of lead from our water supply," said Timothy Watkins, president/CEO of WLCAC and founder of BWI.

"Ultimately, there is no safe level of lead exposure for the human body. We are committed to continue collaborating with the Councilmember's office and other partners to ensure every resident in Watts is informed about the risks of lead contamination and has access to the resources needed to address it."

Watts is one of California's most polluted neighborhoods according to CalEnviroScreen. The BWI study, which highlighted significant levels of lead in the tap water of several homes in public housing developments, revealed that some water samples contained lead concentrations exceeding the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) action level of 15 parts per billion—a threshold that mandates infrastructure repairs and public notification under EPA guidelines.

Founded in 2016, the BWI is a WLCAC-led collaborative advocating for environmental justice in

Watts. Over four months, volunteers from BWI—including residents and students from UCLA and USC—collected more than 500 water samples from across the neighborhood.

"We are thrilled to see the youth of Watts come together to address a critical community concern, demonstrating their leadership and commitment to a brighter future," said John Jones III, President and CEO of East Side Riders Bike Club.

"By partnering with Councilmember Tim McOsker's office, LADWP, the Better Watts Initiative, and the Watts Gang Task Force, we are empowering young people to take action, engage their neighbors, and build stronger connections. The future of Watts lies in the hands of our youth, and initiatives like this show just how impactful their voices and efforts can be."

The door-to-door campaign will take place, led by the ESRBC with interns from California State University Dominguez Hills and Watts high school Verbum Dei Jesuit High School, and other volunteers.

Residents seeking more information about free water testing can call LADWP's Water Quality Hotline at (213) 367-3182.

Kamlager-Dove, Booker Reintroduce Second Look Act to Reform Sentencing and Reduce Incarceration

SENTINEL NEWS SERVICE

U.S. Representative Sydney Kamlager-Dove (D-CA-37) and U.S. Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ)



Rep. Sydney Kamlager-Dove



Senator Cory Booker

reintroduced legislation on Nov. 21 that would allow individuals serving decades-long federal sen-

tences to petition courts for a sentence reduction or release after having served at least 10 years of their sentence. The Second Look Act would allow

reducing the prison population and saving taxpayer dollars.

"For too long, the American justice system blindly prioritized incarceration and longer, harsher sentences over rehabilitation," said Kamlager-Dove.

"Today, the United States still imprisons the most people of any country in the world. Nearly one in five of the two million incarcerated people in the U.S. have served at least 10 years in prison, and about one in five are over 50 years old. While our sentencing practices have changed, these Americans' sentences have not—and they deserve a 'second look.' The Second Look Act would finally provide redress for Americans whose punishments don't fit the crime, saving critical federal resources by

decreasing our overinflated prison populations."

"Thousands of Americans are behind bars due to the draconian sentences of the failed War on Drugs," said Booker.

"Many of these individuals are serving excessive prison terms, are not a threat to the community, and are ready for re-entry, but they are stuck in overcrowded and costly prisons due to archaic sentencing laws. These policies don't make us any safer and waste valuable taxpayer dollars. This bill gives people who have served their time a 'second look' at their sentence."

The United States currently incarcerates more than 1.8 million people in state and federal prisons and local jails. In 2020, nearly 148,000 people in the United States were

serving a life sentence or virtual life sentence of 50 years or longer, and over 55,000 people were serving a sentence without the possibility of parole. Women are the fastest-growing segment of the incarcerated population—and one out of every fifteen women in prison is serving a life or virtual life sentence.

These excessively long sentences do nothing to improve public safety. Studies show there is no evidence that longer imprisonment reduces crime, and that recidivism risk declines with age. Individuals age out of crime starting around 25 years of age, and the vast majority of released individuals over the age of 50 have a very low recidivism rate. Despite this evidence, approximately 250,000 individuals over 50

remained behind bars as of 2016, costing state taxpayers approximately \$16 billion each year.

The Second Look Act would:

- Enable individuals sentenced to more than 10 years imprisonment who have served at least 10 years to petition a court to be released;
- Create a rebuttable presumption of release for petitioners who are 50 years of age or older on the date of the petition;
- Establish factors for courts to consider in determining whether a person should be released or have their sentence reduced; and
- Mandate the United States Sentencing Commission issue a report to Congress detailing the effect of the provision, including the racial impact.

Stay Safe from Holiday Scams

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The holidays are a time to celebrate with loved ones, not falling victim to scams that can steal your cheer. Falling for a scam can lead to losing money and putting your account and personal information at risk, which can be both time-consuming and costly.

Here are some common seasonal scams and tips to help protect yourself:

• **Missed packages or problems with delivery:** Expecting a package? Be cautious of phishing messages through email or text impersonating delivery services like UPS or FedEx with links to view

"missed deliveries." These links may lead to fake sign-in pages or malware-infected sites. Do not respond to messages requesting personal or financial information, including money or cryptocurrency. Be wary of unexpected packages and avoid scanning QR codes, as they may be attempts to steal your information.

• **Online deals that are too good to be true:** When shopping online or on social media, buy only from trusted websites and vendors. If purchasing on a platform or marketplace, stay on the platform to complete transactions and communicate with sellers, as protections often only

apply when you use the platform. Use payment methods that offer buyer protection, and never send money to strangers or use Zelle for purchases, especially when you can't confirm the goods exist.

• **Phony charities preying on your generosity:** The holidays is also a season of giving. Before you donate money, double-check contact and payment information for your charity of choice and watch for text, email or phone call solicitations. Like any other unsolicited message, don't click on links or open attachments that may contain malware or attempt to steal your information.

"Scammers do not discriminate and can target anyone during this festive season. Don't let your guard down. Always remember that if something seems off, it likely is. By staying alert and informed, we can protect ourselves and our loved ones from falling victim during this holiday season," said Darius Kingsley, head of Consumer Banking Practices at Chase.

Tips to Avoid Scams:

- Don't send money to unknown individuals or for goods or services that you can't confirm exist.
- Be cautious of friendly messages from strangers on social apps. Scammers might try to



Do not respond to messages requesting personal or financial information, including money or cryptocurrency.

build trust before asking for money.

• If a deal seems too good to be true, it probably is. Watch out for deep discounts or low prices that may be scams.

• If you shop on social media marketplaces, never pay using Zelle—it is the

same as cash and you may not get back if there is an issue.

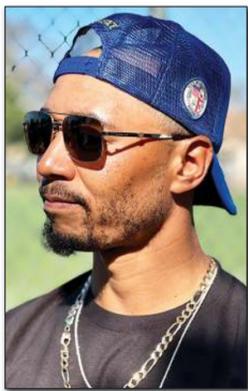
For more information about ways to help protect yourself from scams, visit chase.com/scamspotting—it's a free resource that offers information in English and Spanish.

Brotherhood Crusade and Dodgers Foundation Unite to Bring Thanksgiving Joy to South L.A. Families

BY NATHAN J. LEE
Contributing Writer

South Los Angeles residents gathered at the Algin Sutton Recreation Center on Nov. 21 for a Thanksgiving Grab-and-Go event that exceeded the simple act of giving.

The event, organized by the Brotherhood Crusade in collaboration with the Los Angeles Dodgers Foundation, Mookie Betts' 50/50 Foundation, and Councilmember Marqueece Harris-Dawson, did more than distribute turkeys; it fortified the bonds of a community dedicated to uplifting one another.



NATHAN J. LEE/L.A. SENTINEL
Mookie Betts, World Series Champion and Dodgers outfielder, proudly represents the Dodgers Foundation and his 50/50 Foundation at the Thanksgiving Grab and Go event.

wanting to hand out turkeys for almost two years," she shared, glowing with pride.

Coby Joe Perez, a Carpenters Union representative, attended with his team, proudly showcasing their community involvement trophy. Earned through countless hours of service, the trophy highlighted the importance of sustained community involvement and reflected the event's mission of collective care.

For Perez, the day reinforced the union's dedication to improving lives beyond construction sites. Their work, from volunteering to supporting community projects, stood as evidence to the



NATHAN J. LEE/L.A. SENTINEL
Mookie Betts joins representatives from the Dodgers Foundation, Brotherhood Crusade, and his 50/50 Foundation.



NATHAN J. LEE/L.A. SENTINEL
Coby Joe Perez and his team from the Carpenters Union proudly display their community involvement trophy at the Thanksgiving Grab and Go event.

Erin Johnson, a Los Angeles native, was one of many participants who helped turn the event into a day of connection and giving. With her niece Zoë by her side, Erin reflected on the significance of the moment.

"This means so much to me," Erin said. "It's about showing people they matter, that someone sees them and cares."

For 11-year-old Zoë, who has long dreamed of giving back, the day held special meaning. "I've been

impart of consistent, collective action.

Dodgers outfielder and World Series champion Mookie Betts stressed the importance of giving back to the community, stating, "It's super important. These communities support me every

day, so it's only right for me to come back and support them."

His words captured the spirit of the day as volunteers distributed Thanksgiving bags filled with turkeys, trimmings, and gift cards to hundreds of families in need.

Nichol Whiteman, CEO of the Dodgers Foundation, described the event as a highlight of their year-round mission to tackle homelessness, education, health care, and social justice, emphasizing its timely role in supporting families during the holiday season.

"It's about continuing our impact, partnering with organizations like the 50/50 Foundation and Brotherhood Crusade, and bringing joy to the community during this important



NATHAN J. LEE/L.A. SENTINEL
Mookie Betts addresses local media, emphasizing the importance of giving back through efforts like the Thanksgiving Grab and Go.

season," she said.

Cars snaked through the lot as volunteers with warm smiles handed out the bags. Volunteers, leaders, and community members united not only to meet a need but

to demonstrate the power of collective care. In South Los Angeles, this event is a day of giving and a powerful reminder of what is possible when a community stands together.

Celebrating 20 Years of Neighborhood Builders Program in Los Angeles, BofA Announces Hollywood Community Housing Corporation and St. Joseph Center as 2024 Honorees

SENTINEL NEWS SERVICE

Celebrating its 20th year, Bank of America's signature Neighborhood Builders® program contin-



COURTESY PHOTO
St. Joseph Center President and CEO, Dr. Ryan J. Smith speaks at the annual BofA Neighborhood Builders community celebration.

ership training for each organization's executive director and an emerging leader, and access to a national network of nonprofit peers.

Since the program's inception in 2004, 56 nonprofits have been selected as Neighborhood Builders in Los Angeles, with the bank investing more than \$11 million in philanthropic capital into these local nonprofits.

"This year we celebrate 20 years of strengthening Los Angeles nonprofits that provide solutions to local challenges and promote economic advancement. We're proud to include Hollywood Community Housing Corporation and St. Joseph Center as Neighborhood Builders," said Raul A. Anaya, president, Bank of America Los Angeles.

"Countless individuals, families and neighborhoods have felt the profound impact that these 56 Neighborhood Builders nonprofits have had in Los Angeles over the past two decades."

2024 recipient Hollywood Community Housing Corporation develops affordable rental housing for low-income families, formerly homeless, seniors and those with special needs – vulnerable populations that continue to grow across Los Angeles. The organization

will apply its Neighborhood Builders grant to expand its Resident Services Department that provides onsite support to residents of its various affordable housing communities such as job skills, food assistance, {See ST. JOSEPH CENTER AND BofA on A-4}



COURTESY PHOTO
From left are St. Joseph Center volunteer Raul Bustillos, senior vice president of Community Relations, Bank of America Los Angeles; St. Joseph Center President and CEO Dr. Ryan J. Smith; Santa Monica Mayor Phil Brock; Santa Monica Councilmember Glean Davis; Jonah Glickman, homelessness liaison, Sup. Lindsay Horvath's office; and Laurie Craft, chief program officer, St. Joseph Center.

ues to be one of the nation's largest philanthropic investments into nonprofit leadership development while providing unique multiyear flexible grant funding annually to high-impact nonprofits in nearly 100 communities nationwide.

In Los Angeles, Bank of America has named Hollywood Community Housing Corporation and St. Joseph Center as its 2024 Neighborhood Builders. Specifically, both Los Angeles nonprofits are each awarded a \$200,000 grant over two years, comprehensive lead-



COURTESY PHOTO
Volunteers help St. Joseph Center distribute more than 1,600 Thanksgiving meals to community members in need.



VERMONT TRANSIT CORRIDOR – PUBLIC MEETINGS

Metro is improving transit along Vermont Avenue with new bus-only lanes planned for next year and a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service by 2028.

What We're Planning by 2028:

- > **Faster Trips:** Dedicated lanes and special traffic signals will help buses move faster.
- > **Reliable Service:** These changes will reduce delays, so buses arrive on time.
- > **Safer Streets:** Buses will be separated from traffic, with safer crosswalks and better lighting for pedestrians and riders.

Why Attend?

Metro is applying for a special exemption from California Environmental law per Senate Bill 922. In doing so, Metro is preparing three reports: 1) Racial Equity Analysis 2) Residential Displacement Study and 3) Business Case. We are ready to meet with the public to share and gather feedback on these reports as required by SB922. The public meetings will also update on upcoming near-term improvements, including installation of bus-only lanes that could start as early as Spring 2025.

To view the reports online or in-person at your local public library, please visit www.metro.net/vermont or call 213-922-2846.

Metro is committed to accessibility. If you need interpretation services (other than Spanish) or other accommodations, please contact Metro at 213-922-2846 at least 72 hours before the meeting. Spanish-language interpreters will be available at all meetings.

Meeting Details:

Metro will hold five public meetings, all with the same information. Choose the best time, and we encourage you to "Go Metro".

Saturday, December 7, 2024, 10:00 AM
MASJID OMAR IBN AL-KHATTAB
 1025 W. Exposition Bl, Los Angeles, CA
 Transit: Expo/Vermont E Line Station;
 Bus Lines 204/754; DASH F

Monday, December 9, 2024, 6:00 PM
CRENSHAW CHRISTIAN CENTER
 7901 Vermont Av, Los Angeles, CA
 Transit: Bus Lines 204/754

Wednesday, December 11, 2024, 6:00 PM
LA CITY COLLEGE STUDENT UNION, ROOM A
 798 N. Heliotrope Dr, Los Angeles, CA
 Transit: Vermont/Santa Monica B Line Station;
 Bus Lines 10; 204/754

Wednesday, December 11, 2024, 12:00 PM
 Virtual Meeting: <https://tinyurl.com/MetroVTC1211>

Monday, December 16, 2024, 6:00 PM
 Virtual Meeting: <https://tinyurl.com/MetroVTC1216>

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Legacy of Luther Vandross Honored with Grammy Museum Exhibit and CNN Documentary

BY LILA BROWN
Contributing Writer

The iconic Luther Vandross, whose timeless voice redefined R&B and love songs, is being celebrated in an unprecedented way. His legacy comes alive with the Grammy Museum's "Luther Vandross: Artistry and Elegance" exhibit and the highly anticipated CNN documentary, "Luther: Never Too Much," premiering on New Year's Day.

The Grammy Muse-

Vandross' extraordinary career.

Visitors will find: Hand-beaded costumes worn during his "Power of Love" tour, including matching gowns for his background singers; original fashion sketches that showcase Vandross' unique vision for his live performances; handwritten lyrics and studio notes, accompanied by exclusive recordings, including the creation of hits like "I Can Make It Better" and "Think About

FANDROSS, expressed her excitement about the exhibit.

"For 20 years, we've preserved these costumes and artifacts, and the Grammy Museum has done an incredible job showcasing them. Luther was a perfectionist who wanted every detail—from his vocals to his wardrobe—to represent excellence. This exhibit reflects that," Williams said.

The Grammy Museum also premiered "Luther:



From left are Marcus Miller, Datari Turner, Fonzi Thornton, Dawn Porter, Ray Bardani, and Victor Blackwell at the Luther Vandross program and screening.



Seveda Williams speaks to guests at Luther Vandross exhibit opening party at the Grammy Museum L.A. Live on Nov. 20, in Los Angeles.

um's "Luther Vandross: Artistry and Elegance" exhibit is now open through June 15, 2025, at the Grammy Museum in Los Angeles. Artistry and Elegance offers an intimate look at

You," and six of Vandross' eight Grammy Awards, highlighting his achievements as one of music's most decorated artists.

Seveda Williams, Vandross' niece and CEO of

Never Too Much" in its Clive Davis Theater, with a panel discussion featuring the filmmakers and Vandross' family.

On January 1, 2025, CNN will debut "Luther:

Never Too Much," directed by award-winning filmmaker Dawn Porter. The documentary, which premiered to critical acclaim at the Sundance Film Festival, uses rare archival footage and interviews with Vandross' closest collaborators—Mariah Carey, Dionne Warwick, Valerie Simpson, and Roberta Flack—to explore his life and career.

Porter explained her vision, saying, "This film is made with love, which is what Luther gave to the world. His story is one of joy and perseverance, and I hope viewers walk away understanding the depth of his genius."

The documentary delves into Vandross' journey from Harlem to becoming

the "King of the Love Song," highlighting his relentless pursuit of perfection and the health struggles he faced along the way. It also celebrates Vandross' impact on music and his ability to inspire through his art.

Beyond his music, Vandross' generosity continues through the Luther Vandross Foundation, which provides scholarships for juniors and seniors at historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). Brenda Shields, president of the Foundation, shared, "In the last three years, we've awarded 74 scholarships. Luther's legacy isn't just about music—it's about uplifting others and ensuring they achieve their

dreams."

For Vandross' family, friends, and fans, these tributes are deeply personal. "You can't spell love without LV," Williams said. "This exhibit and documentary reflect everything Luther stood for—his artistry, his commitment to excellence, and his love for people."

Don't miss the opportunity to celebrate Vandross' life and legacy. Visit the Grammy Museum to experience the Artistry and Elegance exhibit and tune in to CNN on January 1, 2025, at 8 p.m. ET/PT for the premiere of "Luther: Never Too Much."

Tickets and more information can be found at Grammymuseum.org.

Shaylen Nelson's Solo Debut Roots & Crowns Shines in West Adams



Shaylen Nelson stands proudly at the opening of his debut solo exhibition, Roots & Crowns, held in Los Angeles on Nov. 22.

BY NATHAN J. LEE
Contributing Writer

Los Angeles experienced an extraordinary evening of art and culture on November 22, at Roots & Crowns, a solo exhibition by interdisciplinary artist



Shaylen Nelson's family proudly attends the Roots & Crowns art exhibition.

Shaylen Nelson.

Set in the vibrant West Adams arts scene, the event reflected the dynamic and community-driven spirit of the neighborhood. The exhibition attracted art enthusiasts, community members, and creative professionals

for a celebration of heritage and self-expression.

Central to the evening's success were Nelson's captivating artworks, each showcasing his innovative creativity. One standout piece, "Timing," exemplifies his unique approach, blending realism, impressionism, and abstraction to highlight his versatility.

Reflecting on his process, Nelson shared via Instagram, "I'm painting in realism for the main figure, impressionism for the towel, and abstraction for the background. There are no rules. That's the beauty of it." This philosophy of creative freedom was evident throughout the exhibition, which explored profound themes of identity and heritage.

This approach also shines in "Tennessee Whiskey," an acrylic painting featuring Kaelyn Mack as Nelson's muse, demonstrated his mastery of merging styles into a visually compelling narrative on identity.

The evening also drew heartfelt praise from attendees, who celebrated the cultural significance of Nelson's work.

"This is a great showing of Black culture and Black excellence," shared art enthusiast Kelsie Campbell. "Shaylen has been working so hard on this solo show, and it's amazing to see it all come together."

For close friend Christen Austin, the event was



Shaylen Nelson's mother adds a sweet touch to the evening with homemade treats.

quite rewarding. "Shaylen has always supported me by coming to my shows, and tonight I get to return that favor," she said, call-



Christen Austin, a close friend of Shaylen Nelson, admires his striking portrait "Timing" at the Roots & Crowns exhibition.

ing the evening a "full circle moment."

Nelson's artistic philosophy challenges the notion that consistency is key to

giving the evening a "full circle moment." This ethos resonated throughout Roots & Crowns, where each piece reflected different facets of his creative journey.

For Shaylen, Roots & Crowns was not just an art show but a celebration of the roots that ground him and the crown he wears as a creative force in Los Angeles. With his debut solo exhibition complete, Nelson's journey is only beginning, and the community that gathered to celebrate him will undoubtedly continue to support his growing legacy.

To follow Shaylen Nelson's artistic journey, visit his Instagram at [@shaay.all.daay](https://www.instagram.com/shaay.all.daay).

ST. JOSEPH CENTER AND BofA {Continued from A-3}

school supplies for children, and specialized services for formerly homeless residents living with HIV/AIDS.

"The board and staff of Hollywood Community Housing are honored to receive the Neighborhood Builders Award. We work hard every day to create safe apartment homes and offer supportive services to thousands of people throughout the county, said Sarah Letts, executive director, Hollywood Community Housing Corporation.

"The leadership training offered by Bank of America will be invaluable to our organization, equipping us with fresh strategies and perspectives to strengthen our impact and further our mission to address the housing

crisis across Los Angeles County."

This year's other Neighborhood Builders awardee, St. Joseph Center, has for nearly 40 years provided critical services to highly vulnerable populations. Last year alone, the organization connected over 2,400 individuals with housing, provided over 50,000 hours of mental health care and job training, and served over 46,000 hot, nutritious meals at their Venice-based Bread and Roses Café. St. Joseph Center will use its grant to expand its job training and employment programs and increase access to food assistance programs.

"The Neighborhood Builders award from Bank of America will empower

St. Joseph Center to deepen our commitment to those we serve, expanding critical programs in housing, job training, and food assistance. With this support, St. Joseph Center will be better positioned to drive sustainable change for families and individuals in Los Angeles, helping them build secure, self-sufficient futures," said Dr. Ryan J. Smith, president and CEO, St. Joseph Center.

Past Los Angeles Neighborhood Builders include: A Community of Friends, A Place Called Home, Academy of Business Leadership, Abode Communities, Anti-Recidivism Coalition, Asian Pacific Islander Small Business Program, Bethune Theatredanse, Boys and Girls Club of Santa Monica, Cen-

ter For Place-Based Initiatives, Central American Resource Center (CARE-CEN), Central City Neighborhood Partners, Centro Latino for Literacy, Challengers Boys & Girls Club, Chinatown Service Center, Coalition for Responsible Community Development, College Bound-Dollars for Achievers, Covenant House California, Downtown Women's Center, East LA Community Corporation, East West Players, Esperanza Community Development Corporation, Goodwill Industries of Southern California, Habitat for Humanity of Greater Los Angeles, Homeboy Industries, Imagine LA, Inner-City Arts, Kheir Clinic, Koreatown Youth and Com-

munity Center, LA Family Housing, LA Plaza de Cultura y Artes, Los Angeles Brotherhood Crusade, Los Angeles Conservation Corps, Los Angeles Regional Food Bank, LTSC Community Development Corporation, Meet Each Need With Dignity (MEND), Neighborhood Housing Services of Los Angeles County (LANHS), New Directions for Veterans, New Economics for Women, Pacific Asian Consortium in Employment, Pacific Coast Regional Urban Small Business Development Corporation, Para Los Ninos, PF Bresee Foundation, Puente Learning Center, Proyecto Pastoral, Skid Row Housing Trust, Thai Community

Development Center, The Chrysalis Center, The Midnight Mission, Union Rescue Mission, Union Station Homeless Services, Upward Bound House, Valley Economic Development Center and West Angeles Community Development Center.

The Neighborhood Builders invitation-only program is highly competitive, and honorees are selected by a committee comprised of community leaders and past Neighborhood Builders awardees. Nationwide since 2004, Bank of America has invested over \$300 million into nearly 1,800 nonprofits and helped more than 3,000 nonprofit leaders strengthen their leadership skills through the Neighborhood Builders program.

From Theater to Film: Raquelle Wallace's Bold Steps in Acting and Storytelling

By MYKO LYRIC
Contributing Writer

Raquelle Wallace, an actress and writer from Orlando, Florida, now calls Los Angeles home as she carves out a growing career in the entertainment industry. Her journey, though rooted in a deep love for storytelling, took an unexpected turn when she discovered acting in high school, a passion that eventually led her to pursue a

ball, but only after you knew me for a certain time. I was super shy, even around my family sometimes," she said.

Raised in a Trinidadian family, Raquelle found their openness a bit intimidating, making it hard for her to step into the spotlight. However, in her senior year of high school, she took an elective in theater, which became a turning point.

"Something clicked," she explained. "I shifted

Raquelle compared it to her approach to roller coasters, where she faced her fears head-on.

"I was terrified of roller coasters. So, I went to Bush Gardens and got on the biggest ride there," she explained.

"I did the same thing in acting, raising my hand first in class, whenever the professor asked 'who wanted to go first' and I just pushed myself through." This exposure therapy worked wonders, as she became increasingly comfortable in front of an audience.

Her training in the Meisner technique, which emphasizes the repetition of lines with a partner, further deepened her understanding of acting, not just as a craft but as a way of living. "Meisner has made me so much more present," Raquelle said. "I used to plan everything out, but now I focus on being in the moment, noticing changes in people's body language and tone." This shift in perspective allowed her to connect with her characters on a deeper level, leading her to embrace spontaneity.

Improvisation has also become an important tool in Raquelle's acting.

"The biggest lesson I've learned from improv is not to judge yourself in the moment," she shared. This approach also informed her writing. Raquelle wrote and starred in her debut

my major to acting, and I can't imagine doing anything else now."

The path to overcoming her shyness was not immediate but rather a process of gradual exposure therapy.



Stills from "Manifest."



Bachelor of Fine Arts in the craft.

Raquelle recalled her childhood as a time when she was shy and reserved, even around family.

"As a kid, I was a goof-



Raquelle Wallace

COURTESY PHOTO

short film, "Manifest," a 10-minute comedy, which was the product of a prompt that Raquelle's accountability writing partner assigned: write a 10-minute film with no more than three characters, set in a single location.

She embraced the challenge of writing within specific boundaries, coming up with outlandish scenarios, like the main character's agoraphobia as the reason the entire film takes place in one room.

"I learned how much I love to write," she revealed. "There's nothing like taking an idea and putting it down on paper."

Looking ahead, Raquelle is working on a new short film with a darker, more dramatic storyline. Her experience with "Manifest" taught her the value of structure and limitations, but now she was exploring more complex themes.

"It's about a woman who falls in love with the augmented reality version of her ex-boyfriend, and then they meet in real life. And then, things ensue," she teased.

For Raquelle, storytelling was at the heart of her career, both as an actress and a creator. She believed that everyone has a story to tell, whether on

stage, in film, or in everyday life.

"Storytelling is all there is," she said. "It's your job to tell your story, and I'm lucky to be able to do that through my work."

Raquelle's career had already hit key milestones, including a breakthrough role in a university play and multiple commercials that solidified her experience and reel. She is now diving more into film and enjoying the creative freedom it offers.

"I'm really happy with where I am," she said. "I'm living the dream and just need to keep pushing until I get more access to the resources I need."

With the support of her family, especially her mother, who emigrated from Trinidad, Raquelle is excited about what the future holds.

"My mom's perspective is that she came to America and worked so I could have these opportunities," she reflected.

Looking ahead, Raquelle is determined to continue telling stories that matter and working with like-minded, passionate individuals.

"I want to work with scripts that make me feel like 'this has to be made.' I just want to tell the best stories I possibly can."

Stay aligned with Raquelle via Instagram: @raquellwallace and watch her short film, "Manifest" on YouTube.

Celebrate the Holidays at The Soraya!

SENTINEL NEWS SERVICE

Holiday traditions continue at The Soraya with a wide variety of seven performances for all ages. The Holiday series begins on Dec. 7 and 8 with the ninth edition of The Soraya's original production, "Nochebuena: A Christmas Spectacular" — featuring Ballet Folklórico de Los Angeles and Mariachi Pueblo Viejo. In the 2024-25 Season, Camila Fernández, the

new vision of the classic holiday tradition is set to Duke Ellington and Billy Strayhorn's arrangement of the Tchaikovsky classic.

"It's a unique telling of this classic story, living very much in a very traditional jazz and vernacular space and percussive, rooted in the tap dance space," Michelle Dorrance said in an interview with Soraya Executive and Artistic Director Thor Steingraber. "It couldn't be more of a literal dream to

reimage a (more traditional) Nutcracker they may have seen growing up."

Following the Nutcracker Suite is the World Famous Glenn Miller Orchestra, with a concert on Dec. 14 filled with timeless arrangements and holiday classics that made the Glenn Miller Orchestra an icon for all ages.

One day later on Dec. 15, Lea Salonga makes her fourth visit to The Soraya, this time with two performances of "Sounding Joy: The Holiday Tour" at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. The all-new holiday concert, sure to be a hit with fans of all ages, features songs from Lea Salonga's new holiday album (just released on Nov. 1) Sounding Joy. The album, featuring original music and classic Christmas songs reimagined in Salonga's original style, is the star's 14th recording, and marks a milestone as her very first holiday release in 20 years.

Best known for her Tony Award-winning role in Miss Saigon, Salonga most recently starred in the West End production of Stephen Sondheim's musical revue "Old Friends," and as Aurora in "Here Lies Love on Broadway," which she also produced. Salonga's Soraya performance this December is just ahead of her Broadway-bound starring role in Stephen Sondheim's "Old Friends," in which she and Bernadette Peters will reprise their roles from the concert's West End bow. Previews for the show will begin in March 2025.

The Soraya's Holiday Series closes on Dec. 19, with SWEET HONEY IN THE ROCK®. On its 50th anniversary tour, the cappella gospel group brings to The Soraya a concert to celebrate the "HolyDays," brimming with vocal improvisations, and gospel traditions for a powerful celebration of the season. The group continues its work and the 50th anniversary tour despite the passing of its founder, Bernice Johnson

Reagon, at the age of 81 in July. The civil rights activist co-founded the Freedom Singers and later started SWEET HONEY IN THE ROCK® in 1973.

"It is impossible to separate liberation struggles from song. And in the 1960s — at marches, and in jailhouses — the voice leading those songs was often Bernice Johnson Reagon," NPR wrote about Reagon in a July 2024 article.

For tickets or more information, visit thesoraya.org.



Josette Wiggan performs in "Dorrance Dance: The Nutcracker Suite."

daughter of Mexican Singer Alejandro Fernández, and granddaughter of the late great Vicente Fernández, joins as a special guest.

On Dec. 12, Michelle Dorrance returns to The Soraya (following her 2023 debut in Turn it Out with Tiler Peck) with "Dorrance Dance: The Nutcracker Suite." The performance, co-created by Dorrance with Josette Wiggan and Hannah Heller, caught attention in the news following its White House invitation by First Lady Jill Biden. The jazzy

work with Duke Ellington and Billy Strayhorn's interpretation of Tchaikovsky...because it's such an unbelievably swingin' version...there's horn, a funky baseline, a swingin' feel."

Co-creator Josette Wiggan, in the same interview, echoed Dorrance's sentiments, saying the whimsical and fun show pays homage to their elders, but also bridges the gaps between the jazz and tap worlds in a way that "creates a fun space for kids to imagine and adults to



Characters come alive in "Dorrance Dance - The Nutcracker Suite."



Watts Healthcare Corporation

57 Years of Service

To summarize our story, the evolution of the organization can be a segment into places, people and our purpose. Our story is simple – to serve the community. **That's the reason since 2005 Watts Healthcare has been a Vendor at the Taste of Soul and as of 2024 we haven't missed a year other than closure due to Covid-19.**

For more than 57 years, community health centers have existed to deliver care in areas where access to basic medical care was limited. The mission of the Watts Healthcare Corporation is to "improve the health and well-being of the people and communities we serve by ensuring access to compassionate, quality, culturally-sensitive preventative and primary health care service". We achieve our mission through our community focused programs.

Our History: Relevant Then: our relevance in 1967 was linked to the social and economic climate of the early 1960s.

Our services: Relevant Now Watts Healthcare remains relevant today as it grown from its original one clinic to now four facilities, 16 health programs, a workforce of 350+ employees and the leadership of a 14-member Board of Directors.

Next 50 Years: Relevant tomorrow under the leadership of Barrett, PhD, acting Chief Executive Officer, the organization has developed a strong strategic plan focused on seven key strategies to lead us through the immediate 3-year period and will set the stage for the next 3-years and beyond. Our relevance to link to growth, workforce development, quality, technology, integrated care, operations and infrastructure development.

Political Playback: News You Might Have Missed - Nov. 28

BY BO TEFU,
JOE W. BOWERS JR. AND
ANTONIO RAY HARVEY
California Black Media

California's 2025-26 Budget: School Funding Expected to Increase by an Estimated \$1.5 Billion

The California Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) recently published its fiscal outlook for the 2025-26 budget, forecasting a \$1.5 billion increase in the minimum guarantee for funding public schools and community colleges.

This raises the total budget to \$116.8 billion, a 1.3% increase over last year's budget. While the additional funding offers opportunities to address educational inequities, challenges such as declining enrollment and the expiration of pandemic-era funding create uncertainty for schools, particularly those serving Black and other underserved communities.

The projected budget includes a 2.46% cost-of-living adjustment (COLA), totaling \$2.4 billion, to help schools manage operational costs.

The Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF), which prioritizes resources for schools with high populations of low-income and English learner students, will benefit from these adjustments. Funding also supports the expansion of transitional kindergarten, a program designed to increase access to early education for all four-year-olds. This initiative receives an \$800

million adjustment as part of the state's ongoing investment.

Despite these funding increases, systemic challenges remain. Enrollment has declined due to lower birth rates and increased migration out of the state, directly affecting funding levels. While the transitional kindergarten expansion may offer a short-term enrollment boost, the long-term trend of declining student populations threatens financial stability for many districts. Additionally, the expiration of \$4.1 billion in one-time pandemic funding after 2025-26 could further strain resources.

For Black students, who are disproportionately represented in low-income school districts, the fiscal outlook provides potential for targeted improvements. Programs like the Learning Recovery Emergency Block Grant, aimed at mitigating pandemic-related learning losses, remain critical in addressing achievement gaps. However, recent assessments highlight the urgency of these efforts. Only 17.8% of Black students met or exceeded state math standards, compared to a statewide average of 35.5%. Similarly, just 30.3% of Black students achieved proficiency in English, compared to 47% overall.

The report identifies \$2.8 billion available for new commitments, presenting options such as strengthening reserves, eliminating deferrals, or funding programs to

address inequities. The LAO emphasizes the importance of fiscal planning and the strategic use of funds to ensure that these efforts will be impactful.

California Students See Gains in Attendance, Graduation

The newly released 2024 California School Dashboard reveals significant progress in student outcomes across the state, reflecting the impact of



ANTONIO R. HARVEY/CBM
California State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond.

targeted interventions and investments in education.

Chronic absenteeism dropped by 16.7% compared to last year, indicating that schools are making strides in re-engaging students. Meanwhile, graduation rates climbed to 86.4% for the class of 2024—the highest recorded since 2017—demonstrating a growing trend of academic resilience and recovery following the disruptions of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Over 51% of the graduating class met the eligi-

bility requirements for University of California (UC) and California State University (CSU) admissions, a key indicator of college readiness. This shows a positive shift toward greater access to higher education and reflects ongoing efforts to support academic achievement among California's students.

"Across California, we're seeing that when we provide for the most vul-

nerable in our communities, all students reap the rewards," said State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond. "Yet, we know there is still much work to be done to ensure every student has the support and resources needed to succeed."

The Dashboard highlights gains in college and career readiness for historically underserved groups, such as Black and Native American students, signaling progress in narrowing long-standing equity gaps.

However, the report also sheds light on areas requiring urgent attention, such as persistent disparities in suspension rates for Black students and foster youth.

"Today's Dashboard results show California continuing to make important strides in post-pandemic recovery," said California State Board of Education President Linda Darling-Hammond. "We are also supporting stronger gains for students who have been furthest from opportunity for many years. This progress is encouraging, but there is still critical work ahead to ensure equity for every child."

The Dashboard provides a comprehensive view of key metrics, including academic performance, absenteeism, graduation rates, and college/career readiness. It serves as a tool for educators, policymakers, and families to monitor progress and identify areas for improvement.

For an in-depth look at the data and analysis, visit the 2024 California School Dashboard online.

California Voters Approve Measure Limiting AIDS Healthcare Foundation's Spending

California voters have passed Proposition 34, a new measure that aims to limit the spending practices of the AIDS Healthcare Foundation (AHF), a major player in funding rent control initiatives.

The California Apartment Association (CAA), the sponsor of the measure, argued that it would reduce taxpayer costs by ensuring that more revenue from federal drug programs goes directly to patient care, rather than being used for non-healthcare expenses such as political campaigns or luxury housing.

Recent reports indicat-

ed that Prop 34 passed with 50% of the vote, narrowly defeating the opposition. The law will target healthcare providers who have spent more than \$100 million over 10 years on non-patient-related expenses, and it specifically impacts organizations that also face significant health and safety violations in their housing operations.

California's nonpartisan Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) stated that the program allows providers including AHF to serve low-income patients. However, the law "does not directly restrict how providers spend their revenue from federal drug discounts," the LAO office stated.

The AHF earns substantial revenue from the federal 340B drug program, which is particularly affected by the new measure. The foundation has used its funds to support rent control campaigns, including multiple failed initiatives. The foundation also used funds to operate apartments, some of which were criticized for poor living conditions. In response to the measure's passage, AHF president Michael Weinstein denounced the effort as a retaliatory move by wealthy real estate interests.

"If billionaires spend more than \$170 million lying and confusing voters, they are virtually guaranteed to win," said Weinstein.

While the law passed, the AHF indicated that it may challenge the measure in court, having previously filed a lawsuit attempting to remove it from the ballot. Legal experts noted that the specificity of the measure, which seemingly targets AHF alone, could render it unconstitutional.

Nonetheless, the passing of Prop 34 marks a significant victory for real estate interests and a major setback for the AHF's ongoing push for rent control.

California Pushes Road Safety During Crash Responder Safety Week

Last week, California officials urged motorists to prioritize safety during Crash Responder Safety Week, emphasizing the importance of moving over and slowing down near emergency and work zones.

The campaign, led by Caltrans, the California Highway Patrol (CHP), the Office of Traffic Safety (OTS), and the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV), aimed to reduce traffic-related injuries and fatalities among first responders and maintenance workers on California's roadways.

California's "Move Over" law requires drivers to change lanes when safe, or slow down when approaching stopped emergency vehicles or maintenance crews with flashing lights. Safety Awareness Week served as a reminder that first responders are often working in hazardous conditions to protect the public.

According to 2022 data by the National Safety Council, 891 people were killed and over 37,000 were injured in work zone crashes across the country. In California, more than 10,000 work-zone crashes were reported, resulting in 117 deaths and over 4,500 injuries.

Caltrans Director Tony Tavares urged drivers to stay alert and cautious in work zones.

"Safety is our top priority," said Tavares. "There's no excuse to speed and drive recklessly. Make the conscious decision to protect yourself, loved ones, fellow travelers, and vulnerable highway workers."

Sean Duryee, commissioner of the CHP, echoed this message, highlighting that roadwork and emergency scenes are critical safety zones where first responders put their lives at risk. Steve Gordon, director of the DMV, also stressed the importance of educating drivers on road safety rules to prevent accidents.

Numerous first responders are struck by passing motorists while working at accident scenes each year. Traffic incidents are the leading cause of death for on-duty law enforcement, firefighters, and other highway workers, according to CalTrans.

California Promotes Jobs Plan in Central Valley to Address Economic Concerns

Gov. Gavin Newsom visited Fresno on Thursday to promote his upcoming "California Jobs First Economic Blueprint," aimed at bridging the economic divide between prosperous coastal areas and struggling inland regions.

During his speech at the West Fresno Center Campus of Fresno City College, Newsom acknowledged that despite California's booming economy, many residents, particularly in conservative areas like the Central Valley, feel disconnected from its success.

"The economy may be booming for some, but people feel like it's not supportive," said Newsom, highlighting a key issue raised during the recent election.

In his message, Newsom clarified that the state's economic growth is yet to reach everyone, namely areas that backed President-elect Donald Trump. The Governor stressed the importance of blue-collar job creation in these regions as a solution to the economic divide.

While Newsom's announcement outlined incremental steps, the setting of him standing in front of heavy machinery at a blue-collar apprenticeship program symbolized his attempt to engage voters in traditionally conservative areas. This was part of his broader effort to respond to critiques of the Democratic Party's disconnect with working-class voters.

Newsom also acknowledged that the cost of living remains the top concern across California. A recent survey showed that a significant portion of residents, especially in the Central Valley, expect tough economic times ahead. Newsom pledged that his plan would address these concerns and promised further details early next year.

His appearance in Fresno is part of a broader strategy to connect with conservative areas, a move seen by some as a response to the mixed results of the 2024 election. Newsom also indicated he would visit other Central Valley counties, including Kern and Colusa, to continue his outreach efforts across the state.

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Newsom's \$827.5M Homelessness Plan Directs Funding to Counties and Cities

By JOE W. BOWERS JR.
California Black Media

With an expansive plan to tackle homelessness across California, Gov. Gavin Newsom has announced an \$827 million investment through the Homeless Housing, Assistance, and Prevention (HHAP) program.

The funds will be allocated to 37 regions, benefiting 100 cities and counties statewide, including many communities where Black Californians are disproportionately affected by housing insecurity.

This funding, announced earlier this month, aims to create permanent housing, establish shelter sites, and provide essential support services to uplift thousands of people experiencing homelessness. The announcement, delivered at the Downtown Women's Center in Los Angeles, highlighted the state's dedication to implementing long-term, accountable solutions.

Tomiquia Moss, secretary of the Business, Consumer Services, and Housing Agency, opened the event, emphasizing the proven strategies being implemented at the local level.

"I'm often asked, 'Do we know what to do around solving homelessness?' The answer is yes because the folks here at the Downtown Women's Center are doing it every single day," Moss said.

She stressed the critical role of collaboration and the new accountability measures that require cities and counties to achieve tangible outcomes.

Moss also acknowledged the complexity of the challenge in Los Angeles, where 207 people are housed daily, yet 227 people become newly homeless in the same period.

"Unless we find solutions that outpace this cycle, we won't get where we need to be," she stressed. Moss highlighted that this funding, paired with other resources like encampment resolution grants and ongoing community collaboration, is key to making a lasting impact.

"No one is naive about the challenges we face, not just here in Los Angeles but throughout California," Newsom said.

"The state has stepped up in ways it never has before. We are seeing progress in some areas and stubborn challenges in others. This crisis requires a crisis mindset, and people are dying on our watch. We need to address this with the urgency it demands."

Newsom also pointed out the significance of the state's involvement in homelessness, noting that until a few years ago, the state had not been heavily invested in addressing the issue.

The impact of this funding will be significant in Los Angeles, which will receive \$164.3 million for the city's ongoing efforts to combat



Councilmember Treva Reid speaks at a press conference in Oakland on Feb 16, 2024, about the Home Key Housing Program.

homelessness. Mayor Karen Bass, who joined Newsom at the event, highlighted the collaboration between city, county, and state officials, as well as the progress her administration has made.

"The only way we can show results is through a comprehensive approach," Bass said. "Groups like The Downtown Women's Center work to rapidly rehouse Angelenos and provide comprehensive services. This morning, I was in the Pico Union area for an Inside Safe operation, where we moved people from tents and RVs off the streets and into housing. We housed over 30 Angelenos today."

Bass emphasized the need for unified efforts, adding, "We know that there are areas of dysfunction, and part of our work has been to bring every level of government together. We have to move beyond finger-point-

ing to real partnership." Newsom highlighted the need for regional collaboration: "This crisis doesn't stop at city or county lines. It demands a coordinated, statewide effort to create real, lasting change."

San Francisco is set to receive \$43.32 million, which will be used for housing-first initiatives and comprehensive support services for the unhoused population.

Alameda County, with its \$55.9 million allocation, will also focus on permanent housing solutions and strategies to address systemic causes of homelessness.

Sacramento will receive \$53.21 million, which will be dedicated to developing permanent housing solutions and integrated support services to address the city's growing homelessness crisis.

The San Diego region, awarded \$58.84 million, aims to expand shelter

capacity and ensure long-term housing stability.

The Inland Empire, encompassing Riverside and San Bernardino counties, will receive \$33.17 million to implement regional solutions, including shelter expansion and supportive services.

Gustavo Velasquez, Director of the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) emphasized that the funding comes with strict accountability requirements.

"Our HCD team is honored to take on this expanded role in identifying and supporting effective regional solutions for Californians struggling with unsheltered homelessness," Velasquez said.

"Not only will this funding provide additional resources, but with the leadership of the Legislature and the administration, this pro-

gram also ensures that every dollar spent delivers meaningful outcomes, with a clear focus on reducing homelessness to create lasting change. HCD will continue to apply our strong focus on accountability to maximize this critical investment for our state."

The HHAP grants are a crucial part of California's \$40 billion investment in tackling homelessness, complementing initiatives like Project Homekey, which has successfully created thousands of permanent housing units, and the Encampment Resolution Fund, aimed at clearing dangerous encampments while providing support services. Earlier this month, Newsom allocated \$131 million specifically for encampment resolutions across the state.

Newsom and other speakers emphasized that this funding is part of a comprehensive and unified effort to make meaningful and lasting changes across the state.

Additionally, Newsom recently announced \$91 million to support Native American communities through the Tribal Homekey and Tribal HHAP programs. This funding includes \$71 million for 172 permanent housing units in rural areas and \$20 million for culturally responsive homelessness interventions, addressing the unique challenges faced by 37 federally recognized tribes.

Facing \$2 Billion Deficit, State Leaders Urge Restraint; Commit to Protecting Families

By ANTONIO RAY HARVEY
California Black Media

Following the non-partisan Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) announcement last week that California faces a \$2 Billion deficit next year, legislative leaders are urging restraint and committing to focus on issues important to working families.



SHUTTERSTOCK

"The Assembly Budget Committee looks forward to crafting a budget that protects core programs, prioritizes accountability, safeguards California values, and focuses on the most important issues facing working families," said Assemblymember Jesse Gabriel (D-Encino), Chair of the Assembly Budget Committee.

On Nov. 20, the LAO released its "The 2025-26 Budget: California's Fiscal Outlook" forecasting a budget deficit that pales in comparison to last year's projection, which was estimated at more than \$50 billion.

This fiscal budget for July 1, 2025, is "roughly balanced" with an estimated \$2 billion shortfall, analysts from LAO shared during a virtual news conference that was held the same day the report was released.

LAO analyst Gabe Petek, who led the discussion, said the Legislature has taken steps to put the state on solid financial footing for the next fiscal year by making "proactive decisions." However, the report warns that spending in the future will be "restrained."

"We describe the state's budget condition as being in fair shape, Petek said.

The LAO operates as the "eyes and ears" of the Legislature to ensure that the executive branch implements legislative policy in a cost-efficient and effective manner.

State government took several actions to address last year's budget shortfall,

including making spending related resolutions amounting to about \$11 billion. The state also raised about \$15 billion in all other solutions, including \$5.5 billion in temporary revenue increases and a \$7 billion withdrawal from the state's rainy-day fund, the report stated.

The current fiscal outlook report provides the Legislature with the LAO's independent estimates and analysis of the state's budget condition to assist legislators as they prepare for the 2025-2026 budget process.

"Although revenues are running ahead of budget act assumptions, those improvements are roughly offset by spending increases across the budget. On net, our assessment finds the state has a small deficit of \$2 billion," the report stated.

The LAO insists that while the budget is moderately balanced in the upcoming fiscal year, California still faces annual operating shortfalls starting in 2026-2027 — increasing from about \$20 billion to about \$30 billion. Lawmakers will likely have to confront the budget problems with a mixture of reduced

spending, increased taxes, shifting costs, or using more reserves.

The LAO warned that its Fiscal Outlooks are always "highly uncertain." Its main concern is projecting revenue, which could be up or down, the report stated.

According to the Fiscal Outlook report, the state faces some key uncertainties in the spending estimates. How Much health-care minimum wage ultimately increases costs, the rapid growth of the senior Medi-Cal population, and the implementation of reductions among state departments that produce cost-saving measures have yet to be determined by the LAO.

"The extent of those savings is still unknown," the report stated.

Assembly Republican Minority Leader James Gallagher (RYuba City) weighed in on the LAO's prognosis of the state budget.

"California is the highest-tax state in the country, yet we are still facing multi-billion-dollar deficits well into the future," Gallagher stated. "Democrats got us into this mess, and I have no confidence in their ability to fix things without inflicting real pain on Californians."

Senate President pro Tempore Mike McGuire (D-North Coast) issued the following statement about the LAO Fiscal Outlook:

"Through last year's action, we've helped stabilize this year's budget. And it goes without saying, there's a lot more work to come. We need to continue to buckle down on spending and be incredibly strategic on any future fiscal expansion."

The Legislature's Democratic leadership plans to convene Assemblymembers in the new year to discuss the needs of working-class Californians and explore budget priorities.

The meetings will take place immediately after the Governor delivers his budget priorities in early

January. Assembly Speaker Robert Rivas (D-Hollister) is also gearing up to prepare for the policies of Donald Trump when he assumes the presidency in

January.

"We need to show restraint with this year's budget, because California must be prepared for any challenges, including ones

from Washington," Rivas stated. "It's not a moment for expanding programs, but for protecting and preserving services that truly benefit all Californians."

Section 8 Waiting List Opening

Van Nuys will be accepting applications for our Studio, 1 and 2-bedroom Section 8 rental apartments. Van Nuys is available to households that include a member who is 62 years or older or is a person with a disability of any age. Van Nuys Apartments consists of 132 Studio, 157 One Bedroom and 10 Two Bedroom apartments.

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.

Rents for this affordable housing program are based on total gross household income. Applicants must be income eligible and meet occupancy guidelines. Households must earn no more than the maximum income levels noted below:

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TTY: 800-735-2929

Historically Black Spelman College President Steps Down After Leave of Absence

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Spelman College's president won't be coming back from her leave of absence and is stepping down permanently, the historically Black women's college announced Nov. 21.

The college, which has more than 3,000 students, hasn't said why Dr. Helene Gayle initially left or why she won't return.

Trustees said in a statement that they are working on a plan to select the college's next president. In the meantime, Interim President Rosalind "Roz" Brewer remains in charge.

"I join the trustees in extending my gratitude to Dr. Gayle for her service to this amazing institution,"

Brewer said in a video announcement. "I'm also excited to continue my service as your interim president."

Brewer is the former chair of the school's board of trustees and a part-owner of the Atlanta Falcons football team.

"I thank the larger Spelman community for this magnificent opportunity to serve as president. I have thoroughly enjoyed interacting with the outstanding students and future world leaders who have chosen to attend Spelman College," Gayle said in the statement the college released. "I look forward to my next chapter."

Gayle became Spelman's president in 2022



Spelman College has more than 3,000 students.

AP PHOTO

after former president retired. The school is part of the Atlanta University Center, a consortium of four historically Black

schools.

Before working at Spelman, Gayle was president of the Chicago Community Trust, one of the nation's largest community foundations. She is also an epidemiologist who spent decades fighting AIDS and HIV and led an international anti-poverty group.

Brewer spent 12 years as chair of the school's board of trustees, where she worked with three Spelman presidents and chaired the two most successful fundraising campaigns in the college's history. She also previously served as president and CEO of Walgreens Boots Alliance, chief operating officer of Starbucks and CEO of Sam's Club.

What to Know About Scott Turner, Trump's Pick for Housing Secretary

BY ADRIANA GOMEZ LICON
Associated Press

Scott Turner, President-elect Donald Trump's choice to lead the Department of Housing and Urban Development, is a former NFL player who ran the White House Opportunity and Revitalization Council during Trump's first term.

Turner, 52, is the first Black person selected to be a member of the Republican's Cabinet.

Here are some things to know about Turner:

From professional football to politics

Turner grew up in a Dallas suburb, Richardson, and graduated from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. He was a defensive back and spent nine seasons in the NFL beginning in 1995, playing for the Washington Redskins, San Diego Chargers and Denver Broncos.

During offseasons, he worked as an intern for then-Rep. Duncan Hunter, R-Calif. After Turner retired from football in



AP PHOTO/EVAN VUCCI, FILE

Scott Turner, the executive director of the White House Opportunity and Revitalization Council, attends a meeting in the Cabinet Room of the White House, May 18, 2020, in Washington.

2004, he worked full time for the congressman. In 2006, Turner ran unsuccessfully as a Republican in California's 50th Congressional District.

Turner joined the Texas House in 2013 as part of a large crop of tea party-supported lawmakers. He tried unsuccessfully to become speaker before he finished his second term in 2016.

He did not seek a third term.

Motivational speaker and pastor

Turner also worked for a software company in a position called "chief inspiration officer" and said he acted as a professional mentor, pastor, and councilor for the employees and executive team. He has also been a motivational speaker.

He and his wife, Robin Turner, founded a nonprofit promoting initiatives to improve childhood literacy. His church, Prestonwood Baptist Church, lists him as an associate pastor. He is also chair of the center for education opportunity at America First Policy Institute, a think tank set up by former Trump administration staffers to lay the

groundwork if he won a second term.

Headed council in Trump's first term

Trump introduced Turner in April 2019 as the head of the new White House Opportunity and Revitalization Council. Trump credited Turner with "helping to lead an Unprecedented Effort that Transformed our Country's most distressed communities."

The mission of the council was to coordinate with various federal agencies to attract investment to so-called "Opportunity Zones," which were economically depressed areas eligible to be used for the

million low-income families through public housing, rental subsidy and voucher programs.

The agency, with a budget of tens of billions of dollars, runs a multitude of programs that do everything from reducing homelessness to promoting homeownership. It also funds the construction of affordable housing and provides vouchers that allow low income families pay for housing in the private market.

During the campaign, Trump focused mostly on the prices of housing, not public housing. He railed against the high cost of housing and said he could



AP PHOTO/ALEX BRANDON, FILE

Scott Turner, the executive director of the White House Opportunity and Revitalization Council, speaks during a listening session with African American leaders, May 21, 2020, in Ypsilanti, Mich.

federal tax incentives.

The role of HUD

HUD is responsible for addressing the nation's housing needs. It also is charged with fair housing laws and oversees housing for the poorest Americans, sheltering more than 4.3

make it more affordable by cracking down on illegal immigration and reducing inflation. He also said he would work to reduce regulations on home construction and make some federal land available for residential construction.

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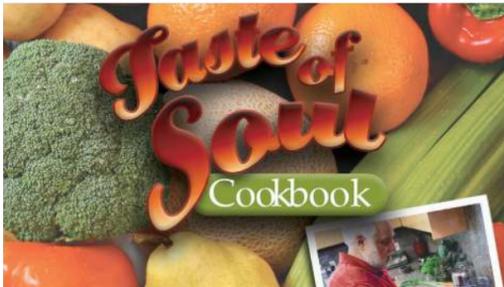
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From Dance Floors to Film Sets - Hydeia Muhammad's Vision of Representation

By MYKO LYRIC
Contributing Writer

Hydeia Muhammad, a professional dancer, choreographer, filmmaker, MFA candidate at USC, and founder of the Blind Dance Company (BDC), hails from Charlotte, North Carolina, and has spent the past decade in Los Angeles combining her passion for dance and film with a commitment to making a safe space for underrepresented people, cultures, and stories.

Raised in a military family, Hydeia was accustomed to a wide array of people and cultures from a young age, which made a lasting impact on her values. She reflected, "I grew up in a melting pot, and it made me very aware of all the people who don't get representation. I genuinely believe all people deserve a safe space."

From a young age, she learned the importance of community service—volunteering for causes such as packing care packages for soldiers and feeding the homeless.

"The importance of community service and giving back was instilled in me at a young age as well," she shared. Without Hydeia realizing it, these values laid the foundation for the selfless work she is doing today.

A multi-hyphenate artist, Hydeia trained as a dancer from the young age of three, quickly excelling through milestones like competitions and awards, and, eventually, became a professional ballroom dance teacher at 16 years old. "I just had a natural knack for ballroom," she recalled. "I loved it, I loved



Hydeia guiding a company member.

COURTESY PHOTO

competing. Then, I was invited to go pro and I started teaching and getting students."

Her early experiences helped shape her career as a dance teacher of 16 different styles. Moving to Los Angeles, Hydeia initially sought out opportunities to teach in various studios. However, over time, she realized she wanted to be more independent, working with private clients, choreographing shows, musicals, and even wedding performances.

It wasn't until one of her wedding clients, who was involved with a theater company for visually impaired individuals, asked Hydeia to choreograph for them that she recognized a new calling. The company members expressed that many teachers came to teach and choreograph, but it was rare that a teacher stayed long-term, which was perhaps due to that teacher's limiting beliefs on teaching the visually impaired.

This confession from the company inspired Hydeia to create something lasting: "I asked if I made a company, would you be committed? And they all said 'yes.'" In 2017, Hydeia founded The Blind Dance Company, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to empowering the lives of the visually impaired community through the art of dance.

Its repertoire includes most styles of dance and boasts an inclusive demographic, with current members ranging from 18 to 80. Recalling this foundational experience, Hydeia shared, "Our first showcase was 2017 and sold over 200 seats."

Although Hydeia was not trained specifically in choreography for visually impaired dancers, she learned the art of teaching through trial, error, and adaptation. "It was something I had to learn, but it honestly wasn't that different from teaching my sight-

ed clients. As a teacher, you have to learn how other people learn, and it was the same with BDC," she shared.

Hydeia found that the same fundamental teaching principles applied to both sighted and visually impaired dancers. Through tactile cues, verbal descriptions, and guiding students physically, she tailored their rehearsals as needed. "Sometimes they need to feel my hips or touch me to understand. And I use certain techniques and verbal cues now. We have this thing for spotting, I tell them to imagine a red dot," she explained.

The company's mission is clear: to empower visually impaired individuals through dance while offering opportunities for employment within the community. BDC's dancers have reported significant improvements in both their

upcoming Spring Showcase, Hydeia is working on a short film that will further amplify the Blind Dance Company's mission of inclusivity and representation. This project

pictures that reflect the real world... people like my dancers, my friends, my family."

As a busy entrepreneur, Hydeia seeks volunteers



A duet within the BDC.

COURTESY PHOTO

is a natural extension of her filmmaking journey at USC, where she's studying Film and TV production.

"The short film is a way for us to capture the essence of what we're doing and tell a bigger story—one that can

who are passionate about community service, the arts, and entrepreneurship to help with BDC's growth. She is actively looking for support: "Right now, our biggest need is volunteers, grants, and donations, and eventually, we are really looking to own our own space in Los Angeles and compete worldwide" she said.

To the new generation of creatives, Hydeia offers this advice: "Find creative ways to use your purpose and your voice to help others. The industry is lacking selfless people. It's not about fame—it's about creating opportunities for people."

"That's what I admire about Issa Rae, Ava DuVernay, Tyler Perry, John Singleton, and Shonda Rhimes. People should always continue to grow, driven by a passion for entrepreneurship, education, and entertainment."

For auditions and volunteer opportunities, contact info@theblinddanceco.org. For donations, land, or grant opportunities, please go to www.theblinddanceco.org



Members of the BDC.

COURTESY PHOTO

physical and mental confidence, with many of them participating in various forms of art outside the studio. "They always tell me they've grown so much in their mental and physical self-esteem," she shared, underscoring the transformative effect dance has had on her dancers' lives.

In addition to the

reach more people," she said. Through both the showcase and the film, Hydeia is blending her passion for dance with her goal of telling narratives that represent a broad spectrum of people, particularly those who are underrepresented. "I want to tell the stories that aren't being told," she explained, "I want to paint

No Labels, Just Stories:

The Infinite Art of Alana Kay Bright

By MYKO LYRIC
Contributing Writer

For Alana Kay Bright, storytelling was a lifeline long before it was a career. Growing up in San Antonio, TX and Houston, she created entire worlds out of her dolls, but not in the typ-



Alana Kay Bright

ical manner of a young child's pseudo-ventriloquism. Instead, she captured stop-motion animations with her grandpa's camera and edited them on his old computer. While other kids played, Alana was quietly stitching together the building blocks of a creative future, immersing herself in projects that gave her a sense of purpose, peace, and escape.

That passion carried her into acting, where she reversed the role and stepped into the front-fac-

ing aspect of filmmaking. Her breakout role as Nikki Vaughn in *Our Kind of People*, filmed in Wilmington, North Carolina, was a defining moment. Surrounded by an all-Black cast, Alana felt seen and nurtured in ways she hadn't before. "I had a Black makeup artist and a Black hairstylist. Everybody was Black! The entire experience gave me the best, but most unrealistic expectation of the industry," she shared.

"It was the most about-the-art experience I could've had," she recalled. "I wasn't questioning my identity. I was just working, going home, and connecting deeply with my castmates," she reminisced, also acknowledging that if it were filmed in Los Angeles, she might have had a very different experience. The six months of filming proved to be grounding, reaffirming the power of authenticity and collaboration.

That breakout role was the product of a fortuitous, early-pandemic era scroll through social media. She stumbled upon an open casting call from Tony winner Laura Benanti, who wanted to create an at-home musical. During this process, the project took on an additional shape: a documentary film. HBO Max

released this film, entitled "Homeschool Musical: Class of 2020," shortly thereafter. That opportunity became her springboard, connecting her with agents and representatives who watered her growing career. With the opportunity with "Our Kind of People" within her grasp, Alana left USC and temporarily moved to North Carolina.

Her warm welcome back to Los Angeles was, unfortunately, thwarted by the beginning of the writer's strike. Not dwelling on what she could not change, Alana looked for new ways to create and engage her imagination, while also vacillating on changing her major at USC. She began to re-explore the backroads of filmmaking through creating her first short film, "Wine West." Inspired by Victoria Monét's "Party Girls" music video, the project cemented within her another calling: filmmaking.

"It all just called me outside of my will," she said. "I was really close in auditions for a big role. Then in an [acting] coaching session, [the coach] was like, 'you go to USC, right?' Through that film, I realized I was at the best film school in the world. I had no idea." Immediately, Alana submitted "Wine West" as an internal transfer from USC's School of Dramatic Arts to the School of Cinematic Arts.

Music, too, has become a canvas on which her soul can express itself. Her most recent single, "Leaves in Georgia" (2024), is a love letter to her great-grandmother, Mama Honey, who lived with her family for a decade.

"I got to live with her {See ALANA KAY BRIGHT on A-11}"



A still from the "Leaves in Georgia" music video.

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The Links, Inc. – Los Angeles Chapter Hold 71st Debutante Ball at Beverly Hilton



The young women of the 71st Debutante Ball sponsored by the Links, Inc. Los Angeles Chapter on Nov. 24.

COURTESY PHOTO

BY JORDAN MURRAY
Contributing Writer

The Links, Inc. – Los Angeles Chapter and its philanthropic arm, The Los Angeles Chapter Charitable Trust, held the 71st Debutante Ball at the Beverly Hilton on Nov. 24.

The event, held to uplift young Black women by teaching valuable life skills, concludes the six months of workshops and seminars sponsored by the Leadership Institute to prepare the young women to make their debut before society.

With seminars and community service completed comes the arrival of the Cotillion Ball. The following young women were presented.

Miss Madison Monet Baffo

Madison is the daughter of Mr. Emmanuel and Mrs. Pamela Baffo. Her father, Mr. Emmanuel Baffo, presented her. Her escort was Grayson Wayne Tooley, son of Mr. Darryl and Mrs. Tonya Tooley. Madison graduated from Harvard-Westlake in Studio City. Currently, Madison is a first-year student at Howard University in Washington, D.C. and she is pursuing a degree in Film and hopes to become a screenwriter and film producer.

Miss Maya Rebecca Cole

Maya is the daughter of Mr. Michael and Mrs. Natasha Cole. Her father, Mr. Michael J. Cole, presented her. Her escort was Mr. Chaz Mandel Austin, son of Mr. Craig and Melandie Austin. Maya graduated from Bishop Montgomery High School. She is a first-year student at Spelman College in Atlanta pursuing a degree in Biology. Maya is planning to become a pharmacist and return to Los Angeles.

Miss Mia Nola Crockett

Mia is the daughter of Mr. Mark and Mrs. TaMiko Crockett. Her father, Mr. Mark Crockett presented her. Her escort was Mr. Jalon Christian Sims, son of Mr. Antwoine Sims and Mrs. Janelle Beatty. Mia graduated from King Drew Magnet High School. She is currently a first-year student at Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia. Mia is pursuing a degree in Biology and planning a career in medical research.

Miss Micah Nicole Fleming

Micah is the daughter of Ms. Karen Hamilton. Her grandfather, Mr. Robert Hamilton, present-

ed her. Her escort was Mr. Paul Anthony Holland-Smith, son of Mr. Paul Smith and Ms. Evan Holland. She graduated from Vistamar School. Micah is a first-year student at Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia where she is a Political Science major and is an Ethel Waddel Githii Honors Student. She plans

Mr. Alan and Mrs. Dana Frelix. Haley graduated from King Drew Magnet School of Medicine. She is currently a first-year student at the University of California, Berkeley and she is pursuing a degree in Molecular Cell Biology.

Miss Brooke Taylor Hinkle

Brooke is the daughter

is pursuing a degree in Art History and Political Science.

Miss Niara Josephine Knox

Niara is the daughter of Mr. Terry and Mrs. Gloria Graves Knox. Her father, Mr. Terry Knox presented her. Her escort was Mr. Daniel Nnamdi Crockett, son of Ms. Denetrich

and Ms. Diedra Ford Ndiaye. Her father, Mr. Pape Diene Ndiaye presented her. Her escort was Mr. Nigel Edward Cherrington, son of Mr. Odis Cherrington and Dr. Laurie Smith. Maimouna graduated from Fairfax Visual Arts Magnet High School and is currently a first-year student at Bowie State University in

School and is currently a first-year student at Howard University in Washington, D.C.

Miss Juliana Christina Stepter

Juliana is the daughter of Mr. Trelles J. and Mrs. Tosca A. Stepter. Her father, Mr. Trelles J. Stepter presented her. Her escort was Mr. Dylan Nicholas Ballard, son of Mr. Ryan and Mrs.

Nicole Ballard. Juliana graduated from West Ranch High School and is currently a first-year student at Mount Saint Mary's University in Los Angeles and she is pursuing a degree in Psychology.

Miss Katelyn Carol Taylor

Katelyn is the daughter of Mr. Emmanuel and Mrs. Stacy Taylor. Her father, Mr. Emmanuel Taylor, presented her. Her escort was Mr. Alexander Brown, son of Mr. Delano and Mrs. Sandy Lanning. Katelyn graduated from Valencia High School and is currently a first-year at Howard University in Washington, D.C.

Miss Gabriella Kya Thompson

Gabriella is the daughter of Mr. Kevin and Dr. Aisha Thompson. Her father, Mr. Kevin Thompson, presented her. Her escort was Mr. Johannes Austin, son of Ms. Nefertiti Austin. Gabriella graduated from Rosary Academy and is currently a first-year at University of Alabama at Birmingham and she is majoring in Aerospace Engineering.

Miss Amanda Nicole Wood

Amanda is the daughter of Ms. Christine Nicole Wood. Her father presented her. Her escort was Mr. Nazir Akbar Cammon, son of Mr. Dadishe Cammon and Mrs. Tiffany Jones. Amanda graduated from Vistamar High School and is currently a first-year student at Hampton University in Hampton, Virginia. She is pursuing a degree in Biology.

Miss Kennedi Nevaeh Worsham

Kennedi is the daughter of Bishop Craig Anthony Worsham and Ms. Carlisa Ivory-Worsham. Her father, Bishop Craig Anthony Worsham, presented her. Her escort was Mr. Karsten Robert Cole, son of Dr. Robert L. Cole, Jr., and Dr. Karen Ragland Cole. Kennedi graduated from DaVinci Connect College Preparatory School and is currently a first-year student at Grambling State University in Grambling, Louisiana. She is pursuing a degree in Biology.



The Honorable Bobbi Tillman served as mistress of ceremonies for the Debutante Ball.

COURTESY PHOTO

to further her education by attending law school and becoming a lawyer.

Miss Cassidy Elaine Fralin

Cassidy is the daughter of Mr. Curtis and Mrs. Dayanna Fralin. Her father, Mr. Curtis Fralin, presented her. Her escort was Mr. Joshua Khalil Patterson, son of Mr. Saladin and Mrs. Chelsea Patterson. Cassidy graduated from the Marlborough School. She is currently a first-year student at Northwestern University where she is pursuing a degree in Theater. She is a working actress and has appeared on the Disney Channel and other prominent television shows.

Miss Saxton Milan Gilmore

Saxton is the daughter of Mr. Wilbert and Mrs. Natasha Gilmore. Her father Mr. Wilbert Gilmore Jr., presented her. Her escort was Mr. Anderson Pecot, son of Mr. Joe and Mrs. Candyce Pecot. Saxton graduated from Mira Costa High School. She is currently a first-year student at Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia and she is pursuing a dual degree in Biology and Economics.

Miss Haley McKenna Henderson

Haley is the daughter of Mr. Deryl and Mrs. Marcal Henderson. Her father, Mr. Deryl Henderson, presented her. Her escort was Mr. Omar Aaron Frelix, son of

of Mr. Laurence C. Hinkle, II and Mrs. Tammy Green Hinkle. Her uncle, Mr. Alfred C. Green, Jr., presented her. Her escort was Mr. Matthew Jamison Murray, son of The Honorable Kevin and Mrs. Janice Jamison Murray. Brooke graduated from the Marlborough School and is currently a first-year student at Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia. Brooke is pursuing a degree in Political Science and plans to attend law school.

Miss Peyton Alexis Jackson

Peyton is the daughter of Mr. Sidney Jackson, Jr., and Ms. Lisa Neal. Her father, Mr. Sidney Jackson, Jr., presented her. Her escort was Mr. Joshua Sangster, son of Mr. Rodrick Sangster and Mrs. Althea Ford. Peyton graduated from Sierra Canyon High School and is currently a first-year student at Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia.

Kamael Adalaide Kirkland

Kamael is the daughter of Mr. Ismael Kirkland and Ms. Kenya Croom. Her father, Mr. Ismael Kirkland, presented her. Her escort was Mr. Elliott Colin Fenderson, son of Mr. Travis Fenderson and Mrs. Adreon Fenderson. Kamael graduated from Oakwood Secondary School and is currently a first-year student at Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia. Kamael

Crockett. Niara graduated from Palisades Charter High School and is currently a first-year student at The New School in New York City. Niara is pursuing a dual degree in fine arts in Photography and Culture and Media.

Miss Taylor Lynette Lankford

Taylor is the daughter of Mr. Timothy and Mrs. Florence Lankford. Her father, Mr. Timothy Lankford presented her. Her escort was Mr. Max Eugene McQueen, son of Mr. Garry and Mrs. Carolyn McQueen. Taylor graduated from West Ranch High School and is currently a first-year student at University of California, Los Angeles. Taylor is pursuing a degree in Film and Television Production.

Miss Hannah Nicole Lowe

Hannah is the daughter of Mr. Reginald and Mrs. Theresa Lowe. Her father, Mr. Reginald Lowe presented her. Her escort was Mr. Christian James Favarote, son of Mr. Torey and Mrs. Natasha Favarote. Hannah graduated from Oaks Christian High School and is currently a first-year student at Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas. Hannah is pursuing a dual degree in Music and Journalism with a minor in Business.

Miss Maimouna Lee Ndiaye

Maimouna is the daughter of Mr. Pape Diene

Bowie, Maryland and she is pursuing a degree in Art.

Miss Noelle J'nai Sanders

Noelle is the daughter of Ms. Whitney Rose Haggins. Her grandfather, Mr. Anthony D. Anderson presented her. Her escort was Mr. Caden Fuller, son of Mr. Garry and Ms. Dana Wilson. Noelle graduated from Bishop Montgomery High School and is currently a first-year student at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

Miss Jada Nevaeh Smith

Jada is the daughter of Mr. Barry and Mrs. Anita Smith. Her father, Mr. Barry Wayne Smith, presents her. Her escort is Keyshawn Caleb Reece, the son of Mr. Shun Reese and Ms. Chenika Townsend. Jada graduated from Oaks Christian School and is currently a first-year student at Clark-Atlanta University in Atlanta, Georgia and she is pursuing a degree in Mass Media with a specialization Broadcast Journalism.

Miss Ryan Quinn Smith

Ryan is the daughter of Mr. Quincy and Mrs. Aisha Andrews-Smith. Her father, Mr. Quincy Smith, presented her. Her escort was Mr. Benjamin K.E. Boateng, Jr, son of Mr. Benjamin K.E. Boateng, Sr. and Ms. Patricia Newton-Addy. Ryan graduated from Beverly Hills High

Tracey Michae'l Lewis-Giggetts Talks the Power of Black Joy in Entertainment

BY KEITH L. UNDERWOOD
Entertainment Writer

In a media landscape saturated with depictions of Black trauma, author Tracey Michae'l Lewis-Giggetts is on a mission to change the narrative. Known for her acclaimed book "Black Joy: Stories of Resistance, Resilience, and Restoration," Lewis-Giggetts believes in the transformative power of joy as a tool for healing and resistance.

"Black joy is a very real thing," said Lewis-Giggetts. "It's not just about celebration—it's about survival, resistance, and hope."

The history of Black representation in entertainment has often leaned heavily on stories rooted in pain and



Tracey Michae'l Lewis-Giggetts

struggle. From films that depict systemic racism and injustice to stories focused on historical oppression, these narratives provide necessary education but can limit how Black lives are perceived.



A scene from the film "Twelve Years a Slave."

struggle. From films that depict systemic racism and injustice to stories focused on historical oppression, these narratives provide necessary education but can limit how Black lives are perceived.

Lewis-Giggetts argued that focusing solely on trauma risks reinforcing one-dimensional portrayals of Black existence. "What I

want," she shared, "is for Black stories to be a balance—a reflection of our wholeness, not just our wounds."

"Entertainment isn't just about entertaining—it's a tool to uplift," Lewis-

Giggetts said passionately. She emphasized that joy must be purposeful, rooted in authenticity and intention.

"When we create media that celebrates Black joy, it's not just for the sake of it. It's for those watching to understand the fullness of who we are," said Lewis-Giggetts. "That's what makes it powerful."

Lewis-Giggetts reflected

on how moments of triumph and joy are as vital to understanding Black resilience as stories of struggle. "If you think about Bloody Sunday in Selma, you also have to think about the hope and resilience that carried people through," she explained. "We need both sides of the story."

Lewis-Giggetts sees contemporary media as an extension of this legacy, creating opportunities to tell multifaceted narratives.

Shows like "Abbott Elementary" and "Black-ish" highlight thriving Black families and communities, challenging stereotypes, and redefining representation.

"It's wonderful to see Black people celebrated and having their joy show up in ways that feel real and relatable," she said. For Lewis-Giggetts, joy is not a luxury—it's a necessity, a radical act that pushes back against limited portrayals of Black lives.

Her essays in "Black Joy" capture these ideas vividly. Whether she's recounting a moment dancing in the rain with her daughter or reflecting on the connections forged in family gatherings, her stories



Issa Rae in a scene from "Insecure."

reclaim joy as a fundamental part of Black existence.

"It's about finding light in the midst of darkness," shared Lewis-Giggetts. "And it's about showing our babies—showing every-

so meaningful," said Lewis-Giggetts. "They're seeing themselves as capable, as worthy of joy—and that matters."

Acknowledging the weight of trauma-focused

range of Black stories.

"We need to see ourselves in all our dimensions," emphasized Lewis-Giggetts. "Not just as survivors, but as people who thrive, who laugh, who love,



The cast of the hit ABC sitcom "Abbott Elementary."

one—that joy is ours, too."

Lewis-Giggetts stressed the importance of representation in children's media, referencing shows like "Doc McStuffins" and animated films that offer young Black viewers heroes who look like them.

"Kids are connecting to these stories in ways that are

storytelling, Lewis-Giggetts made it clear that such narratives are still critical.

"We can't ignore our history, our pain," said Lewis-Giggetts. "But we have to balance it. Because if we only see ourselves in struggle, it limits how we imagine our future." She urged creators to show the full spectrum of Black lives, from hardship to triumph.

As creators like Issa Rae (Insecure) and Quinta Brunson (Abbott Elementary) continue to center joy and humor in their work, Lewis-Giggetts is hopeful about the future.

"We're seeing more and more storytellers center joy, humor, and authenticity—and audiences are showing up for it," said Lewis-Giggetts. Her hope is that this momentum continues, creating space for a broader

who dream."

Lewis-Giggetts closed with a call to action for creators and audiences alike: "Be intentional about what you consume and what you create. Celebrate stories that uplift, that show joy as well as struggle. Because when we do that, we're not just changing the narrative—we're changing lives."

Lewis-Giggetts' work, from "Black Joy" to her latest project "Black Playbook," continues to inspire audiences to embrace joy as a radical and restorative act. "It's been an absolute joy to share this work," she said. "And I hope it reminds people that joy is always within reach."

For more on Tracey Michae'l Lewis-Giggetts, visit her website at tracym-lewis.com or follow her on Instagram at @TMLGwriter.

BYRDSONG, SMILEY, JEFFERSON {Continued from A-1}

McDermott, Will & Emery LLP from 2004 to 2006, senior counsel at US Airways Inc. from 2002 to 2004, and an associate at Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP from 2000 to 2002.

Byrdsong earned a Juris

Doctor degree from Columbia University School of Law. She fills the vacancy created by the death of Judge James R. Dunn.

Jefferson has served as supervising deputy city attorney at the Oakland

City Attorney's Office since 2019. Previously, she held positions as senior deputy city attorney and deputy city attorney as well as served as a research attorney at the Alameda County Superior Court from 2006

to 2012.

Her expertise includes service as an associate at Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld from 2004 to 2006 and at Orrick Herrington & Sutcliffe from 2003 to 2004. Also, she served as a

law clerk for the Honorable Andre M. Davis at the U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland from 2002 to 2003 and as a staff attorney law clerk at the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit from 2001 to

2002.

Jefferson earned a Juris Doctor degree from the University of Pennsylvania Law School. She fills the vacancy created by the retirement of Judge Stephen D. Kaus.

RICHARDSON WINS {Continued from A-1}

me the charge to do the work on their behalf and I am ready, willing and able to do so," said Senator-Elect Richardson.

"Likewise, I am grateful for the neighbors, community leaders, local Mayors, Councilmembers and Congresswoman Waters who stood by me during the campaign demonstrating to the public that elected officials

can work together and achieve common goals on behalf of the residents we serve and that we are poised to work collaboratively to bring the greatest resources, programs and services to the 35th Senate District," she insisted.

"I am here to serve everyone in this district. I will listen, I will work hard, and I will fight for you,"

Chambers wrote in a statement that she was "proud of the campaign we ran," thanking supporters who canvassed, phone-banked or cast votes for her "vision of better jobs, better wages and a California that works for everybody, not just the wealthy and well-connected."

"This was the closest state senate race in the state, but unfortunately it appears

that we will fall just short of victory," she added.

"Our people-powered efforts were not quite enough to overcome millions of dollars in outside spending on lies from the oil and tobacco industry and their allies."

Carson, Compton are a large part of the 35th Senate District, which snakes its way all the way down to the Port of Los Angeles and the

Los Angeles Harbor. With prominent businesses and Cal State University of Dominguez Hills as part of Richardson's District.

At times during the lengthy campaign season, the race got nasty with each candidate slinging mud and bringing forward old allegations from the other times serving as elected officials. Given the voter turnout and the slim margins between the two candidates' voters don't appear to be swayed either

way by the two candidates past discretions.

"It's been said voters are very forgiving, and if you stand up and you accept responsibility and you improve in the work that you do — we need people who've been through things, who understand what it's like to have had difficulties," said Richardson in an interview with the Los Angeles Times. "And so that's exactly what I did. I didn't shy away from it."

REPARATIONS' IMPACT {Continued from A-1}

sure that the agenda of racism was delivered without consequence.

As a clinical psychologist, how do you see reparations efforts' potential to improve mental health for Black Californians?

Grills: It can improve, but depending on how California handles this, it can

harm us too. I'm saddened by the fact that we have to make this distinction — direct descendants or non-descendants — because post-enslavement, if you were Black, you could be harmed as severely as someone who was a direct descendant.

When it comes to the

mental health and well-being of Black folk, there's nothing like having your reality validated. [Imagine] if somebody threw a boulder and hit me in the back of my head... I'm hurting, I'm bleeding, I'm traumatized... but everybody that walks by me says, "Nothing's wrong with you, nothing

happened."

That's the lived experience of Black folk in America who have been told, "Nothing happened to you. In fact, maybe it was good for you, and if something happened to you, get over it and pull yourself up by your bootstraps." If you're constantly trying to pull

yourself up by your bootstraps but you don't have boots ... but you're still being held accountable, to have your experience negated is extremely damaging.

Reparations becomes a way to create that validation ... opening a pathway for correcting what have been multigenerational processes that make it difficult for us to ... have equi-

ty on any of the basic indicators of quality of life: education, housing, wealth creation, etc.

We can look at how do we begin to spread out the different ways that repair can happen. Now, you're talking about people who are actively engaged in their own well-being, with allies at their side. That has the potential for healing.

ALANA KAY BRIGHT {Continued from A-9}

[when she was] 93 to 103. She shaped so much of my womanhood and integrity. I felt that people didn't know me until they met her," Alana recalled.

The song, inspired by a trip through Georgia, represents a moment when she

stood with her great-grandmother under the foliage; under the leaves in Georgia. Looking up, the moment reframed the haunting reality that her Mama Honey

experienced of trees being symbols of and weapons for death, into something heal-

ing and sacred. The song is a story of roots, resilience, and finding beauty in pain.

Navigating multiple creative paths as an acting, filmmaking, music-making Black woman hasn't been simple. "People want you to be palatable, to fit into

neat boxes," she admitted. But Alana refuses to shrink herself. Whether acting, writer, directing, or making music, she's committed to claiming space and telling stories that matter.

As for the heart of her journey, it's the people who believe in her. "Thank you to my producer Jayvidd, my

good friend Preston Peace for the guitar loop—the heart of the song—and my best friend Ari, who listened to it a sickening amount of times and reassured me every step of the way."

From crafting tiny, imagined worlds as a child to shaping the real ones she

inhabits now, Alana Kay Bright reminds us that true artistry doesn't have to fall into one perfectly marketable box. For her, the story doesn't truly begin until she's stepped past the edge of a boundary, into the endless unknown where her creativity thrives.

Feeling Betrayed By Increased Minority Support for Trump, Black Women Say They're Stepping Back

By KENYA HUNTER
Associated Press

As she checked into a recent flight to Mexico for vacation, Teja Smith chuckled at the idea of joining another Women's March on Washington.

As a Black woman, she just couldn't see herself helping to replicate the largest act of resistance against then-President Donald Trump's first term in January 2017. Even in an election this year where Trump questioned his opponent's race, held rallies featuring racist insults and falsely claimed Black migrants in Ohio were eating residents' pets, he didn't just win a second term. He became the first Republican in two decades to clinch the popular vote, although by a small margin.

"It's like the people have spoken and this is what America looks like," said

sanity."

After Trump was declared the winner over Democratic Vice President Kamala Harris, many politically engaged Black women said they were so dismayed by the outcome that they were reassessing — but not completely abandoning — their enthusiasm for electoral politics and movement organizing.

Black women often carry much of the work of getting out the vote in their communities. They had vigorously supported the historic candidacy of Harris, who would have been the first woman of Black and South Asian descent to win the presidency.

AP VoteCast, a survey of more than 120,000 voters, found that 6 in 10 Black women said the future of democracy in the United States was the single most important factor for their vote this year, a higher share



AP PHOTO/JACQUELYN MARTIN, FILE
Supporters of Democratic Presidential nominee Vice President Kamala Harris hold up their fists in the air after she delivered a concession speech on Nov. 6 at Howard University.

fight they lend their organizing power to.

"America is going to have to save herself," said LaTosha Brown, the co-founder of the national voting rights group Black Voters Matter.

"That's not a herculean task that's for us. We don't want that title. ... I have no goals to be a martyr for a nation that cares nothing about me," she said.

About 9 in 10 Black female voters supported Harris in 2024, according to AP VoteCast, similar to the share that backed Democrat Joe Biden in 2020. Trump received support from more than half of white voters, who made up the vast majority of his coalition in both years.

Like voters overall, Black women were most likely to say the economy and jobs were the most important issues facing the country, with about one-third saying that. But they were more likely than many

other groups to say that abortion and racism were the top issues, and much less likely than other groups to say immigration was the top issue.

Despite those concerns, which were well-voiced by Black women throughout the campaign, increased support from young men of color and white women helped expand Trump's lead and secured his victory.

Politically engaged Black women said they don't plan to continue positioning themselves in the vertebrae of the "backbone" of America's democracy. The growing movement prompting Black women to withdraw is a shift from history, where they are often present and at the forefront of political and social change.

One of the earliest examples is the women's suffrage movement that led to ratification in 1920 of the 19th Amendment to the Constitution, which gave

women the right to vote. Black women, however, were prevented from voting for decades afterward because of Jim Crow-era literacy tests, poll taxes and laws that blocked the grandchildren of slaves from voting. Most Black women couldn't vote until the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Black women were among the organizers and counted among the marchers brutalized on the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Alabama, during the historic march in 1965 from Selma to Montgomery that preceded federal legislation. Decades later, Black women were prominent organizers of the Black Lives Matter movement in response to the deaths of Black Americans at the hands of police and vigilantes.

In his 2024 campaign, Trump called for leveraging federal money to eliminate diversity, equity and inclusion programs in government programs and discus-

sions of race, gender or sexual orientation in schools. His rhetoric on immigration, including false claims that Black Haitian immigrants in Springfield, Ohio, were eating cats and dogs, drove support for his plan to deport millions of people.

Tenita Taylor, a Black resident of Atlanta who supported Trump this year, said she was initially excited about Harris' candidacy. But after thinking about how high her grocery bills have been, she feels that voting for Trump in hopes of finally getting lower prices was a form of self-prioritization.

"People say, 'Well, that's selfish, it was gonna be better for the greater good,'" she said. "I'm a mother of five kids. ... The things that (Democrats) do either affect the rich or the poor."

Some of Trump's plans affect people in Olivia Gordon's immediate community, which is why she struggled to get behind the "Black women rest" wave.

Nicole Lewis, an Alabama-based therapist who specializes in treating Black women's stress, said she's aware that Black women withdrawing from social impact movements could have a fallout. But she also hopes that it forces a reckoning for the nation to understand the consequences of not standing in solidarity with Black women.

"It could impact things negatively because there isn't that voice from the most empathetic group," she said. "I also think it's going to give other groups an opportunity to step up. ... My hope is that they do show up for themselves and everyone else."

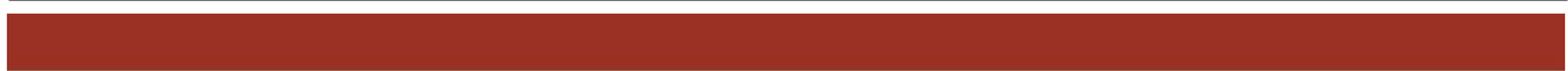


AP PHOTO/MARCIO JOSS SANCHEZ, FILE
Alycia Pascual-Pen, left, and Marley Ralph kneel during a protest in memory of Breonna Taylor in Los Angeles, on July 11, 2020.

Smith, the Los Angeles-based founder of the advocacy social media agency, Get Social.

"And there's not too much more fighting that you're going to be able to do without losing your own

than for other demographic groups. But now, with Trump set to return to office in two months, some Black women are renewing calls to emphasize rest, focus on mental health and become more selective about what



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B-1

Koshie Mills and Heirs of Afrika Celebrate and Honor Black Women

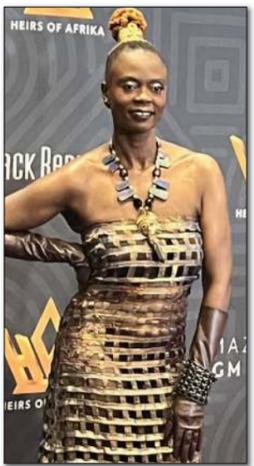
BY SIMONE GRANT
Contributing Writer

On Sunday, Nov. 24, Ghanaian American media mogul and founder of Heirs of Afrika Koshie Mills hosted her 7th Annual International Women of Power Awards Gala.

The star-studded event took place at the Sheraton Grand Los Angeles Hotel in downtown L.A., and honored Black women from the Diaspora and Africa who are influential leaders, innovators, and powerful symbols in the fields of entertainment, fashion, beauty, business, and social justice.



Founder of Heirs of Afrika Koshie Mills takes the purple carpet at her annual Women of Power Awards Gala.



Essence Ventures President/CEO Caroline Wanga humbly accepts the Warrior "Adinkrahene" Award at the gala.

Before the ceremony, Mills, honorees, and presenters graced the purple carpet

in their beautiful African garments. As cameras flashed, they were all smiles.

Stepping into the venue was like immersing yourself into a beautiful African experience. Each table had stunning flower centerpieces that guests were allowed to take home at the end of the night, and bottles of actress, writer, and producer, Issa Rae's sparkling white wine, Viarae Prosecco.

Attendees were served delicious cuisine, and once the ceremony commenced, guests were captivated by the sounds of African drummers. Host for the ceremony, actress Wendy Raquel Robinson, made her

entrance dancing to the rhythmic beats.

Robinson thanked Mills for putting this event together to celebrate the global power of Black women. She emphasized how the theme was "ascension" and asked the female guests who she honorary crowned "queens and princesses" to stand, take a deep breath, and repeat the affirmation, "I am a daughter of the soil."

She then asked the "kings" of the room to stand and repeat, "I am a king of the soil. A son of the soil."

Actress Pepi Sonuga took the stage to present the Heirs of Afrika "Sankofa" Award to the first honoree of the night, Chiney Ogwumike, a two-time WNBA

All-Star, ESPN host, and founder of the Queens of the Continent Foundation. She humbly accepted her award as she spoke about her hometown of Texas and what being at the event meant to her as a woman of African descent.

Grammy Award-winning artist Ledisi presented the Entertainment Roar "Nya Gidi" Award to actress Meagan Good, who could not attend the ceremony, but sent a heartfelt video message to express her gratitude.

Actress Ryan Destiny presented the Goddess Beauty "Duafe" Award to actress and singer Sierra McClain. She danced her way on stage and was in tears shortly after revealing she didn't feel as confident as she thought she would, but felt seen and would trade that for feeling confident any day.

There was a short intermission as people danced and took pictures before actor, director, and entrepreneur Kofi Siriboe introduced his mother, Mills, to the stage. He told guests a story about his mom, who was a nurse, driving him to auditions after work when he was younger.

being dedicated and compassionate before she came to the stage and embraced her with a big hug.

She gave grace to God and said that this event almost didn't happen because she had some medical issues. She said God told her this was her mission and ministry and that is the reason she is standing on stage today.

She continued by thanking her sponsors and crew



The vibrant energy of actress Wendy Raquel Robinson, host for the awards, transitioned from the purple carpet to the stage.

and invited her other son, Qwesi, and her husband on stage to pose for photos.

International pop star Estelle performed a few of her songs including her hit singles "Come Over" and "American Boy" that had the audience all on their feet

dancing and singing along.

Visionary executive and the current Chief Marketing and Communications Officer for the NAACP Aba



Janeisha John, former Miss U.S. Virgin Islands, host, producer, and executive at Zeus Network, graced the purple carpet.

Blankson presented the "Media Titan "Dame-Dame" Award to entrepreneur and musician Shavone Charles, and Zeus Network President/CEO Lemuel Plummer presented the Lionheart Business "Akofena" Award to Janeisha John.

To close out the awards, actress, writer, and producer Yetide Badaki presented the Warrior "Adinkrahene" Award to Caroline Wanga, who gave a captivating, poignant speech about her journey to get to where she is today.

For more information on Heirs of Afrika, visit: https://heirs आफrika.com/

Kaiser Permanente and LA Clippers Unite to Elevate Community Health

SENTINEL NEWS SERVICE

The LA Clippers and Kaiser Permanente have announced a long-term agreement that brings together two trusted Southern California organizations, united in their shared commitment to improve the vitality and health of the Greater Los Angeles community.

Through this agreement with the Clippers, Kaiser Permanente will serve as Official Health Care Partner and Team Physicians, extending its premiere sports medicine program to the team in their Kaiser Permanente Training Center.

Kaiser Permanente will also open a specialized sports medicine clinic within the Intuit Dome campus in 2025 to provide care for both its members and the community. In addition, Kaiser Permanente will invest in a community activation fund to support the well-being and future of the local area's youth.

"The LA Clippers share Kaiser Permanente's vision

for a thriving community that embraces total health and wellness and that's what makes this a perfect partnership," said Michelle Gaskill-Hames, president, Kaiser Permanente Southern California, Health Plan and Hospitals.

"This collaboration will strengthen our commitment to the community, expand our care delivery and highlight our exceptional health care for both athletes and Southern California residents."

"Kaiser Permanente was selected as our Official Health Care Partner and Team Physicians because of their long-standing reputation in sports medicine," said LA Clippers and Intuit Dome Chief Commercial Officer Scott Sonnenberg.

"This long-term partnership with Kaiser Permanente demonstrates our two highly-valued and respected organizations' deep commitment to improving the health of Los Angeles residents, as well as our commitment to the health for the future – the youth of

Greater LA."

As the Official Health Care Partner, Kaiser Permanente's focus areas will include:

• Community activation fund: This will include a multi-year initiative with selected community partners, focused on the youth of Inglewood and surrounding Los Angeles communities. The expected programming will address healthy minds, healthy bodies) and thriving futures.

• Community engagement: The LA Clippers and Kaiser Permanente will collaborate on activities and programs in the community and open the Intuit Dome campus to local youth.

• Medical excellence: The LA Clippers have selected the Southern California Permanente Medical Group as their Team Physicians. The same physicians who provide care to these elite athletes are part of a team of physicians who provide high-quality medical care to the members of Kaiser Permanente.

• New sports medicine

clinic: Kaiser Permanente will establish a cutting-edge sports medicine clinic strategically located within the Intuit Dome campus, home of the LA Clippers, to serve Kaiser Permanente members and the community. It is expected to open in late 2025.

"We are pleased to support the LA Clippers and provide the expertise and high-quality care to professional athletes as well as Kaiser Permanente members and the community," said Dr. Ramin Davidoff, executive medical director of the Southern California

Permanent Medical Group.

"Our team of sports medicine physicians has extensive experience and expertise in the specialized care of sports medicine focused on comprehensive preventive care and injury treatment to help athletes perform their best."



The Kaiser Permanente Training Center

Simon Burris: Africana Diaspora Black History Month II Crossword

AFRICAN AMERICAN TRAILBLAZERS

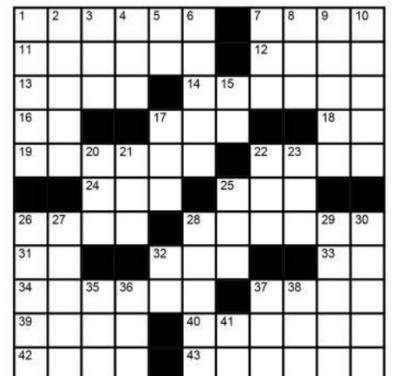
www.simonburris700.com

Across

- 1. ** __McDaniel; first African American [A/A] Academy Award winner (1940)
7. **Civil Rights icon Martin Luther __
11. Aged pork cut (2 wds.)
12. Region
13. **Condoleezza __; first A/A woman Secretary of State (2005)
14. ** __ Anderson; legendary singer/activist
16. Opposite of SW
17. Relaxed
18. Left Guard (abbr.)
19. Makes law
22. November voting day, briefly
24. * __ Charles; iconic musician
25. Refusals
26. Atom __
28. ** __ Harris; first A/A & female U.S. vice president
31. Blood type
32. **Jackie Robinson's ball club
33. "God __ love" (1 John 4:8)
34. __ roll (bread)
37. **"Beloved" author Morrison
39. Pull off
40. **First National Youth Poet Gorman
42. Seattle event
43. **Underground Railroad leader

Down

- 1. **Legendary singer and activist Lena
2. Foreign
3. Tulsa Democrat Center, for short
4. * __ Help" Viola Davis film (2011)
5. Cedar Rapids, __
6. Girl names
7. * __ L Malone; famed basketballer
8. __ SH (Celtic)
9. **Author Zora __ Hurston



- 10. Crime groups
15. * __ Last" Etta James classic
17. Pig's pen
20. Branch
21. **First name in jazz Calloway
22. ** __ Bradley; Los Angeles' first A/A mayor
23. IN/CO/ME, briefly
25. **Slave revolt leader, martyr __ Turner (1831)
26. **First A/A woman superstar Josephine (1920s)
27. **First A/A U.S. president
28. Gold unit
29. Girl's name
30. Japanese or Korean
32. "Ask, and it shall __ given you" (Matt. 7:7)
35. *3, to Afro-Roman emperor Severus (193 AD - 211 AD)
36. Station (abbr.)
37. Label
38. ABAND __ ENT (being forsaken)
41. ** __ hammad Ali

(ANSWERS ON D-4)

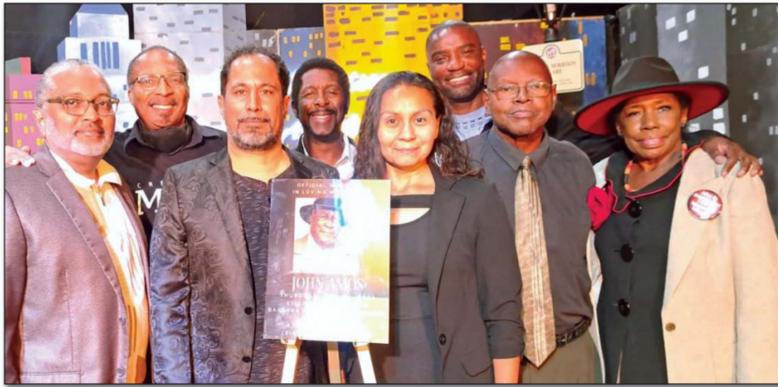
Barbara Morrison Theater Hosts Celebration of Life for John Amos

SENTINEL NEWS SERVICE

The Barbara Morrison Performing Arts Theater hosted a heartfelt celebration of life for legendary actor John Amos on Nov. 21.

Family, friends, and admirers gathered to honor his extraordinary contributions to the entertainment industry and his enduring impact on those who knew him. The event, sponsored by Kelly Christopher “KC” Amos, John Amos’ son, in partnership with the Barbara Morrison Performing Arts Theater, featured moving tributes, reflections, and prayers.

Speakers included actor and producer Rodney Allen Rippey, local film producer Al Franklin, pro basketball player Zollie Stevens, and private investigator Kevin Faler. These prominent figures, along with other outstanding leaders in the community, reflected on Amos’ influence not only as an entertainer but also as



From left are Robert Sausedo, Kelly Christopher Amos, Maria Avila, Dr. Eddie White, Dr. Cherilyn Lee, (back) Rodney Allen Rippey, and Zollie Stevens.

a mentor and advocate who left an indelible mark on their lives and careers.

Pastor Robert Sausedo, CEO of Community Build, led the ceremony in the eulogy and prayer. In addition, Dr. Cherilyn Lee shared heartfelt memories.

“I am deeply honored and profoundly grateful to have been part of the official celebration of life ceremony for the incredible Mr. John Amos. Meeting him in

person was a true privilege, and I cherish the opportunity to celebrate the legacy of such a remarkable actor and extraordinary human being,” said Lee.

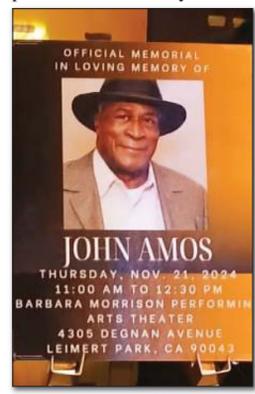
John Amos was celebrated for his groundbreaking roles, including James Evans Sr. in “Good Times” and Kunta Kinte in the landmark miniseries “Roots.” His portrayal in “Roots,” which earned critical acclaim and multiple

awards, addressed themes of identity and resilience that resonated deeply with audiences. Amos also made his mark in film, with stand-out performances in movies like “Coming to America,” showcasing his versatility and comedic brilliance.

More than an actor, Amos was remembered as a storyteller and advocate who championed authentic narratives and sought to inspire through his craft.

Those who knew him personally spoke of his generosity, wisdom, and commitment to uplifting others, leaving a legacy of mentorship and empowerment.

“As I think about Pops, I know he would be proud of this day to see so much love and support from people who sincerely cared



John Amos

about him as a person,” said KC Amos.

“It is truly moving and comforting. John Amos was a great actor gifted beyond

words. He was also a man with a passion to give back to the community. We traveled the world together and, in our travels, he always made it a point to connect with the people who make communities great. People from all walks of life. Parents, families, local business owners, community leaders,” recalled his son.

“We now carry that spirit of strength and unity that he gave us and showed us. I want you to know that I am committed to carrying out his wishes and there is more to come,” KC Amos said.

Dr. Lee added, “As we reflect on his remarkable journey, let us carry forward the lessons he taught us and the joy he brought to our lives. Thank you, Mr. Amos, for everything. Your spirit will continue to shine brightly in our hearts, and the love you shared with KC will forever inspire us to cherish our own connections.”

Stevie Wonder Celebrates 25 Years of House Full of Toys with ‘Sing Your Song! As We Fix Our Nation’s Broken Heart’

SENTINEL NEWS SERVICE

Legendary entertainer and social activist Stevie Wonder announced that he will bring the critically acclaimed performance, “Sing Your Song! As We Fix Our Nation’s Broken Heart” to Crypto.com Arena in Los Angeles on Saturday, Dec. 14, in celebration of the 25th House Full of Toys benefit concert.

The 25-time Grammy winner – whose other accolades include an Academy Award, and a Presidential Medal of Freedom– completed 11 sold-out performances across the nation this Fall to amazing reviews.

This performance, titled “Sing Your Song! As We Fix Our Nation’s Broken Heart”, is produced by Wonder Productions, and promoted by



Stevie Wonder

AEG Presents in partnership with Free Lunch.

As a special thank you, Wonder will be offering a designated number of complimentary tickets to those in communities who are already working tirelessly to fix the nation’s broken heart. House Full of Toys benefits children, people with disabilities, and families in need. Concertgoers are asked

to bring an unwrapped toy or gift of joy. Wonder’s We Are You Foundation is a nonprofit organization, and charitable gifts are 100% tax deductible.

Listen to Stevie Wonder’s new single “Can We Fix Our Nation’s Broken Heart” at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SKS23n3qP6g>.

Tickets are now on sale at cryptoarena.com.

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B-3

St. Stephen Missionary Baptist Church Sings in the Holidays

By JOANIE HARMON
Contributing Writer

As Los Angeles prepares for the holiday season, St. Stephen Missionary Baptist Church in La Puente serves up a full menu of joyous performances to ensure blessings for Thanksgiving, Christmas, and even the ringing in of the New Year.

“The holidays bring lots of special services,” says Rochelle Beams, the church’s musical and media director for the last three years, of upcoming events that will take place both in-person and streaming live on the church’s YouTube channel.

St. Stephen’s festive season of praise starts on Thanksgiving Day, Thursday, Nov. 28, with a one-hour service at 10 a.m. that will include a 15-minute sermonette, followed by 45 minutes of music. A Christmas program takes place twice on Sunday, Dec. 8, at 8 a.m. and 11 a.m., with children and adult choirs and praise dancers performing; and on Wednesday, Dec. 25, Christmas Day will be observed with a service at 10 a.m.

A New Year’s Eve Watchnight Service will take place on Tuesday, Dec. 31, beginning at 7 p.m., with Myesha Chaney serving as worship leader. The program includes a keynote by Dr. Adam Groza, president, Gateway Seminary, and a full lineup of recording artists, comedians, and other worship leaders.



The Sanctuary Choir of St. Stephen Missionary Baptist Church is co-led by Rochell Beams, far left, and Devin Hope, 3rd from left.

dians, and other worship leaders.

St. Stephen’s music ministry will continue to celebrate 2025 with two events in January. The Churchwide Day of Prayer, on Sunday, Jan. 5, will combine two services into one, starting at 8 a.m., to pray on specific topics for the new year. In addition, two old-fashioned tent revival services will be celebrated on Sunday, Jan. 12, beginning at 8 a.m. and 11 a.m.

“The original meaning of revival was to cater to non-believers or folks outside of the walls,” says Beams. “We’ve gotten away from that in the church arena, so we’re bringing that back.”

Reaching out beyond their congregation is a focus at St. Stephen’s, led by its pastor, Dr. Anthony

Dockery. The church’s Sanctuary Choir performed for the first time at Bakewell Media’s Taste of Soul Family Festival on Oct. 19.

“Here at St. Stephen’s, our motto is, ‘We are God’s servants, in God’s service, serving God’s people,’” says Beams. “In doing so, our goal is to ‘G.E.T.E.M.’ – we ‘Go Evangelize to Every Mortal.’”

“That was our goal when we went to Taste of Soul,” she says. “We planned on singing so that somebody that might walking by could hear what we had to say as we professed our love for Jesus. If Jesus was someone they didn’t know, we prayed that some lyric... something they saw on that stage would get them to want to know Christ.”

Beams says that while

St. Stephen’s services are all available to stream via YouTube, there is something to be said for encouraging in-person church attendance.

“This church is alive and thriving - we thank God for that,” she says. “On a given Sunday, there might be 300 or so, but on the roll, there might be

2,000. The pandemic, as it did nationally, kind of put a halt to a lot of people getting out of the bed and coming in.

“We’re still striving to get those that are watching online to come on in, because there’s a difference to watching it on the

couch versus the fellowship that you feel when you’re together and worshipping Christ together,” says Beams. “But as long as they’re getting [the message], it it’s all good.”

To learn more, visit youtube.com/@SSBCservants.



Rochell Beams is the music and media director of St. Stephen Missionary Baptist Church in La Puente.



St. Stephen’s Sanctuary Choir graced the Brenda Marsh-Mitchell Gospel Stage at this year’s Taste of Soul.

West Angeles Joins Faith & Fine Dining With New West A Café

By ANNDRETTA LYLE, PhD
Contributing Writer

West Angeles Church of God In Christ served a special Thanksgiving family style meal in the West A Café for its grand opening dinner after Sunday service on Nov. 24.

Pastor Charles Blake II warmly shared that Lady DeAndrea Blake is the visionary behind the West A Café, which is located on the first floor of the new West Angeles Family Life Center.

As they sat together with Pastor Emeritus Bishop Charles Blake Sr. and Lady Mae L. Blake in a dining area filled to capacity with members alongside family and friends, it was clear that West A Café is an extension of the West Angeles Church Sunday worship experience.

Lady DeAndrea stated, “The West A Café is a fine dining café with a farm-to-table approach bringing



Pastor Charles Blake II and Lady DeAndrea Blake

only the highest quality produce. The West A Café is geared towards bringing families back together, feeding them both spiritually and physically.”

She expressed during the grand opening remarks how important it is that we consider both health and flavor as we fellowship with food.

Sunday’s menu included incredibly tender and moist herb roasted turkey with house-made bread stuffing, black pepper



For West A Café reservations, visit www.westa.org/cafe.

gravy, garlic string beans, sweet potato puree, and cit-



Lady DeAndrea addresses family, members, and guests.

rus cranberry sauce. Guests enjoyed that elevated tradi-

West A Café has to offer. The breakfast menu, served buffet-style, includes hot foods such as scrambled eggs, potatoes with onions, creamy grits, and Akara — the standout item — alongside bacon, assorted juices, and pastries.

For December 2024, the lunch menu offers two meal options: Southern-style chicken and rice served with sautéed lemon and garlic kale, or countryside shepherd’s pie accompanied by the same flavorful kale. Beverage choices include lychee lemonade, unsweetened iced tea, and sweetened iced tea.

The West A Café is open exclusively on Sundays, offering breakfast and lunch service. Breakfast is served from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m., while lunch is available from 12:30 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Each Sunday menu will feature the best of season ingredients and will rotate monthly so guests can experience the many flavors

For more information or to make reservations, visit westa.org/cafe.

JOANNE SANDERS TRANSITIONS TO BE WITH THE LORD

SENTINEL NEWS SERVICE

Los Angeles resident Joanne Sanders passed away on Friday, Nov. 22, and now rests in the heavenly home of the Lord. A celebration of her life will be held at a later date.

Joanne was born on February 27, 1938 in Los Angeles to Alphonso William and Addie Lois Webb. The oldest of five children, she was educated in the Los Angeles Unified School District. She attended Hoop-



Joanne Sanders

er Avenue Elementary, George Washington Carver Junior High School, and

Thomas Jefferson High School.

Joanne accepted Christ at an early age. She attended Zion Temple Community Church under the leadership of the Rev. Ralph D. Williams.

She met her sweetheart Vernell Thompson, at Jefferson High School and they later united in marriage. From this union, three children were born - Mishell Thompson, Linell Thompson (who preceded her) and Darnell Thompson. Also, her grandson, Linell Thompson, preceded

her in death.

After that marriage dissolved, she met and married Donald Sanders. Donald had three children - Michelle Sanders, Donald ‘Zipper’ Sanders Jr. and Juan Sanders, and they became a blended family.

In 1970, Joanne joined the workforce of the United States Postal Service as a mail supervisor where she served with distinction for 37 years.

Joanne also loved to travel and she visited many places ranging from Paris France to Alaska, Dubai,

and Hawaii. Frequently, her travel companions included her sister, Alphonsa “Jeanne” Wiggins, and her aunt, Gussie Mae Fuller.

Joanne built her dream home in Tehachapi, California where she lived for more than 15 years. During her last year, she was well taken care of at the Hope House in Los Angeles.

She leaves to cherish her memory, her daughter, Mishell Thompson of Los Angeles; son, Darnell Thompson of Bakersfield, CA; grandson, Vito Hill; great granddaughter, Mila

Hill; sister, Katherine “Nay Nay” Harrison of Los Angeles; aunt, Gussie Mae Fuller of Carson, CA; nieces, Karen Henry, La Nay Harrison, Naylyn Harrison and Shelly Harrison; nephew, Yusef Harrison Sr., 11 great nieces, 12 great nephews, several great great nieces and nephew, great cousins, Vernell Richardson of Arlington, TX; Michael and Scarlet Beard of Fontana, CA; and Ambrose and Rosalind Beard of Los Angeles; and a host of relatives and friends.

• DR. MAULANA KARENGA •

Dialoguing with Nanas Thurman, Brooks and Burroughs: Meditations on Meanings of Resistance and Resilience - Part II

Nana Gwen Brooks was an internationally recognized and respected poet, Poet Laureate and Pulitzer Prize recipient when she decided to join the Black Revolt sweeping the country and calling all Black people to be themselves and free themselves and create an expanded realm of freedom in this country and the world.

She embraced a fundamental tenet of Kawaida philosophy that I put forth in the 1960s that “the fact that we are Black is our ultimate reality.” She writes that “the huge, the pungent object of our prime out-ride/ is to Comprehend/ to salute and love the fact that we are Black/ which is our ‘Ultimate Reality.’”

It is our source and sanctuary, the foundation and framework on which and within which we strive to be ourselves and free ourselves and speak our own special cultural truth to the world.

She wants us to embrace ourselves and each other, see ourselves in expanded and uplifting ways and find ourselves ever resistant and resilient regardless of the times and tests we face. She tells us to reject the negativism of “the down-keepers, the sunslappers, the self-soilers, the harmonyhushers.” And to say to them “even if you aren’t ready for day/ it cannot always be night.” We must, she teaches us, call for the day, hurry the dawn, and as we say in Kawaida, “lift up the light that lasts.”

She reminds us of our capacity and courage, telling us we can change the course of history and rivers. Calling to us, she says “my people, Black and Black... say that the river turns and turn the river.” We have to prepare to meet the hell and hurricanes of history she says, “the brash and terrible weather/ the pains, the bruising...”, the chaos and killing, the evil and unjust.

And we must resist and be resilient above all, we must

dare to live in spite of the lynchers and liars, the police and politicians, the systemic violence, the injustice and genocide. For “this is the urgency! Live and have your blooming in the noise of the whirlwind.”

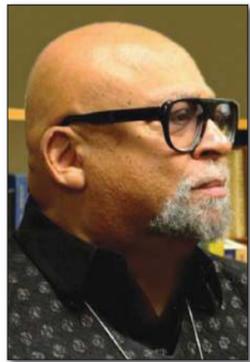
Furthermore, Nana Brooks tells us that we must build our churches, our homes, our mosques and temples and all our institutions, not with brick, steel and stone alone, but “with love like lion-eyes, with love like morningrise. With love like Black, our Black-luminously indiscreet, complete; continuous.” We must “straddle the whirlwind;” we must choose life, “live and go out, define and medicate the whirlwind.”

And again, we must love and serve our people, honor and respect them, realizing that “a garbage man is dignified as any diplomat” and that the ordinary everyday woman “Big Bessie...stands-bigly-under the unruly scrutiny” and “is a moment of highest quality; admirable. Also, Nana Brooks tells us that diligently pursuing the upward path of our people and our culture may bring us a certain sense of loneliness, and in times of crisis and fierce struggle, we might notice that absence, inactivity and silence of others.

Thus, she says, “It is lonesome, yes. For we are the last of the loud.” And yet, we must live, dare to struggle, dare to win and dare to be ourselves and free ourselves. And this means again, we must “conduct our blooming in the noise and whip of the whirlwind.” For this again reveals and reaffirms the meaning and value of our resistance and resilience.

Nana Nannie Burroughs, educator and teacher, institution builder, womanist, spiritual and moral leader, human rights activist and businesswoman concerned with workers’ rights and unionization, teaches us in word and deed to understand and assert

ourselves as a people who “specialize in the wholly impossible.”



DR. MAULANA KARENGA

As a womanist, Nana Burroughs stressed the equal dignity and rights of Black women and advocated for them to enter the world equally educated and prepared for life and struggle. Like Nana W. E. B. DuBois and other leaders and thinkers of this time and mind, she advocated and practiced an education that teaches students not only how to make a living, but also and equally important, how to make a life.

Thus, she says, “The training of (Black) women is absolutely necessary, not only for their own salvation and the salvation of the race, but because the hour in which we live demands it. If we lose sight of the demands of the hour we blight our hope of progress.” Here, she asks for the cultivation of a social consciousness attuned to the demands of the times, the urgencies of the historical moment in which we live,

strive and struggle. Doing this, we are not to lose sight or sense of ourselves or our community and its pressing needs and interests, but to place and pursue them in the context of our times.

Nana Burroughs understands her people as second to none in their soulfulness and sacredness. Indeed, she says, “No race is richer in soul quality and color than the (Black person). Some day he will realize it and glorify them. He will popularize Black.” And she lived to see this come to pass in the 1960s when Nana Elijah Muhammad and Nana Haji Malcolm sacralized, even divinized, Black people.

It is during this time Black people pictured and painted their Lord as Black, created a Black liberation theology, declared they were Black, beautiful, gifted, and proud and called out in radical and righteous resistance, “Liberation is coming from a Black Thing” or Thang, depending on the form of Ebonics we were speaking at the time.

And Nana Burroughs taught unrelenting resistance to all forms of oppression, calling for a total and encompassing victory. She taught that “To struggle and battle and overcome and absolutely defeat every force designed against us is the only way to achieve.” And she urged us to give the best of ourselves to our striving and struggle as a way, not only to free ourselves and be

ourselves, but also to honor the work, struggle, sacrifice and achievement of those wayopeners before us.

Thus, she states, “A lot of people endured a lot of hardship, humiliation, suffering and pain. The least I can do is be my best, live my best life, and treat myself and my surroundings with respect.” Also, she teaches, we must always dare to do our best, try regardless of apprehensions and sometimes being unable to do or achieve all we long for or intend.

Nevertheless, she tells us, “Aspire to be, and all that we are not, God will give us credit for trying.” Here, we read her as asking us to step out on faith, Imani, the Seventh Principle of the Nguzo Saba and the foundational principle of all our ancient and ongoing spiritual traditions.

Finally, Nana Burroughs established as the motto of her school the audacious claim and commitment that “We specialize in the wholly impossible.” Now this concept of the “impossible” has at least three possible meanings: the impossible the oppressor and his system teach; the impossible we mistakenly define for ourselves; and the impossible that conceals the possible within it and challenges us to unmask it, make it visible and then pursue and achieve it.

But again, we can only achieve the wholly impossible, Nana Burroughs teaches us, by being our best, living our best, aspiring to and

achieving our best and treating ourselves, others and our surrounding with rightful respect.

Riding the storms with Nana Thurman, blooming in the noise and whip of the whirlwind with Nana Brooks, and specializing in the wholly impossible with Nana Burroughs are central and continuing lessons and life realities of our history, an urgent need of our present and a righteous and reliable promise of our future.

And they are left for us as a legacy to be lived, uplifted and passed on as a model and mirror to future generations for this and all the other storms we will have to ride, all the whirlwinds we will have to bloom in, and all the impossibilities we will have to specialize in and achieve.

And as always and again, this is our duty: to know our past and honor it; to engage the present and improve it, and to imagine a whole new future and forge it in the most ethical, effective and expansive ways.

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 •

Palm Springs Taking Steps to get it Right

I love to go to the city of Palm Springs. It’s my favorite place in the world, that’s right the world, and yes, I do have a passport.

It’s close, you don’t need to go through TSA, you can get there in a couple of hours, you don’t need to pack a ton of clothes, and you can go there and totally cool out. When I know I’m going to take time out and go there, I have my own routine and rhythm.

So, why Palm Springs? Because it’s clean and quiet, there are great restaurants, great shopping and the pace of the city is slow and laid back. As soon as I hit town, I stop by my favorite cigar spot, and I sit in the outside areas on the sidewalk and enjoy a good cigar and download before checking into my hotel. So where am I going with this?

Last week, the city of Palm Springs approved a \$5.9 million settlement and \$20 million for housing initiatives and \$1 million for local business initiatives for marginalized Black and Latino families whose homes were bulldozed and burned to the ground in a savage takeover under the guides of urban renewal in the 1950s and 1960s—an area they call Section 14 (Downtown Palm Springs).

Isn’t it interesting how people can dress up evil by trying to give it a sophisticated name. I guess if you call it Section 14 and not a Black and Brown neighborhood, you can feel justified in brutally mistreating people and taking what belongs to them. This was deep because I never knew that the city I love so much had such a history. Had I known that I really don’t think that I would have embraced it as I have.

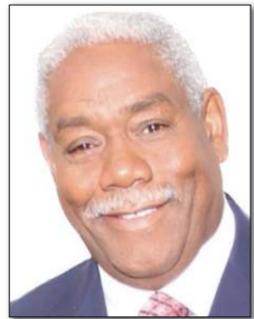
I never knew that this one-square-mile plot of land east of downtown

Palm Springs owned by the Aqua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians and a number of Black families, was a thriving community of homes, apartments, mobile homes, restaurants, churches and other cultural sites, which celebrated having over 1,000 buildings and several thousand residents living there.

These Black people living there worked as chefs, chauffeurs, butlers, maids, nannies, carpenters, construction workers and laborers, which was key to the development of Palm Springs as a thriving hospitality, tennis, tourist and golf industry that emerged in the 1960s. These people, our people, Black people, owned their own businesses, boarding homes, shoe repair shops and restaurants.

From the late 1950s through the 1960s the good citizens of the City of Palm Springs hatched a plan to demolish the vibrant community and develop it into more lucrative (white) commercial enterprises. So, what did these good citizens, the city and its agents do? They destroyed homes, personal property and belongings.

City-employed fire fighters and private companies bore down on the neighborhood and burned and bulldozed homes and



Tony Wafford

personal possessions of residents while many were at work and some while still at home. Doesn’t this remind you of Rosewood, Florida; Tulsa, Oklahoma; and countless other atrocities perpetrated on our people. Hell, can you say, the Santa Monica freeway!

“It is the responsibility of the city of Palm Springs to compensate individuals for the destruction of personal property,” said Councilmember Lisa Middleton. “We broke something that was yours, and now we need to pay for it.”

In addition, the council

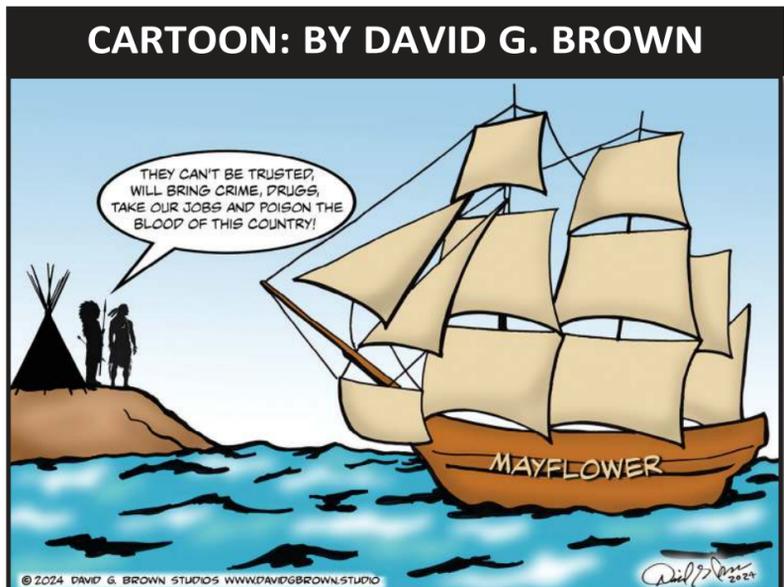
approved funding broader programs to address longstanding economic disparities including \$20 million for a housing initiative and \$1 million for local business initiatives for Black communities.

Mayor Jeffrey Bernstein said, “The truth is that we can’t right the wrongs of the past, what we can do is we can heal and move forward, and we can look at restorative justice.”

Please don’t get me twisted, we all know that \$26.9 million and an apology is a teardrop in the ocean for the hurt and pain that they caused but it’s a start. While I appreciate Councilmember Middleton’s words — let’s be honest, they didn’t break something that was ours and a check isn’t going to fix it.

What I will say is that the beginning of healing is to first recognize that you’re sick and I appreciate the city of Palm Springs at least recognizing that what they did was sick. Is this total reparations for what they did? Of course not, but I believe this is a start.

Now if we can just get the rest of America to go see a doctor.



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Coach Wendy

Life Strategist / Consultant
Author / Speaker

Friends Giving

Traditionally, Americans have celebrated Thanksgiving since 1621. The origins were supposedly attributed to a feast by the Pilgrims at Plymouth Colony and was shared with the Native Americans.

Interestingly, history is always told from the perspective of the last person who survived or whoever has the power. However, most importantly we celebrate Thanksgiving as a time to express our gratitude for all our blessings and to come together with friends and family.

No matter what any of us may have experienced over the past year, we should always remember to give thanks and show our gratitude for what God has brought us through. Remember, if He brought us to it, He will bring us through it. As I reflect on the happenings of this year, I am truly grateful for friends and family.

Recently, one of my dearest sister-friends gave me a book called "Pilgrim." The book talks about twenty-five ways God's character leads us onward or forward. When she first mentioned



the book, all I could think of was a book I used to read to my children when they were little called "Pilgrim's Progress." Although they are very different books with two different themes, written at two different times in history, they both talk about one's journey.

When I think of Thanksgiving, I think of it as a good time to reflect on the journey or path my life has been on and how I would not be where I am without the love and commitment of those near and dear to my life. I am truly grateful for how

my friends give and pour into my life and it is my hope and desire to always give back to my friends and family as well.

During this time of year, as the world begins to slow down, it is a good time to do some introspective thinking on how we can do a better job of giving and sowing into the lives of others. There are so many ways we can give of ourselves, such as through our time, resources, or finances.

Learning to listen to others and hearing what really matters to them, so they feel heard. Donating your time to a shelter or a home for the elderly is just a few examples of how we can get out of our comfort zone and be a blessing to someone else. It is also a good way to teach valuable lessons to our children and grandchildren about giving back to others.

If you are in doubt about where to go or who to help, you can always talk to your pastor or a nonprofit organization that helps others in

need. The holidays can be a very lonely time, but when you give of yourself in a friendly fashion, it can be the best gift of all.

Overall, I have nothing to complain about. Although I had my ups and downs, just like everyone else, I know that I am blessed, and as one of my friends used to say, "I am one of God's favorites," but there still were moments that were a little tough and I wanted to take this time to express my thanks and gratitude, especially to the sisterhood of friends that stayed plugged in and checked on me to see what was going on in my life and how they could help. For the most part, the things that were heavy on my heart were about how I could help others who were experiencing some tough times and needed help.

Without the prayers and assistance of my sister circle, it would have been difficult for me to pour into their lives the way I needed to and keep my own life mov-

ing in the direction necessary to keep things balanced. To each of you, I want to say thank you. You know who you are, and I pray God's richest blessings on everything you put your hands to do.

From our house to yours, we want to wish you a Happy Thanksgiving. Remember, focus more on what you have than what you think is missing. Learn to be grateful for the bounty God has already blessed you with and you will be surprised how your life will begin to feel full and satisfying.

You might even realize you have enough to give to others and you might even end up helping a friend in need and entertaining angels unaware.

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Updated Invoice Deadline Approaching

Where do you want to go from here? Are you properly registered? Have you built up your credit credentials? What about a down payment and ongoing acts substantiating that your credit is approved?

Even Jesus Christ had credentials. There were those who denied his credentials, all to no avail. He was called a bastard child, a Samaritan.

When they saw his undeniable healings: miracles, turning water to wine, walking on water disregarding gravity, passing through the contagious dis-

ease of leprosy by touching the leper, which was a forbidden act. This, of course, is a small showing of his proof of incarnation and resurrection.

With all of this, He was denied his righteous identity as the Son of God and resurrected Savior. So, I ask you, "Have you had a look at your heavenly invoice, your debits, and credits?"

There are no two ways about Christianity and the foreground of heaven in the perspective. Fortunately, it's a decision-making action. It's up to the indi-



vidual. Jesus isn't going to wrangle you with a rope and force us to accept him for who He is and who He represents.

Holding false and contradictory views about who He is prohibits fellowship with Him. Fellowship is a vital component to abide in Him and he in us. We walk and talk with Him as our divine guide every step of the way. We eat His flesh, and we drink His blood. What does that mean? We accept Him fully for who he is.

The apostles understood the fullness of his existence. They heard Him.

They saw Him with their own eyes and gazed upon him with concentration. They handled Him, feeling and seeing the pierced hands. He actualized His incarnation of existing before the world began. He came to earth to show that man (and women) could grasp the literalness of His fullness.

Understanding by faith who He was; that is, He was God, they were compelled to be obedient and evangelize their faith. He promised them He would leave them but not without His eternal Spirit to be with them, in them, and upon them. He assured them they were protected and secure in him for all eternity.

The obedience factor was mandatory then and today as well. If someone says he/she loves God, how can they love Him, who they have not seen, and hate his brother, who they have seen? It's conclusive evidence that they are hypocritical and unable to live walking two sides of the fence.

Many people nowadays say, "I love God." But they use God substituting or thinking they substitute in God. But they don't say Jesus Christ, the savior of the world. That's not going to cut it because it is insufficient and inadequate to confession. We confess our sins, and He is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins and to cleanse us of all unrighteousness.

Therefore, I ask you about your "invoice." Are you making payments on your invoice? Do

you need to check your balance? Remember the five virgins who had to run out and buy oil for their lamps because the bridegroom was approaching? Their invoice was not paid up.

Their deadline was approaching to the extent they missed making their last payment, and whatever they proposed to bring up the balance was inadequate. They were so overdue they never updated their invoice and made their monthly payments. This is a

metaphor for being prepared for the great subject of salvation. Pay up.

If leaders tell you to follow that which is detrimental, don't follow. Think carefully and ask tough questions. Make tough decisions because your life depends on it. 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, (Ask Dr. Jeanette TM) "Inquiring Minds Want to Know." All articles are copyright. 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, Believer's Bible Commentary, Christian Classics Ethereal Library Website. Don't stop praying and hoping. "Today is another great day to do good and be successful."

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LOS ANGELES SENTINEL CLASSIFIED

10 Rooms for Rent	50 Apartments - Unfurnished	50 Apartments - Unfurnished	50 Apartments - Unfurnished	90 Houses - Unfurnished	230 Employment Opportunities
<p>Ocean Front Furnished Private Room for Rent Near Santa Monica Pier Has private bath and balcony. \$1350 a month, first and last month move with \$500 security. Steps to ocean and a few blocks from Santa Monica Pier. Call David 424-470-0069</p> <p>Shared Room / Safe Clean Affordable Seniors Welcomed / Free Washer Dyer Big screen TV / Cable / Wi - Fi Meals can be included Street parking only Must see to believe Shawn Baker / 213 884 0700</p> <p>ROOM FOR RENT Rent: \$750 / Private Room Senior friendly / 1311 W. vernon, LA Quiet & Nice place / Freshly painted Kitchen & Bathrooms Mike / 310-433-8800</p> <p>Rooms for Rent in Los Angeles NEW HOMES, shared \$750/Mo. Private \$1,000/Mo. Master Bedroom with Private Bathroom \$1,400/Mo. All utilities paid, washer/dryer, Internet, SSA, SSI, Pilot Program welcome. Call 310-766-0501.</p> <p>FURNISHED ROOMS FOR RENT Nice quiet Rooms / Utilities included microwave, stove, refrig. Call Candy @ 424-757-2713 \$750.00 and \$850.00 monthly</p> <p>Furnished Room for Rent Senior Preferred Back house room for rent. \$900 per month. Cash only first and last! room has its own key entry, a Fridge & TV Shares living space, huge backyard. 42's call me No pets no Kids... Compton/Lynwood/LongBeach Mr Duboise 661-674-8626/209-684-5696</p>	<p>Long Beach Beauty!! 1 bedroom/1 bath apt. for rent located at: 29 W. Bort St. Long Beach 90805. Freshly painted, laminate floors updated kitchen/granite top, new stove & new fridge, upper unit. Off street parking. \$1295/mo Call Fred / 310 649-1990</p> <p>Senior Citizens Bldg. Quiet upstairs unit Laminate flooring throughout, granite countertops. \$2150 / Section 8 okay 445 W. 84th PL Call (323)759-8026</p> <p>APTS. FOR RENT NEAR SOFI (1) BDRM APTS UNFURN FAN HEATED CEILING IN BATH, LGE CLOSET, DRAPES, SHEERS, CARPETS, WALL FURNACE. LOTS OF KITCHEN CABINETS, NEW FACETS, DINE AREA. ST PKG. \$1400 Sec 8. AND 1 BD. PART FURN. CALL FOR MORE \$1600 ALSO CUTE BACHELOR FOR 1, UPDATED FULL BATH, NEW FLOORS, FRIDGE, BLINDS, SHEERS. ALL UTILITY PAID \$850. LNDY ROOM ONSITE FOR ALL. 310-677-6686</p> <p>1 Bedroom Apartment Bright and airy 1 bedroom upper apartment 4023 Palmswood #4 Dr near King & Buckingham. Laminate floors. Kitchen & bathroom floors are tiled. Bedroom has new carpet. Ceiling fans in kitchen, dining & bedroom. Window covering. George McGrew (323) 291-2077 / (323) 767-6646</p> <p>Spacious 2bd Apt - \$1875. Great deal Spacious 2bd Apt. Well maintained, parking & gated. Priced to get good neighbors for existing tenants. Call to set up appt to view. / 310 876 2071</p> <p>1BDR, UPSTAIRS, NEWLY REMODELED, SEC 8 OK, \$2400.00 LEIMERT PARK ADJACENT NEAR CRENSHAW/VERNON METRO TRAIN LINE, HARDWOOD FLOORS WALLHEATER, CEILING FANS, GAS STOVE, BREAKFAST NOOK</p>	<p>WASHER/DRYER HOOKUP BEDROOM WALK IN CLOSET COAT CLOSET LIVING ROOM JACQUI / 323-620-1010</p> <p>Refurbished 2 Bdrmm w/ Den Remodeled kitchen w/stove, remodeled bathroom, new granite countertops, new laminate floors throughout unit. Section 8 okay \$2450 / 6821 10th Avenue Call Ms. Carrasco / (323)759-8026</p> <p>Newly Remodeled/1 Bedroom \$1825 Remodeled kitchen w/stove & remodeled bathroom, new granite countertops, new laminate floors throughout unit. / Section 8 okay 6821 10th Avenue Call Ms. Carrasco / (323)759-8026</p> <p>1 Bedroom Remodeled. Laminate floors, many blinds. 4726 4th Ave. \$1500/month. 310-645-1303</p> <p>Renovated 2 Bedroom Apartment For Rent / 2 bed 1 bath near LaCienega & Washington. Near elementary school, security in building. Sec 8 voucher welcome. \$2,800 / 818-336-0166</p> <p>Triplex 3 bedroom 1 bath unfurnished apt. Completely remodeled bathroom, new hardwood floors recessed lighting and ceiling fans. Gated complex with 2 parking spaces. Located in Vermont Knolls. \$3,000 month Call for appointment 225-449-1219 or 310-631-9574</p> <p>Venice/Arlington 1 bedroom upper newly remolded with new stove, in a gated building. Parking included. Close to all. Move in ready. \$1675 Low move in. 310-556-3202</p> <p>2 Story Guest House Apt. for Rent Windsor Hills/View Park area. Extra large 2000 sq ft One bedroom/one bath bonus room/2 car</p>	<p>electric garage/courtyard washer/dryer refrigerator stove/microwave. \$3,000 a month \$6,000 move in Move in Available soon Leslie York 323-207-1397</p> <p>For Rent 2 bedroom/1bath 1 car parking, upstairs. 60th Place and Vermont. \$2,100 month Call Darryl 323-633-2079</p> <p>Duplex for Rent Large 2 bedroom 1 bath. Formal Dining room & large backyard. Section 8 welcome \$3050 monthly 6022 8th Ave LA 90043 Contact Marie 323-628-2544</p> <p>LA 5 Plex 2 Bdrmm 2 Bath Unit Spacious condo style upstairs unit. Redone like new @ \$2800/mo. Inside laundry, gated remote parking. EZ movin with sec. deposit terms available. A must see. Call Joy 310-750-8438 LA CITY VOUCHER WANTED! Call Joy now.</p> <p>LA 3 Br 2 ba \$2800 mo Near Washington & Fairfax Pkg Quiet Street 323.290.2080 Sydney</p> <p>Apartment for Rent Unfurnished. All appliances included; laundry room on site. Close to pub. trans & shops. Located in West Adams Contact (323) 935-5267</p> <p>NEWLY REFURBISHED LARGE 2 BDRM., 1 BATH / 849 W. 73rd St., L.A. Large kitchen/living rm., totally new bathroom sec 8 welcome (323) 757-8459 (323)316-0627. cell</p>	<p>2 bed 1 bath Section 8 Accepted Jerry Turner 7145046142 Jturnerhouse@myyahoo.com</p> <p>2 Bedroom 1 Bath House 1152 East 59th Place LA, CA 90001 Back house, 2 bed 1 bath, private laundry room. Total remodeled interior and exterior. Asking for first and security. 2666+2666=5332 Section 8 welcome Give me a call Jesse Howard 818-535-8978 Call between 10am-5pm only.</p>	<p>Live in staff or hourly staff needed Staff needed in 90043 area for a quad. Staff should be able to cook and perform ADL's. Full time or live in. Easy to use hoyer available. Please call in during morning hours. Must pass background. Patrice / 310-770-5665</p> <p>240 Employment Wanted</p> <p>Care Provider We are currently looking for a Care Provider to support individuals with disabilities at an Adult Residential Facility. Successful candidates should be able to clear a Department of Justice (DOJ) background check. Training will be provided, and no prior experience is necessary. For further information, please contact Jaunuta at 310-569-1721.</p> <p>400 Auto/Trucks (New & Used)</p> <p>LIEN SALE 12/16/24 10AM AT 7813 S BROADWAY ST. LOS ANGELES 22 KIA LIC# 9HJB190 CA VIN# 3KPF44AC2NE462458</p>
<p>50 Apartments - Unfurnished</p> <p>4 bedroom 2 bath Washer/dryer, secure bldg. 5869 S. Figueroa \$3,900 section 8 welcome 2 weeks free rent Call Pittoo 818-416-2178</p>	<p>90 Houses - Unfurnished</p> <p>Homes For Rent 1127 E 88th PL LA, CA 90002 3 bed 2 bath 1125 E 88th Place LA, CA 90002.</p>				

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CIVIL

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME

Case No. 24NNCP00693 Superior Court of California, County of LOS ANGELES

Petition of: EVELYN GAIL JACKSON-FLORES for Change of Name

TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: Petitioner EVELYN GAIL JACKSON-FLORES filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows:

EVELYN GAIL JACKSON-FLORES to ISA The Court orders that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted.

Notice of Hearing: Date: JAN 10, 2025, Time: 8:30AM, Dept.: V

The address of the court is LASC-NORTHEAST DISTRICT ALHAMBRA COURTHOUSE, 150 WEST COMMONWEALTH AVENUE ALHAMBRA, CA 91801

(To appear remotely, check in advance of the hearing for information about how to do so on the court's website. To find your court's website, go to www.courts.ca.gov/find-my-court.htm.)

A copy of this Order to Show Cause must be published at least once each week for four successive weeks before the date set for hearing on the petition in a newspaper of general circulation, printed in this county: LOS ANGELES SENTINEL

Date: NOV 12, 2024 ROBIN MILLER SLOAN, JUDGE

Judge of the Superior Court 11/28, 12/5, 12/12, 12/19/24 CNS-3874233# LOS ANGELES SENTINEL

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME

Case No. 24TRCP00420 Superior Court of California, County of LOS ANGELES

Petition of: JEREMIAH MESSIAH ABERNATHY BY JOAQUIN LEMAR GEORGE for Change of Name

TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: Petitioner JEREMIAH MESSIAH ABERNATHY BY JOAQUIN LEMAR GEORGE filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows:

JEREMIAH MESSIAH ABERNATHY to JEREMIAH MESSIAH GEORGE The Court orders that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted.

Notice of Hearing: Date: JAN 17, 2025, Time: 08:30AM, Dept.: M, Room: 350

The address of the court is TORRANCE COURTHOUSE 825 MAPLE AVE. TORRANCE, CA 90503

(To appear remotely, check in advance of the hearing for information about how to do so on the court's website. To find your court's website, go to www.courts.ca.gov/find-my-court.htm.)

A copy of this Order to Show Cause must be published at least once each week for four successive weeks before the date set for hearing on the petition in a newspaper of general circulation, printed in this county: LOS ANGELES SENTINEL

Date: 11/05/2024 GARY Y. TANAKA

Judge of the Superior Court 11/14, 11/21, 11/28, 12/5/24 CNS-3870732# LOS ANGELES SENTINEL

AMENDED SUMMONS

Cross-Complainant (CITACION JUDICIAL-CONTRADEMANDA) SHORT NAME OF CASE (from Complaint): (Nombre de Caso):

KATARINA ANDERSON v. SUPERIOR LOAN SERVING CASE NUMBER (Número del Caso):

CVRI2304826

NOTICE TO CROSS-DEFENDANT (AVISO AL CONTRA-DEMANDADO): KATARINA ANDERSON, an individual; TRACIE CAROLYN LOVE, an individual; ADRIAN LAVERNE BATES, an individual; DIVIDENDS XIII CAPITAL, a California corporation, and ROES 1 through 20, inclusive

YOU ARE BEING SUED BY CROSS-COMPLAINANT (LO ESTÁ DEMANDANDO EL CONTRADEMANDANTE): SERGEI SHARAPOV, TRUSTEE OF THE SHARAPOV FAMILY TRUST

YOU HAVE 30 CALENDAR DAYS after this summons and legal papers are served on you to file a written response at this court and have a copy served on the cross-complainant. A letter or phone call will not protect you. Your written response must be in proper legal form if you want the court to hear your case. There may be a court form that you can use for your response. You can find these court forms and more information at the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp), your county law library, or the courthouse nearest you. If you cannot pay the filing fee, ask the court clerk for a fee waiver form. If you do not file your response on time, you may lose the case by default, and your wages, money, and property may be taken without further warning from the court.

There are other legal requirements. You may

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want to call an attorney right away. If you do not know an attorney, you may want to call an attorney referral service. If you cannot afford an attorney, you may be eligible for free legal services from a nonprofit legal services program. You can locate these nonprofit groups at the California Legal Services Web site (www.lawhelpcalifornia.org), the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp), or by contacting your local court or county bar association. NOTE: The court has a statutory lien for waived fees and costs on any settlement or arbitration award of \$10,000 or more in a civil case. The court's lien must be paid before the court will dismiss the case.

Tiene 30 DÍAS DE CALENDARIO después de que le entreguen esta citación y papeles legales para presentar una respuesta por escrito en esta corte y hacer que se entregue una copia al contrademandante. Una carta o una llamada telefónica no lo protegen. Su respuesta por escrito tiene que estar en formato legal correcto si desea que procesen su caso en la corte. Es posible que haya un formulario que usted pueda usar para su respuesta. Puede encontrar estos formularios de la corte y más información en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California (www.sucorte.ca.gov), en la biblioteca de leyes de su condado o en la corte que le quede más cerca. Si no puede pagar la cuota de presentación, pida al secretario de la corte que le dé un formulario de exención de pago de cuotas. Si no presenta su respuesta a tiempo, puede perder el caso por incumplimiento y la corte le podrá quitar su sueldo, dinero y bienes sin más advertencia.

Hay otros requisitos legales. Es recomendable que llame a un abogado inmediatamente. Si no conoce a un abogado, puede llamar a un servicio de remisión a abogados. Si no puede pagar a un abogado, es posible que cumpla con los requisitos para obtener servicios legales gratuitos de un programa de servicios legales sin fines de lucro. Puede encontrar estos grupos sin fines de lucro en el sitio web de California Legal Services (www.lawhelpcalifornia.org), en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California (www.sucorte.ca.gov), o poniéndose en contacto con la corte o el colegio de abogados locales. AVISO: Por ley, la corte tiene derecho a reclamar las cuotas y los costos exentos por imponer un gravamen sobre cualquier recuperación de \$10,000 o más de valor recibida mediante un acuerdo o una concesión de arbitraje en un caso de derecho civil. Tiene que pagar el gravamen de la corte antes de que la corte pueda desechar el caso. The name and address of the court is (El nombre y dirección de la corte es): RIVERSIDE SUPERIOR COURT, 4050 MAIN STREET RIVERSIDE, CA 92501

The name, address, and telephone number of cross-complainant's attorney, or cross-complainant without an attorney, is (El nombre, la dirección y el número de teléfono del abogado del contrademandante, o del contrademandante que no tiene abogado, es): LAW OFFICES OF DARREN P. TRONE, APC, 3838 ORANGE STREET RIVERSIDE, CA 92501, (951) 686-2975

DATE (Fecha): 10/25/2024 JASON B. GALKIN, EXECUTIVE OFFICER/CLERK OF COURT, Clerk, by (Secretario), OLGA RAMÍREZ-CHAVEZ, Deputy (SEAL)

11/14, 11/21, 11/28, 12/5/24 CNS-3869936# LOS ANGELES SENTINEL

AMENDED ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME

Case No. 24CHCP00426 Superior Court of California, County of LOS ANGELES

Petition of: ANTOINE FEGHALI for Change of Name

TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: Petitioner ANTOINE FEGHALI, ANTOINE KHALIL FEGHALI filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows: AKA ANTOINE FEGHALI to ANTON FEGHALI

AKA ANTOINE K. FEGHALI to ANTON FEGHALI AKA ANTOINE KHALIL FEGHALI to ANTON FEGHALI

The Court orders that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted.

Notice of Hearing: Date: 12/31/24, Time: 8:30AM, Dept.: F51

The address of the court is 9425 PENFIELD AVENUE, ROOM 1200 CHATSWORTH, CA 91311

(To appear remotely, check in advance of the hearing for information about how to do so on the court's website. To find your court's website, go to www.courts.ca.gov/find-my-court.htm.)

A copy of this Order to Show Cause must be published at least once each week for four successive weeks before the date set for hearing on the petition in a newspaper of general circulation, printed in this county: LA SENTINEL

Date: NOV 08, 2024 DAVID B. GELFOUND

Judge of the Superior Court 11/21, 11/28, 12/5, 12/12/24 CNS-3869783# LOS ANGELES SENTINEL

SUMMONS BY PUBLICATION

CASE NUMBER: 24STCV04903

In the Superior Court of the State of California in and for the County of Los Angeles. DANIELLE BUCHANAN, an Individual; MANEVA CURRIE, an individual, Plaintiffs, vs. JEFFREY

Public Notices

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OSBORNE, Defendant. STATE OF CALIFORNIA to the said JEFFREY OSBORNE, Defendant: YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED to appear within thirty (30) days after the date of the first publication of this summons, to wit: Within thirty (30) days after the 25 of October 2024, you are required to appear to defend the above-entitled court case, and file a written response/answer the complaint of the plaintiff, and serve a copy of your response/answer upon the undersigned attorney at her office below and in case of your failure to do so a judgment will be rendered against you according to the demand of the complaint, which has been filed with the Clerk of said court, Stanley Mosk Courthouse, 111 North Hill Street, Los Angeles, California 90012. The object of said action and the relief sought, as fully set forth in said complaint, are on the grounds of Civil Rights violation and tort damages. Royal DL Bonds, Attorney for Plaintiffs BOND LAW LEGAL GROUP, LP

30141 Antelope RD D228 Menifee, California 92584 11/14, 11/21, 11/28, 12/5/24 CNS-3869627# LOS ANGELES SENTINEL

SUMMONS (CITACION JUDICIAL)

CASE NUMBER (Número del Caso): 24NNCV04697

NOTICE TO DEFENDANT (AVISO AL DEMANDADO): QUALITY LOAN SERVICES CORP., an unknown entity; RONALD E. WOOD, an individual; and DOES 1 through 50, INCLUSIVE. YOU ARE BEING SUED BY PLAINTIFF (LO ESTÁ DEMANDANDO) EL DEMANDANTE): TRI POLE INVESTMENTS, LLC, a California limited liability company; and B. MANOR, INC., a California Corporation

NOTICE! You have been sued. The court may decide against you without your being heard unless you respond within 30 days. Read the information below. You have 30 CALENDAR DAYS after this summons and legal papers are served on you to file a written response at this court and have a copy served on the plaintiff. A letter or phone call will not protect you. Your written response must be in proper legal form if you want the court to hear your case. There may be a court form that you can use for your response. You can find these court forms and more information at the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp), your county law library, or the courthouse nearest you. If you cannot pay the filing fee, ask the court clerk for a fee waiver form. If you do not file your response on time, you may lose the case by default, and your wages, money, and property may be taken without further warning from the court.

There are other legal requirements. You may want to call an attorney right away. If you do not know an attorney, you may want to call an attorney referral service. If you cannot afford an attorney, you may be eligible for free legal services from a nonprofit legal services program. You can locate these nonprofit groups at the California Legal Services Web site (www.lawhelpcalifornia.org), the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp), or by contacting your local court or county bar association. NOTE: The court has a statutory lien for waived fees and costs on any settlement or arbitration award of \$10,000 or more in a civil case. The court's lien must be paid before the court will dismiss the case.

¡AVISO! Lo han demandado. Si no responde dentro de 30 días, la corte puede decidir en su contra sin escuchar su versión. Lea la información a continuación. Tiene 30 DÍAS DE CALENDARIO después de que le entreguen esta citación y papeles legales para presentar una respuesta por escrito en esta corte y hacer que se entregue una copia al demandante. Una carta o una llamada telefónica no lo protegen. Su respuesta por escrito tiene que estar en formato legal correcto si desea que procesen su caso en la corte. Es posible que haya un formulario que usted pueda usar para su respuesta. Puede encontrar estos formularios de la corte y más información en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California (www.sucorte.ca.gov), en la biblioteca de leyes de su condado o en la corte que le quede más cerca. Si no puede pagar la cuota de presentación, pida al secretario de la corte que le dé un formulario de exención de pago de cuotas. Si no presenta su respuesta a tiempo, puede perder el caso por incumplimiento y la corte le podrá quitar su sueldo, dinero y bienes sin más advertencia.

Hay otros requisitos legales. Es recomendable que llame a un abogado inmediatamente. Si no conoce a un abogado, puede llamar a un servicio de remisión a abogados. Si no puede pagar a un abogado, es posible que cumpla con los requisitos para obtener servicios legales gratuitos de un programa de servicios legales sin fines de lucro. Puede encontrar estos grupos sin fines de lucro en el sitio web de California Legal Services (www.lawhelpcalifornia.org), en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California (www.sucorte.ca.gov), o poniéndose en contacto con la corte o el colegio de abogados locales. AVISO: Por ley, la corte tiene derecho a reclamar las cuotas y los costos exentos por imponer un gravamen sobre cualquier recuperación de \$10,000 o más de valor recibida mediante un acuerdo o una concesión de arbitraje en un caso de derecho civil. Tiene que pagar el gravamen de la corte antes de que la corte pueda desechar el caso. The name and address of the court is (El nombre y dirección de la corte es): RIVERSIDE SUPERIOR COURT, 4050 MAIN STREET RIVERSIDE, CA 92501

The name, address, and telephone number of cross-complainant's attorney, or cross-complainant without an attorney, is (El nombre, la dirección y el número de teléfono del abogado del contrademandante, o del contrademandante que no tiene abogado, es): LAW OFFICES OF DARREN P. TRONE, APC, 3838 ORANGE STREET RIVERSIDE, CA 92501, (951) 686-2975

DATE (Fecha): 10/25/2024 JASON B. GALKIN, EXECUTIVE OFFICER/CLERK OF COURT, Clerk, by (Secretario), OLGA RAMÍREZ-CHAVEZ, Deputy (SEAL)

11/14, 11/21, 11/28, 12/5/24 CNS-3869936# LOS ANGELES SENTINEL

AMENDED ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME

Case No. 24CHCP00426 Superior Court of California, County of LOS ANGELES

Petition of: ANTOINE FEGHALI for Change of Name

TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: Petitioner ANTOINE FEGHALI, ANTOINE KHALIL FEGHALI filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows: AKA ANTOINE FEGHALI to ANTON FEGHALI

AKA ANTOINE K. FEGHALI to ANTON FEGHALI AKA ANTOINE KHALIL FEGHALI to ANTON FEGHALI

The Court orders that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted.

Notice of Hearing: Date: 12/13/2024, Time: 08:30 AM, Dept.: M, Room: 350

The address of the court is Torrance Courthouse, 825 Maple Avenue, Torrance, CA 90503

(To appear remotely, check in advance of the hearing for information about how to do so on the court's website. To find your court's website, go to www.courts.ca.gov/find-my-court.htm.)

A copy of this Order to Show Cause must be published at least once each week for four successive weeks before the date set for hearing on the petition in a newspaper of general circulation, printed in this county: LA SENTINEL

Date: 10/28/2024 GARY Y. TANAKA

Judge of the Superior Court 11/7, 11/14, 11/21, 11/28/24 CNS-3868087# LOS ANGELES SENTINEL

Public Notices

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an attorney, is (El nombre, la dirección y el número de teléfono del abogado del demandante, o del demandante que no tiene abogado, es): JACOBY R. PEREZ, Esq.; GERACI LAW FIRM 90 Discovery, Irvine, CA 92618 ; Phone: (949) 379-2600 DATE (Fecha): 10/02/2024 DAVID W. SLAYTON, Clerk (Secretario), by A. OLIVA, Deputy (Adjunto) (SEAL) 11/7, 11/14, 11/21, 11/28/24 CNS-3868409# LOS ANGELES SENTINEL

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME

Case No. 24STCP03505 Superior Court of California, County of LOS ANGELES

Petition of: BRENNEN-NICOLE JADE HIGGINS-BELL by SHERRI BELL for Change of Name

TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: Petitioner BRENNEN-NICOLE JADE HIGGINS-BELL filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows: BRENNEN-NICOLE JADE HIGGINS-BELL to BRENNEN JADE BELL

The Court orders that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted.

Notice of Hearing: Date: FEBRUARY 14, 2025, Time: 10:00AM, Dept.: 86, Room: 836

The address of the court is LOS ANGELES SUPERIOR COURT, 111 N. HILL STREET, ROOM 102, LOS ANGELES, CA 90012

(To appear remotely, check in advance of the hearing for information about how to do so on the court's website. To find your court's website, go to www.courts.ca.gov/find-my-court.htm.)

A copy of this Order to Show Cause must be published at least once each week for four successive weeks before the date set for hearing on the petition in a newspaper of general circulation, printed in this county: LA SENTINEL

Date: OCTOBER 29, 2024 CURTIS A. KIN

Judge of the Superior Court 11/7, 11/14, 11/21, 11/28/24 CNS-3868094# LOS ANGELES SENTINEL

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME

Case No. 24TRCP00408 Superior Court of California, County of LOS ANGELES

Petition of: CRISTINA ARACELY FIGUEROA PAICES for Change of Name

TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: Petitioner CRISTINA ARACELY FIGUEROA PAICES filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows: CRISTINA ARACELY FIGUEROA PAICES to CRISTINA ARACELY LOPEZ PAICES

The Court orders that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted.

Notice of Hearing: Date: 12/13/2024, Time: 08:30 AM, Dept.: M, Room: 350

The address of the court is Torrance Courthouse, 825 Maple Avenue, Torrance, CA 90503

(To appear remotely, check in advance of the hearing for information about how to do so on the court's website. To find your court's website, go to www.courts.ca.gov/find-my-court.htm.)

A copy of this Order to Show Cause must be published at least once each week for four successive weeks before the date set for hearing on the petition in a newspaper of general circulation, printed in this county: LA SENTINEL

Date: 10/28/2024 GARY Y. TANAKA

Judge of the Superior Court 11/7, 11/14, 11/21, 11/28/24 CNS-3868087# LOS ANGELES SENTINEL

SUMMONS (CITACION JUDICIAL)

CASE NUMBER (Número del Caso): 37-2024-00018547-CL-PA-CTL

NOTICE TO DEFENDANT (AVISO AL DEMANDADO): MARIANNA GASPARRAN; LUCAS P. GUERRAZZI; DOES 1 TO 10, INCLUSIVE

YOU ARE BEING SUED BY PLAINTIFF (LO ESTÁ DEMANDANDO) EL DEMANDANTE): OLGA MELNIKOV

NOTICE! You have been sued. The court may decide against you without your being heard unless you respond within 30 days. Read the information below. You have 30 CALENDAR DAYS after this summons and legal papers are served on you to file a written response at this court and have a copy served on the plaintiff. A letter or phone call will not protect you. Your written response must be in proper legal form if you want the court to hear your case. There may be a court form that you can use for your response. You can find these court forms and more information at the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp), your county law library, or the courthouse nearest you. If you cannot pay the filing fee, ask the court clerk for a fee waiver form. If you do not file your response on time, you may lose the case by default, and your wages, money, and property may be taken without further warning from the court.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAMES

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT

File No. 2024236742 The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: A Plus Productions, 612 Broadway, Ste 532, Los Angeles, CA 90014, County of Los Angeles

Articles of Incorporation or Organization Number: AI #ON: 2885417 Registered owner(s): Atelier Management, Inc., 612 S Broadway, Ste 532, Los Angeles, CA 90014; This business is conducted by: a Corporation

The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name or names listed above on 11/20/24

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

S/ Lauren Nukes, President Altier Management, Inc. This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Los Angeles on 11/18/2024

NOTICE-In accordance with Subdivision (a) of Section 17920, a Fictitious Name Statement generally expires at the end of five years from the date on which it was filed in the office of the County Clerk, except, as provided in Subdivision (b) of Section 17920, where it expires 40 days after any change in the facts set forth in the statement pursuant to Section 17913 other than a change in the residence address of a registered owner. A new Fictitious Business Name Statement must be filed before the expiration. Effective January 1, 2014, the Fictitious Business Name Statement must be accompanied by the Affidavit of Identity form.

The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a Fictitious Business Name

Public Notices

Public Notices

There are other legal requirements. You may want to call an attorney right away. If you do not know an attorney, you may want to call an attorney referral service. If you cannot afford an attorney, you may be eligible for free legal services from a nonprofit legal services program. You can locate these nonprofit groups at the California Legal Services Web site (www.lawhelpcalifornia.org), the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp), or by contacting your local court or county bar association. NOTE: The court has a statutory lien for waived fees and costs on any settlement or arbitration award of \$10,000 or more in a civil case. The court's lien must be paid before the court will dismiss the case.

¡AVISO! Lo han demandado. Si no responde dentro de 30 días, la corte puede decidir en su contra sin escuchar su versión. Lea la información a continuación. Tiene 30 DÍAS DE CALENDARIO después de que le entreguen esta citación y papeles legales para presentar una respuesta por escrito en esta corte y hacer que se entregue una copia al demandante. Una carta o una llamada telefónica no lo protegen. Su respuesta por escrito tiene que estar en formato legal correcto si desea que procesen su caso en la corte. Es posible que haya un formulario que usted pueda usar para su respuesta. Puede encontrar estos formularios de la corte y más información en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California (www.sucorte.ca.gov), en la biblioteca de leyes de su condado o en la corte que le quede más cerca. Si no puede pagar la cuota de presentación, pida al secretario de la corte que le dé un formulario de exención de pago de cuotas. Si no presenta su respuesta a tiempo, puede perder el caso por incumplimiento y la corte le podrá quitar su sueldo, dinero y bienes sin más advertencia.

Hay otros requisitos legales. Es recomendable que llame a un abogado inmediatamente. Si no conoce a un abogado, puede llamar a un servicio de remisión a abogados. Si no puede pagar a un abogado, es posible que cumpla con los requisitos para obtener servicios legales gratuitos de un programa de servicios legales sin fines de lucro. Puede encontrar estos grupos sin fines de lucro en el sitio web de California Legal Services (www.lawhelpcalifornia.org), en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California (www.sucorte.ca.gov), o poniéndose en contacto con la corte o el colegio de abogados locales. AVISO: Por ley, la corte tiene derecho a reclamar las cuotas y los costos exentos por imponer un gravamen sobre cualquier recuperación de \$10,000 o más de valor recibida mediante un acuerdo o una concesión de arbitraje en un caso de derecho civil. Tiene que pagar el gravamen de la corte antes de que la corte pueda desechar el caso. The name and address of the court is (El nombre y dirección de la corte es): SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO, CENTRAL DIVISION

The name, address, and telephone number of plaintiff's attorney, or plaintiff without an attorney, is (El nombre, la dirección y el número de teléfono del abogado del demandante, o del demandante que no tiene abogado, es): ALTON F. KUPERMAN, 11230 SORRENTO VALLEY ROAD, SUITE 105, SAN DIEGO, CA 92121, (619) 232-5353

DATE (Fecha): 04/22/2024 Clerk (Secretario), by A. GIDRON, Deputy (Adjunto) (SEAL)

11/7, 11/14, 11/21, 11/28/24 CNS-3867035# LOS ANGELES SENTINEL

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT

File No. 2024231707 The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: AUNTIE MOE4??S SEASONING, 5327 S MULLEN AVE, LOS ANGELES, CA 90043 County of LOS ANGELES

Registered owner(s): MÓNIQUE BRACKETT, 5327 S MULLEN AVE, LOS ANGELES, CA 90043 This business is conducted by an Individual

The registrant(s) started doing business on 08/20/24. I declare that all information in this statement is true and correct. (A registrant who declares as true any material matter pursuant to Section 17913 of the Business and Professions code that the registrant knows to be false is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000).)

S/ MÓNIQUE BRACKETT, OWNER This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Los Angeles County on 11/08/2024.

NOTICE-In accordance with Subdivision (a) of Section 17920, a Fictitious Name Statement generally expires at the end of five years from the date on which it was filed in the office of the County Clerk, except, as provided in Subdivision (b) of Section 17920, where it expires 40 days after any change in the facts set forth in the statement pursuant to Section 17913 other than a change in the residence address of a registered owner. A new Fictitious Business Name Statement must be filed before the expiration. Effective January 1, 2014, the Fictitious Business Name Statement must be accompanied by the Affidavit of Identity form.

The filing of this statement does not of itself authorize the use in this state of a Fictitious Business Name

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT

File No. 2024231707 The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: AUNTIE MOE4??S SEASONING, 5327 S MULLEN AVE, LOS ANGELES, CA 90043 County of LOS ANGELES

Registered owner(s): MÓNIQUE BRACKETT, 5327 S MULLEN AVE, LOS ANGELES, CA 90043 This business is conducted by an Individual

The registrant(s) started doing business on 08/20/24. I declare that all information in this statement is true and correct. (A registrant who declares as true any material matter pursuant to Section 17913 of the Business and Professions code that the registrant knows to be false is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000).)

S/ MÓNIQUE BRACKETT, OWNER This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Los Angeles County on 11/08/2024.

Cal State L.A. Senior and Gucci Scholarship Recipient Amanda Flowers Honors Her Family Through Artwork

SENTINEL NEWS SERVICE

Amanda Flowers is a caretaker of her family's history. All her life, the Cal State LA senior has heard stories about her mother's family from North Carolina, and from her father's side in Texas.

The little snippets of her ancestors' lives have been passed on from one generation to the next, and Flowers has taken her turn to share the stories. She does so with her paintings and other artwork. There is no photographic evidence, for example, of her great-great-grandmother Jenny and her fabled long, black hair and black snake, but Flowers brings back to life her dark tresses and the pet reptile.

But Flowers does not simply regurgitate the stories of her grandparents, great aunts and uncles, and others who came before her. Her paintbrush provides fresh, new strokes to their ancestral tales by incorporating colors from her own life and dreams.

"They tell me stories from their childhood, about their own parents and grandparents," said Flowers, 29.

"So I have a combination of different scenes I pull out, but I also pull from my intimate life, from my dreams. I have very vivid dreams."

"It's definitely an interpretation of their stories," she continued. "I come from them, so their history is already within me. Those are their memories, but I also have my own, and I combine them together."

Her vigorous depictions caught the attention of [Gucci Changemakers North America](#), which earlier this year named Flowers among the 12 recipients of \$20,000 scholarships



Amanda Flowers

COURTESY PHOTO

that aim to uplift and empower undergraduate students to pursue their unique paths within the design and fashion industry.

Flowers, who prefers to go by her professional name but is also known by her given name of Amanda Fair, says she has spent some of the scholarship money on art supplies and has earmarked some for graduate school.

But first, she will conclude her undergraduate work in studio arts at Cal State LA with her capstone senior project, which will continue Flowers' exploration of "Ancestral Building."

In her artistic statement, Flower described "Ancestral Building" this way: "We live in this colonized world where mainly minorities are disconnected from their childhood and lineage, which can diminish their identities."

"However, we all inherently honor our families in unique ways like naturally cooking family recipes or singing all the lyrics from a tune that we remember from our childhood. When we place positive intention behind it, the connection can become stronger with identifying self, bringing courage when navigating

the real world."

She is also currently working on a concept called *The Community Gardens*, a multidimensional painting of buildings with different communal life moments interacting together on rooftops and within rooms.

Flowers—a painter, photographer, sculptor, and poet—did not begin her collegiate career as an artist, but as an aspiring astrophysicist. At 17, she enrolled at Arizona State University as an aerospace engineer major.

"I've always loved space; I wanted to study dark matter," she said.

"I was interested in the stars. I had an old telescope, I was just a little nerd, you know. I just saw the beauty of the sky."

But Flowers said the program failed to speak to her, and being away from her family in Northern California for the first time in her life left her feeling isolated.

She found solace in her paintings and discovered art to be her true passion. She then left Arizona State, returned to her hometown of Antioch, attended a couple of community colleges, ensconced herself into the Oakland art scene,

and made a good living as a professional photographer.

Flowers moved to Southern California seven years ago, partly to integrate into the entertainment industry, but also to take business courses at Pasadena City College to help grow her photography business. Finally in fall 2023, Flowers enrolled at Cal State LA to concentrate again on her art.

"It just feels very relaxing," she said.

"Art is a stress reliever. Even just going to an art exhibition, you can escape your reality for a little bit. It's a safe haven. You see other people's perceptions of reality, and it just feels cool to depict things from my mind and be able to expand on them."

In February, Flowers held her first solo exhibition, *The Family Flower Garden*, at the WJD Gallery in Pasadena, showcasing her multidisciplinary skills.

"Amanda showed such a wide range of work—paintings, drawings, sculptures, ceramics. She has such a diverse skill set," said Phung Huynh, Cal State LA assistant professor of art. "She's very thoughtful about what she says and what she thinks.

I admire her community-based approach, and her work is about honoring her ancestors and history. It's very spiritual."

Flowers, of course, harkens back to an ancestor when discussing her versatility.

"My great-grandmother Marie used to experiment with plants and cross-breed seeds to get different plants," she said.

"I feel like I crossbreed themes, and I experiment and create different art. It has come full circle. Genetically we have different traits, and they come out in different ways. Someone else from my lineage passed down this skill."

Her mother, Amber Redmon, describes Flowers as an inquisitive "old soul."

"She's always been curious about who, what, where, when," Redmon said.

"She's always been into the family and where we come from. When we took our trips to North Carolina, she was very attentive to the people there, trying to get to know their names and faces and their stories."

Redmon appreciates the universality and timelessness of Flowers' pieces. Flowers' subjects might

be about her family, with a sprinkling of herself, but Redmon says the art provides a sense of familiarity. She cites a painting of her mother's North Carolina farmhouse as an example.

"My brothers and I can relate to that picture because we were there," Redmon said.

"It's from Amanda's point of view, but anybody can feel that they've been inside that house, inside that kitchen. It's relatable to a lot of people."

Flowers is a Cal State LA success story. The university endeavors to transform lives by cultivating and amplifying students' unique talents, diverse life experiences, and intellect.

Flowers plans to pursue a master's degree in art, which will likely mean she will be unpacking more stories about her family from North Carolina, Texas, and California.

"There's a lot of power when you can honor the people around you," she said.

"Everything starts with the home. When I hear my mother say, 'You see me in this capacity? You see me like this? I didn't even know that'—I want to share that information and honor family members."

Public Notices

floor, V/CM Department, on or before 2:00 p.m. Pacific Time on Friday, January 31, 2025. Proposals received after the above date and time may be rejected and returned unopened. Each proposal must be sealed and marked **Proposal No. AE127279MC084**. For a copy of the Proposal/Bid specification visit our Solicitation Page on our Vendor Portal at <https://business.metro.net> or for further information email Kenneth Stewart at kstewart@metro.net. 11/28/24 **CNS-3874016# LOS ANGELES SENTINEL**

REQUEST FOR STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS FOR AS-NEEDED SEPTIC TANK MAINTENANCE SERVICES
The County of Los Angeles Department of Beaches and Harbors is seeking qualified and experienced Vendors to enter into Master Agreements to provide as-needed septic tank services for emergency maintenance, pump outs, septic system repairs, effluent and groundwater sampling, with required reporting of septic systems located at County-owned or operated beaches. The selection of Vendors will be based on the qualifications of the firms that submit proposals. Vendors submitting Statement of Qualifications (SOQs) must provide proof of training certificates authorized by the manufacturer to service septic systems and a minimum of five years of relevant experience providing services for the categories requested. The County may require additional minimum qualifications. The deadline for submitting SOQs will be 5:00 p.m., December 23, 2024, however, County will continuously accept SOQ's throughout the duration of the Master Agreement. Further information regarding the RFSQ is available at: <https://doingbusiness.lacounty.gov/>. To view and print a copy of the RFSQ, please visit: <http://beaches.lacounty.gov/request-for-proposals/>. The County reserves the right to cancel the RFSQ and to modify any and all terms and conditions of the RFSQ, including minimum qualifications. For further information, email Jean Dao at CN111579-12-23-2024 Nov 28, 2024 **CNS-3874004# LOS ANGELES SENTINEL**

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
The Los Angeles County Hearing Officer will conduct a public hearing to consider the project described below. A presentation and overview of the project will be given, and any interested person or authorized agent may appear

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and comment on the project at the hearing. The Hearing Officer will then consider to approve or deny the project or continue the hearing if it deems necessary. Should you attend, you will have an opportunity to testify, or you can submit written comments to the planner below or at the public hearing. If the final decision on this proposal is challenged in court, testimony may be limited to issues raised before or at the public hearing. **Hearing Date and Time:** Tuesday, January 7, 2025, at 9:00 a.m. **Hearing Location:** Hall of Records, 320 W. Temple Street, Room 150, Los Angeles, CA 90012. Virtual (Online) at bit.ly/ZOOM-HQ. By phone at (669) 444-9171 or (719) 359-4580 (ID: 824 5573 9842). **Project No.:** PRJ2023-000349-(2) **Project Location:** 5486 Valley Ridge Avenue, within the Westside Planning Area **CEQA Categorical Exemption:** Class 1 - Existing Facilities and Class 5 - Minor Alterations in Land Use Limitations **Project Description:** To authorize an existing five-foot and eight-inch-tall front yard fence and an existing 256-square-foot covered patio encroaching into the front yard. **More information:** Evan Sahagun, 320 W. Temple Street, 13th Floor, Los Angeles, CA 90012. (213) 974-6411. ESahagun@planning.lacounty.gov. **Case Material:** <https://bit.ly/PRJ2023-000349> If you need reasonable accommodations or auxiliary aids, contact the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Coordinator at (213) 974-6488 (Voice) or (213) 617-2292 (TDD) with at least 3 business days advanced notice. 11/28/24 **CNS-3873405# LOS ANGELES SENTINEL**

Pre-Qualification Opportunity with LACCD
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Los Angeles Community College District ("District") invites Civil Engineering Firms to submit Statements of Qualification (SOQ) for the following: **Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for District Wides, Civil Engineering Services, Multiple Award Task Order Contract (MATOC).** This procurement process will take place in two steps: the instant Request for Qualifications step ("RFQ") (i.e., pre-qualification); and a subsequent Request for Task Order Proposal step ("RFTOP"). Upon receipt and evaluation of the Statements of Qualifications ("SOQ's") submitted in response to this RFQ, the SOQ's will be scored and evaluated using the District's Uniform System of Rating, and the Qualified Applicants will be identified.

Public Notices

A qualified firm will enter into Multiple Award Task Order Contract. Thereafter, the District will publish and issue a Request for Proposal only to the Firms who have pre-qualified. Only Pre-Qualified Firms will be permitted to submit a proposal. All Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) must be uploaded to the LACCD PlanetBids vendor portal by: **January 8th, 2025 before 12:00 PM** The Applicant assumes full and sole responsibility for timely receipt of its SOQ and any other documents required to be submitted with the SOQ, by the District. The District will have no responsibility for SOQ's not submitted in a timely manner, no matter the reason. RFQ Documents, including instructions to Applicants, will be available to Applicants No Later Than **November 25th, 2024**, at the: PlanetBids Vendor Portal: <https://pbsystem.planetbids.com/portal/21372/portal-home> or <http://www.build-laccd.org/>. "Work With Us" and click on "Vendor Portal (PlanetBIDS)" **Non-Mandatory Pre-SOQ Zoom Video Conference will be held on December 5th, 2024 at 1:00 PM** access information included at the PlanetBids Vendor Portal - Documents Tab - "Pre-SOQ Virtual Meeting Information". Questions shall be directed to the Online Vendor Portal - Q&A 11/28, 12/5/24 **CNS-3873363# LOS ANGELES SENTINEL**

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS Notice is given that Los Angeles County Public Works is requesting proposals from qualified firms to provide Design-Build Services to perform the design, construction, and warranty maintenance for the Martin Luther King, Jr. Medical Campus Transitional Age Youth (TAY) Drop-In Center, located at 1807 E. 120th Street, Los Angeles, CA 90059. The RFP may be obtained at the following link: https://dpw.lacounty.gov/Contracts/aeed_rfp/ProjectDetail.aspx?project_id=BRC0000546 or emailed to you by calling (626) 476-0378. Proposals must be received by Public Works by December 12, 2024 by 5:30 p.m. 11/28/24 **CNS-3870860# LOS ANGELES SENTINEL**

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA REGIONAL RAIL AUTHORITY
RFP No. E761-25
ON-CALL PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FOR METROLINK OPERATIONS
SCRRA is seeking proposals for On-Call Professional Services to support the Metrolink Operations Department. Solicitation documents may be obtained at <https://metrolinktrains.com/doing-business>. Proposals

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are due at 2:00 P.M. (PT) on 1/22/25. The contract to be awarded will be funded in part by grants under the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration. For further information, contact Dorothea Cantero, Sr. Contract Administrator, at (213) 452-0302 or CanteroD@scra.net. 11/28/24 **CNS-3864141# LOS ANGELES SENTINEL**

PROBATE

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF: CLYDE NOLAN PATE CASE NO. 24STPB09465
To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the WILL or estate, or both of CLYDE NOLAN PATE. A PETITION FOR PROBATE has been filed by JAMES DILLINGHAM REED in the Superior Court of California, County of LOS ANGELES. THE PETITION FOR PROBATE requests that JAMES DILLINGHAM REED be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent. THE PETITION requests the decedent's WILL and codicils, if any, be admitted to probate. The WILL and any codicils are available for examination in the file kept by the court. THE PETITION requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act. (This authority will allow the personal representative to take many actions without obtaining court approval. 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.) The independent administration authority will be granted unless an interested person files an objection to the petition and shows good cause why the court should not grant the authority. A HEARING on the petition will be held in this court as follows: 12/30/24 at 8:30AM in Dept. 62, Room 600 located at 111 N. HILL ST., LOS ANGELES, CA 90012 IF YOU OBJECT to the granting of the petition, you should appear at the hearing and state your objections or file written objections with the court before the hearing. Your appearance may be in person or by your attorney.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS Notice is given that Los Angeles County Public Works is requesting proposals from qualified firms to provide Design-Build Services to perform the design, construction, and warranty maintenance for the Martin Luther King, Jr. Medical Campus Transitional Age Youth (TAY) Drop-In Center, located at 1807 E. 120th Street, Los Angeles, CA 90059. The RFP may be obtained at the following link: https://dpw.lacounty.gov/Contracts/aeed_rfp/ProjectDetail.aspx?project_id=BRC0000546 or emailed to you by calling (626) 476-0378. Proposals must be received by Public Works by December 12, 2024 by 5:30 p.m. 11/28/24 **CNS-3870860# LOS ANGELES SENTINEL**

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA REGIONAL RAIL AUTHORITY
RFP No. E761-25
ON-CALL PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FOR METROLINK OPERATIONS
SCRRA is seeking proposals for On-Call Professional Services to support the Metrolink Operations Department. Solicitation documents may be obtained at <https://metrolinktrains.com/doing-business>. Proposals

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IF YOU ARE A CREDITOR or a contingent creditor of the decedent, you must file your claim with the court and mail a copy to the personal representative appointed by the court within the later of either (1) four months from the date of first issuance of letters to a general personal representative, as defined in section 58(b) of the California Probate Code, or (2) 60 days from the date of mailing or personal delivery to you of a notice under section 9052 of the California Probate Code. Other California statutes and legal authority may affect your rights as a creditor. You may want to consult with an attorney knowledgeable in California law. YOU MAY EXAMINE the file kept by the court. If you are a person interested in the estate, you may file with the court a Request for Special Notice (form DE-154) of the filing of an inventory and appraisal of estate assets or of any petition or account as provided in Probate Code section 1250. A Request for Special Notice form is available from the court clerk. In Pro Per Petitioner JAMES DILLINGHAM REED 5232 WINDERMERE AVENUE LOS ANGELES CA 90041 11/21, 11/28, 12/5/24 **CNS-3872956# LOS ANGELES SENTINEL**

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF: BEATRICE GRAY CASE NO. 24STPB12749
To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the WILL or estate, or both of BEATRICE GRAY. A PETITION FOR PROBATE has been filed by CONNIE DOREEN GRAY in the Superior Court of California, County of LOS ANGELES. THE PETITION FOR PROBATE requests that CONNIE DOREEN GRAY be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent. THE PETITION requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act. (This authority will allow the personal representative to take many actions without obtaining court approval. 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.) The independent administration authority will be granted unless an interested person files an objection to the petition and shows good cause why the court should not grant the authority. A HEARING on the petition will be held in this court as follows: 12/30/24 at 8:30AM in Dept. 62, Room 600 located at 111 N. HILL ST., LOS ANGELES, CA 90012 IF YOU OBJECT to the granting of the petition, you should appear at the hearing and state your objections or file written objections with the court before the hearing. Your appearance may be in person or by your attorney.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA REGIONAL RAIL AUTHORITY
RFP No. E761-25
ON-CALL PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FOR METROLINK OPERATIONS
SCRRA is seeking proposals for On-Call Professional Services to support the Metrolink Operations Department. Solicitation documents may be obtained at <https://metrolinktrains.com/doing-business>. Proposals

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granted unless an interested person files an objection to the petition and shows good cause why the court should not grant the authority. A HEARING on the petition will be held in this court as follows: 12/16/24 at 8:30AM in Dept. 62 located at 111 N. HILL ST., LOS ANGELES, CA 90012 IF YOU OBJECT to the granting of the petition, you should appear at the hearing and state your objections or file written objections with the court before the hearing. Your appearance may be in person or by your attorney. IF YOU ARE A CREDITOR or a contingent creditor of the decedent, you must file your claim with the court and mail a copy to the personal representative appointed by the court within the later of either (1) four months from the date of first issuance of letters to a general personal representative, as defined in section 58(b) of the California Probate Code, or (2) 60 days from the date of mailing or personal delivery to you of a notice under section 9052 of the California Probate Code. Other California statutes and legal authority may affect your rights as a creditor. You may want to consult with an attorney knowledgeable in California law. YOU MAY EXAMINE the file kept by the court. If you are a person interested in the estate, you may file with the court a Request for Special Notice (form DE-154) of the filing of an inventory and appraisal of estate assets or of any petition or account as provided in Probate Code section 1250. A Request for Special Notice form is available from the court clerk. Attorney for Petitioner DMITRY ARISTOV - SBN 298467 FORWARD ESTATE PLANNING, A LAW CORPORATION 222 N. PACIFIC COAST HWY., SUITE 2000 EL SEGUNDO CA 90245 11/21, 11/28, 12/5/24 **CNS-3872239# LOS ANGELES SENTINEL**

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF: BERNARD HART JR CASE NO. 23STPB08789
To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the WILL or estate, or both of BERNARD HART JR. A PETITION FOR PROBATE has been filed by LA SANDRA HAMLIN in the Superior Court of California, County of LOS ANGELES.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA REGIONAL RAIL AUTHORITY
RFP No. E761-25
ON-CALL PROFESSIONAL SERVICES FOR METROLINK OPERATIONS
SCRRA is seeking proposals for On-Call Professional Services to support the Metrolink Operations Department. Solicitation documents may be obtained at <https://metrolinktrains.com/doing-business>. Proposals

Public Notices

THE PETITION FOR PROBATE requests that LA SANDRA HAMLIN be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent. THE PETITION requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act. (This authority will allow the personal representative to take many actions without obtaining court approval. 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.) The independent administration authority will be granted unless an interested person files an objection to the petition and shows good cause why the court should not grant the authority. A HEARING on the petition will be held in this court as follows: 01/16/25 at 8:30AM in Dept. 67 located at 111 N. HILL ST., LOS ANGELES, CA 90012 IF YOU OBJECT to the granting of the petition, you should appear at the hearing and state your objections or file written objections with the court before the hearing. Your appearance may be in person or by your attorney. IF YOU ARE A CREDITOR or a contingent creditor of the decedent, you must file your claim with the court and mail a copy to the personal representative appointed by the court within the later of either (1) four months from the date of first issuance of letters to a general personal representative, as defined in section 58(b) of the California Probate Code, or (2) 60 days from the date of mailing or personal delivery to you of a notice under section 9052 of the California Probate Code. Other California statutes and legal authority may affect your rights as a creditor. You may want to consult with an attorney knowledgeable in California law. YOU MAY EXAMINE the file kept by the court. If you are a person interested in the estate, you may file with the court a Request for Special Notice (form DE-154) of the filing of an inventory and appraisal of estate assets or of any petition or account as provided in Probate Code section 1250. A Request for Special Notice form is available from the court clerk. In Pro Per Petitioner LA SANDRA HAMLIN 1858 W 74TH ST LOS ANGELES CA 90012 11/14, 11/21, 11/28/24 **CNS-3861832# LOS ANGELES SENTINEL**

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA REGIONAL RAIL AUTHORITY
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Black Parents Tell Santa Barbara School District: Years of Bullying of Black Students Must Stop

By TERESA MOORE
Ethnic Media Service

Sometimes Black History Month can be the cruelest month. During the same week in February 2022, at two different Santa Barbara Unified School District junior high schools, two 12-year-old Black boys were victims in painful episodes of racist bullying.

SBUSD is being sued by the victims' mothers, who accuse school officials of not doing more to protect their kids in a city where African Americans have long been an extreme minority.

This is a story studded with cruel ironies. In June 2020, in response to the resurgence of the Black Lives Matter movement, SBUSD issued a "Resolution in Sup-



"The pain I heard devastates me," said SBUSD President Wendy Sims-Moten during a Nov. 12 meeting where Black parents described their children's experience with anti-Black racism in the district's schools. "I want to apologize as a board member."

port of Black History Month can be the cruelest month. During the same week in February 2022, at two different Santa Barbara Unified School District junior high schools, two 12-year-old Black boys were victims in painful episodes of racist bullying.

racist bullying throughout their sons' years in Santa Barbara public schools. Shalhoob said that despite the district's proclamations, school officials allegedly acknowl-

children, adequately inform the parents or provide prompt and effective support for their sons.

"It's difficult to put a dollar amount on wanting someone to do something right," said Shalhoob. "I had to learn that often change comes from someone feeling like they had to pay for what they did wrong."

She continued, "But more than anything, I just don't want anyone at Santa Barbara Unified School District ever again to be able to say, 'I didn't know what to do.'"

Not long after the attacks, McCullough said that Gateway Educational Services, a Black women-led nonprofit learning center, and Healing Justice Santa Barbara, a Black women-led nonprofit, organized parents and children that spring to speak out at school board meetings about unchecked anti-Black racism in the SBUSD.

McCullough said, "There was a common outrage at the lack of transparency."

In addition to complaints from other parents at the school board meetings, students talked about how regularly they were called racist names by their classmates, how they felt seeing racist slurs written on surfaces in the locker rooms, how they were mocked for their appearances and compared to animals.

In response to the public outcry, school board president Wendy Sims-Moten, pushed the district to independently audit the schools' racial climate.

The district hired an independent auditor to conduct the assessment using surveys and 24 focus groups. The

study participants included 585 district and school staff, 888 families and caregivers and 4,694 students. At the time of the audit, from October 2022 to February 2023, there were about 12,500 children enrolled in the district.

Among the April 2023 report's key findings: students said school staff ignored and therefore normalized racist bullying. "It's kind of normal to come to school and feel like it's going to be a racist day today," a student remarked in a focus group. "Students get in trouble for cursing, but not for using the N-word," another said.

Staff said they had no clear guidance for how to handle racist incidents. "Santa Barbara staff stated their immediate reaction in response to directly or indirectly encountering racism was to report the event to an acting administrator or supervisor rather than hold space to serve as the first line of defense against racism and anti-Blackness," the report noted.

Shevon Hoover, who says anti-Black racist incidents have been an "annual occurrence" for her son the

school professionals, many "expressed an uncertainty for whether or not their race or whiteness dis/qualifies them as an individual able to lead anti-racist and pro-Black efforts in the district."

Since the report's release, the district has been working on several reforms, including an app where students can file reports as soon as something happens and staff training on how to effectively "recognize, respond and report" racist offenses when they happen.

"We now have a policy," said Sims-Moten. "We have an oversight committee that is helping us guide many of the policies and the responses. And for the first time, we now have a procedure that talks about here's how you respond. And here's also how you follow up with families so that they don't feel left in the dark when these incidents occur."

Still, for Shalhoob and McCullough, these efforts are too little, too late.

McCullough's son, who has dyslexia and anxiety, has struggled with serious depression since the racist TikTok video. She said his condition has changed the

bullied him.

"There's one main hall at Santa Barbara High School and for a couple of weeks he was dodging the main hall because kids would say, 'I can't breathe' when he walked by," Shalhoob said. "And still nobody's doing anything."

Worst of all, Shalhoob feels she's failed her child.

"I feel like it's just taught him like, yeah, that adult might love you to death and might want to make things better for you, but it's just shown him how, excuse my language, but how f-up the system is."

The idea that teachers would need special training in how to protect Black kids from obviously damaging situations, like getting called the word that everyone knows is so bad it has its own euphemism or dismissing kneeling on someone's neck as "horsing around," enrages her.

"I think that's what brought me the most anger is because I don't think you need training to deal with it," she said. "You just need to be a human."

This resource is supported in whole or in part by funding provided by the



Leeandra Shalhoob speaking during a Nov. 12 meeting of the SBUSD board. Shalhoob's son was attacked by classmates who knelt on his neck, mocking the death of George Floyd at the hands of law enforcement. She is suing SBUSD for what she says was a lack of response to the attack.

port of Black Santa Barbara Youth," stating, "We do not tolerate hate or racism and must respond swiftly and decisively when we encounter intolerance, inequity, and bias on our campuses."

Less than two years later, a Black Santa Barbara Junior High student was assaulted by Latino classmates mimicking the lethal police attack on George Floyd, their knees pressed against the victim's neck. Within days, a Black La Colina Junior High student was bullied by a white student who made a TikTok video comparing photos of him and other Black students to monkeys and apes. The video, accompanied by an offensive song, was festooned with the N-word.

In their initial court filing, mothers Leeandra Shalhoob and Katherine McCullough argued the attacks were the culmination of a pattern of

edged, "We don't know how to deal with this."

Blacks make up less than 1% of SBUSD's student body, which is majority Latino (61%) followed by white students (31%). Asian American and Pacific Islander, Native American and students of two or more races account for the remainder.

Shalhoob and McCullough initially filed suit against the district in August 2022 seeking reform of SBUSD's practices and compensation for the toll on their sons. Mediation efforts collapsed in December 2022. In February of this year, they filed a lawsuit in U.S. District Court against SBUSD. The filing requested unspecified damages and a jury trial. The case is still pending.

The mothers allege that despite the schools' awareness of racist bullying, teachers and administrators failed to intervene, protect their



A mural of George Floyd with the words, "I can't breathe," is painted on the side of a building along East Haley Street in Santa Barbara, once the hub of the city's Black commercial district. Floyd's words were used in an attack targeting a Black student in SBUSD schools.

past six years, helped organize the push for the climate survey. "The only people that were really surprised, I think, was the school district and the administrators, and quite frankly, the white teachers who are completely disconnected," Hoover said.

About 67% of SBUSD's teachers are white. According to a focus group summary of

family dynamic with everyone on edge "because we know that not a hundred percent stabilized mentally and emotionally because of the effects of this."

Two years later, the kid behind that devastating video, and McCullough's son are both at Santa Barbara High School. So are Shalhoob's son and the kids who

State of California, administered by the California State Library in partnership with the California Department of Social Services and the California Commission on Asian and Pacific Islander American Affairs as part of the Stop the Hate program. To report a hate incident or hate crime and get support, go to CA vs Hate.



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ENTERTAINMENT

Loni Love Brings Holiday Cheer with Comedy, Cooking, and Candid Conversations



BY KEITH L. UNDERWOOD
Entertainment Writer

Loni Love is no stranger to wearing many hats—and this holiday season, she’s adding a Santa hat to the mix.

The Emmy and NAACP award-winning comedian, actress, and author is lighting up December 2024 with a full slate of projects, from her live holiday comedy show, “Loni Love and the Lovettes,” to her appearance on “The Great American Baking Show: Celebrity Holiday,” and her new podcast, “Grown Ass Women Talking.”

Performing her holiday comedy show at Pasadena’s

show, and it’s about love and laughter,” said Love, explaining her focus on bringing people together through humor and connection. Love expressed excitement about performing at the Ice House, a venue she described as iconic in comedy history.

“We’ve been working hard to put together a show that celebrates the holidays with joy and laughs,” Love added, emphasizing that the holiday season was the perfect time to bring people together through shared experiences.

In addition to her live performances, Love turned up the heat in the kitchen with her appearance on “The Great American Baking Show: Celebrity Holiday,” and her new podcast, “Grown Ass Women Talking.”

Competing alongside stars like Anthony Anderson and Rob Riggle, she



Loni Love

COURTESY PHOTO

Paul Hollywood and Prue Leith added a layer of intensity.

“You’re not just baking; you’re baking in front of people who can look at a cupcake and know exactly what went wrong,” joked Love, laughing at the high stakes of the competition.

One of Love’s more personal endeavors this year has been her podcast, “Grown Ass Women Talking,” which she co-hosts with Erica Montolfo.

The show features in-depth conversations with women sharing their life experiences and wisdom. Love explained that the podcast was inspired by her love of storytelling and her desire to highlight voices that aren’t always heard in

mainstream spaces.

“That’s what I love to get,” shared Love. “Peel back the layers and get their experience.” She emphasized that the show allowed her to dive deep into personal stories and connect with women who have navigated complex paths in their careers and personal lives.

Among her favorite episodes was one featuring Sheila E., the legendary musician and drummer. “She’s just a great, phenomenal woman,” Love said. The two discussed Sheila E.’s journey in the music industry, including the challenges she faced and the triumphs she achieved.

Love also highlighted

an episode with Lyn Sisson-Talbert, the producer of Netflix’s “Jingle Jangle.”

“It’s like just to hear her process and what she goes through as a woman and how she was able to navigate Hollywood—it’s a treasure trove of advice,” said Love. For Love, these conversations weren’t just informative; they were inspiring and deeply personal.

Love reflected on the value of featuring women from diverse backgrounds, including those working behind the scenes.

“We’ve had people that maybe you don’t know because they’re behind the camera,” explained Love, referencing Sisson-Talbert

the mix. Love described these episodes as a blend of comedy and wisdom, where candid conversations offered both laughs and life lessons.

Despite her packed schedule, Love shared that her projects are deeply fulfilling. She explained that balancing comedy, cooking, and podcasting came naturally because each allowed her to connect with audiences in meaningful ways. “It’s great,” she said. “And I just love doing it.”

Love’s approach to her work this holiday season reflects her broader philosophy: using humor to bring people together. She emphasized that whether it’s a stand-up show, a



Loni Love shares a selfie with the audience.

COURTESY PHOTO

historic Ice House Comedy Club on Dec. 5, 12, and 19, Love aims to create a festive and comedic space for audiences.

“We’re up there for the

described the experience as both nerve-wracking and exhilarating. When asked about stepping out of her comedic comfort zone, she admitted that baking for



Loni Love performing standup comedy live on stage.

COURTESY PHOTO

and others. By spotlighting these voices, Love hoped to offer listeners insights into perseverance, creativity, and resilience.

Her podcast also includes lighthearted moments, with guests such as Kathy Griffin and Margaret Cho adding humor to

cooking challenge, or a podcast episode, her goal is always to make her audience feel seen and entertained.

“This is what I’ve always wanted to do. I want to help folks laugh, learn, and feel a little lighter,” said Love.

FUTURE ICONS

Jac’leen Smith: A Journey of Bold Pivots and Fresh Starts

How Reinvention and Fearless Exploration Shaped Her Career

BY NATHAN J. LEE
Contributing Writer

At every crossroad in her career, Jac’leen Smith has chosen reinvention. From landing a dream internship at VIBE Magazine to creating a docuseries that amplifies Black women, her journey is as fearless as it is inspiring.

“I had always aspired to be a journalist,” she says. Fascinated by human-interest stories and musicians, she landed an internship at VIBE Magazine during college.

“That was the dream. I was just like, I’ll do that. And then there was a recession. It was like, no, no, I won’t.”

Life threw a curveball, but Jac’leen did not stay off track for long. After a detour in retail, a friend helped her break into television. At VH1, she worked on shows like “I Love the 2000s” and “Behind the Music.”

It was a win, but her creative instincts pushed her toward new horizons. “Around 2017, I was like, you know what? I want to pivot... expand on my interest in art.”

Her artistic curiosity led her to the Red Bull Arts, where she explored her passion for visual storytelling. But soon, the dots began to connect: “Wait, you’ve always been fascinated with people. You’ve always



Jac’leen Smith

COURTESY PHOTO

loved film. You’ve always loved documentary. It clicked for me. I was like, I want to now transition into documentary filmmaking.”

The transition was challenging, but Jac’leen leaned on her network and found support in Brown Girls Doc Mafia, a collective of Black and Brown women and non-binary documentary filmmakers. “I’m so grateful to her for suggesting that organization to me, because that’s how I got my first documentary job.”

The sense of community Jac’leen found within Brown Girls Doc Mafia helped her get her start in the documentary space, but the inspiration for “Dear Younger Self”

came from a different place. After years of helping other companies bring narratives to life, Jac’leen realized it was time to create something of her own, something that not only amplified her voice but also uplifted the voices of others.

In 2022, she released “Dear Younger Self,” an eight-episode docuseries



Jac’leen Smith, a multi-talented voice in storytelling.

COURTESY PHOTO

featuring Black women reflecting on life lessons and offering advice to their younger selves. “Black women inspire me every single day. They’re my mother. They’re my peers. They’re my best friends. They’re my sisters.”

Smith conceived the

series in 2018, filming it in 2019. It was a profoundly personal endeavor born from a rough moment. “It came at a time where I was just having to make so many challenging decisions. And I was like, I wonder what would have happened if I was able to have all this knowledge when I was younger.”

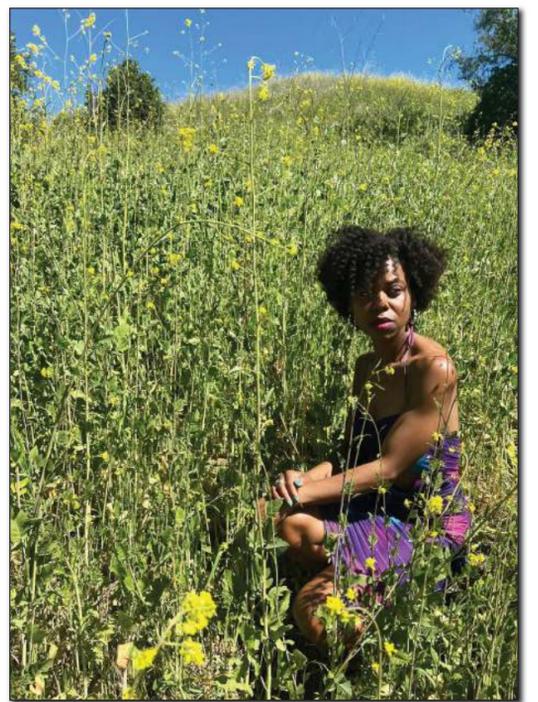
Through setbacks and breakthroughs, “Dear Younger Self” turned hindsight into a powerful lens for storytelling. It became a defining chapter in Jac’leen’s career, highlighting her gift for creating stories that connect and inspire.

“You can’t be afraid to



Jac’leen in the booth, recording voice work for an upcoming independent film set for release in 2025.

COURTESY PHOTO



Jac’leen on the set of “Black Girls,” which debuted earlier this year at the Tribeca Film Festival and was featured at the BlackStar Film Festival in Philadelphia.

COURTESY PHOTO

fail,” she says. “Because it’s scary either way.” For Jac’leen Smith, this mindset has been key to her success. Her career, shaped by daring pivots and fearless exploration, exemplifies the strength that comes from perseverance.

“I think you have to just do it and also not judge yourself for the challenges that you might come

across,” she advises. Challenges, often mislabeled as failures, are, in her view, stepping stones to growth. Jac’leen’s journey reminds us that reinvention is not about avoiding fear but embracing it, and finding the courage to move forward anyway.

Follow Jac’leen Smith’s creative journey on Instagram @sunny_josephine.

Blxst: West Coast Music is in Good Hands

By MYKO LYRIC
Contributing Writer

On Nov. 24, the YouTube Theater in Inglewood played host to a sold-out concert by Los Angeles' very own Blxst, a singer, rapper, producer, and writer. The 6,000-seat venue provided the perfect stage for this full-circle moment, as Blxst reflected on his journey during the show.

"I used to live across the street, making beats in my room," he shared with the audience. "This moment means so much to me. I love my city."



NOEL VASQUEZ / YOUTUBE THEATER
Joyce Wrice as the opener.

Los Angeles marked the 29th stop on his "I'll Always Come Find You" tour, and Blxst's excitement to perform in his



Blxst performing.

hometown was palpable. Opening the night was breakout R&B star Joyce Wrice, who also hails from Los Angeles. Joyce's set highlighted her prowess as a performer, with the majority of her setlist being from her 2021 debut album, "Overgrown."

She later joined Blxst on stage to perform their collaborative track, "Better Off Friends," further cementing her place as a rising force in R&B.

Between the two sets, the audience was treated to a short film directed by Blxst himself. The film provided deeper context for the album's title, "I'll Always Come Find You,"

building anticipation for Blxst's entrance.

Blxst's set design was nothing short of theatrical. The stage was transformed into a mechanic shop-turned-bedroom, centered around a vintage 1990s-era Cutlass car with a California license plate reading "Birdie"—a nod to Blxst's character and costume. The space was accented with palm trees, a makeshift office, and a cozy bedroom at the back, immersing the audience in a West Coast vibe.

Supporting singer and fellow L.A. native, Cheyenne Wright, and a trio of dancers also donned mechanic uniforms, adding to the theme. Props like vintage telephones and

clipboards enhanced the storytelling, with dancers playfully engaging Blxst in scenes that mimicked workplace banter, all while seamlessly weaving into the music.

The night was a love

table initiative close to his heart. He announced that \$1 from every ticket sold — a total of \$40,000 — was donated to "Education is Key," a nonprofit dedicated to providing resources, mentorship, and

to accept the donation, creating a heartfelt moment of community impact.

While promoting his latest album, Blxst paid homage to the songs that skyrocketed him to fame. Tracks from his pandemic-era project No Love Lost (2020), such as "Gang Slide," "Forever Humble," and "Be Alone," had even the most reserved attendees out of their seats and dancing. The energy in the room was electric, blending nostalgia with a celebration of his current success.

The night closed on an inspirational note. Before leaving the stage, Blxst addressed the audience, many of whom he imagined to be creatives.

"I know there are so many creatives in this audience tonight," he said. "Please take me as an example. Do not give up on your dreams. You can get there like I got here!"



Blxst and supporting singer, Cheyenne Wright.

letter to Los Angeles as Blxst brought out an array of special guests including local rappers Kalan.FrFr and Bino Rideaux. The latter performed several tracks from their collaborative Sixtape series, including fan favorites "Doin Yo Stuff" and "Wake It Up." Blxst also surprised the crowd with a guest appearance by Offset, delivering a high-energy performance of their hit "Risk Taker" from "I'll Always Come Find You."

Amid the electrifying performances, Blxst paused to highlight a chari-

opportunities for students pursuing education. Representatives from the organization joined him onstage



Offset and Blxst

The Future of Vocal Coaching – Dot Todman's CORE Philosophy

By MYKO LYRIC
Contributing Writer

Dot Todman is a Canadian-born vocalist, recording artist, celebrity vocal empowerment coach, and founder of Core Vocal Power residing in Los Angeles for over three decades. Throughout the 2000s, Dot has redefined vocal training by fusing technique with mental, emotional, and spiritual alignment.

Known for her transformative approach, Todman shared her journey toward her method, C.O.R.E., in an exclusive interview with the Sentinel, revealing how her

career forward, it was evident she had too many mental, emotional, and physical ailments working against her.

"I realized I needed to dig deeper into why this was happening," she explained.

"Even though I was doing pretty well in my career, I decided to take a break and work on my mental and emotional health."

In 2007, while focusing more on her clients over her own career as an independent artist, Dot faced a pivotal moment after a medical accident left her physically and financially vulnerable, with her doctor telling her that she would need six-to-eight



Dot performing

types of epiphanies that led Dot to create Core Vocal Power, a groundbreaking approach that integrates the physical, mental, and emotional aspects of the voice.

This method, paired with her extensive background in music, theater arts, and psychology, became a new foundation. Equally profound was that her daily practice of her own method led to a near-full physical recovery in one month - not six - of stillness. This approach, developed over 20 years ago, was revolutionary then and is revolutionary now.

"I felt there was a need for more than [teaching vocal] technique," Dot shared. "Singers can hit all the right notes but still feel completely disconnected from themselves. It just doesn't engage the audience the same, and it doesn't feel good long-term. I wanted to teach people how to use their voices in a way that heals, empowers, and transforms their entire being."

Today, other vocal coaches around the world are beginning to use the term "vocal empowerment coach," a phrase Dot pioneered.

Her Core Vocal Power system is rooted in what she calls the C.O.R.E. framework—Connect, Objective, Resonate, and Exercise. It empowers students to align their inner energy, thoughts, emotions, and frequencies with their vocal technique, enabling breakthroughs not only in performance but also in self-expression and confidence.

"Your voice is a reflection of your energy," Dot explained. "When someone is afraid, it shows in their voice. When they release that fear, the voice transforms." The method has produced remarkable results. Clients ranging from beginners to professionals have shared stories of breaking through creative blocks, overcoming stage fright, and even healing emotional trauma.



Dot Todman

personal struggles inspired her groundbreaking work.

After moving to Los Angeles from Canada to pursue a career in music and modeling, Dot was receiving opportunities that promised to establish her career and catapult her toward more milestones. However, she began to notice that her inconsistent health would synchronously falter when she had a major audition.

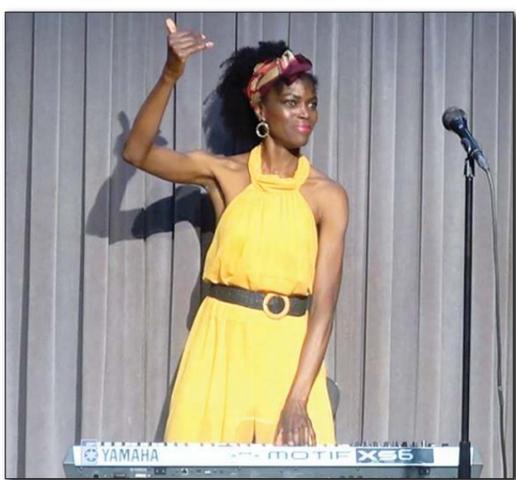
"Sometimes when I was asked to audition, I would have meltdowns. I would be shaking and crying. I was feeling so much stress and pressure from being a perfectionist," Dot recalled.

This severe reaction was compounded by a gnawing case of endometriosis, rendering her nearly paralyzed with pain each month. Despite pushing to move her

months to recover.

During the first few weeks of this against-her-will illness, Dot was forced to reassess her approach to work and life. This period illuminated how deeply she absorbed her others' energy, which compounded unresolved personal challenges stemming from a difficult childhood, including experiences as a foster child, feelings of isolation as one of the few Black individuals in her community, and struggles with perfectionism and shame.

Through meditation and self-reflection, she learned that the frequencies produced by the human voice could weaken or strengthen the body, sparking a transformative realization about the mind-body-voice connection. It was a series of these



Leading a workshop.

mas. One notable success is "This Is Us" star Chrissy Metz, who turned her dreams into reality after vocal coaching with Dot.

"It's not just about singing; it's about empowering who you are as a person," Dot said.

Dot's influence extends far beyond one-on-one coaching. She has led workshops, spoken at events, and continued to release music, like her recent single, "Everybody Deserves Love," which carries her message of emotional healing and empowerment to wider audiences.

"When people think about their voice, they don't often realize how deeply it's tied to their identity," Dot said. "It's not just a tool for

communication—it's your essence."

Two decades after she began redefining what it means to coach singers, Dot continues to lead the field she helped pioneer. Her groundbreaking work is a reminder of the power of finding your voice, both literally and figuratively.

"When someone finally connects with their authentic sound, it's not just about music," she said. "It's about freedom."

To apply for lessons, visit www.corevocalpower.com/apply-for-lessons/

To have Dot lead a workshop at your business, visit www.corevocalpower.com/business/

Visit www.singwdot.com to listen to her music.

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Student Athlete of the Week: Semi Taylor

BY AMANDA SCURLOCK
Sports Editor

Washington Prep senior Semi Taylor is a third-generation General. Her grandparents and parents are alums of Washington Prep.

"Generals run in my blood ... it means a lot to me to be a General," Taylor said. "My whole family been here."

On the Generals girl's flag football team, she plays wide receiver. Taylor comes from a family of football players. In her youth, she played tackle



Washington Prep senior Semi Taylor is a wide receiver and a cheerleader.

football.

"I was in shoulder pads for a park league," Taylor said. "I really had to go out

there and show out."

Taylor helped the Generals to a 10-12-1 overall record this season. She

enjoys making big plays for the team.

"When the quarterback throws me deep passes, that excites me," Taylor said. "I'd be so happy; even though if I was to get my flag pulled but I'm still deep, so it's still gonna get us yards."

As a leader, Taylor learned the importance of keeping a level head during games. During tough games, her coach urged her to not give up.

"What I have learned is to control my attitude," she said. "It can affect the team, how I act."

Taylor is also a cheerleader, which helped her understand her peers. That skill also helped her in flag football.

"It helped me get to know people better," she said. "Their attitude, the way they move, everything."

Taylor noted how cheerleaders have to be both physically and mentally strong.

"You got to have strength because you're lifting up people," Taylor said. "You got to have confidence, you got to be able to go out in front of a

crowd and not be scared."

For Taylor, being a student athlete means that she can leave a legacy at Washington Prep. She works to prioritize her school work before working on her athletic endeavors.

"Sometimes, I set myself to the side to finish my work that I got to do," Taylor said. "When I'm done doing what I have to do, I'll go to practice and it's a lot for me because I have to do cheer and football."

In the future, Taylor wants to be a wealthy dental assistant.

Stopping the Run With Derwin James and Daiyan Henley

BY AMANDA SCURLOCK
Sports Editor

The Los Angeles Chargers are in fifth place in the AFC as of Friday. Their defensive aggression plays an important role in their success. The Chargers pace the NFL in scoring defense, which has only allowed 12.6 points per game this season.



Chargers safety Derwin James (3) has 59 total tackles, 1.5 sacks and five pass deflections.

The Bolts are one of the top 10 teams in the league in both net yards allowed (eighth, 303.8) and rushing yards allowed (eighth, 107.9). No team has scored over 20 points against the Chargers in their first nine games this season.

Linebacker Daiyan Henley has emerged in recent weeks as a leader in tackles for the team. As of

week nine, Henley paced the team with 94 total tackles, 59 solo stops, and 35 assisted tackles.

"That's my little bro, we train in the offseason together and he's just working his butt off," said Chargers safety Derwin James. "I see how hard everyday he works and I'm nothing but happy for him."

Coming up second is six-year veteran James with 59 total tackles. He also placed third on the Bolts with 21 assisted hits and 38 solo tackles.

"The love that Derwin James has for football," Chargers head coach Jim Harbaugh said. "I gravitated to that."

In week 10, Henley led the league with 11 solo tackles against the Tennessee Titans. Against the Cleveland Browns in week nine, Henley paced the NFL with 14 total stops.



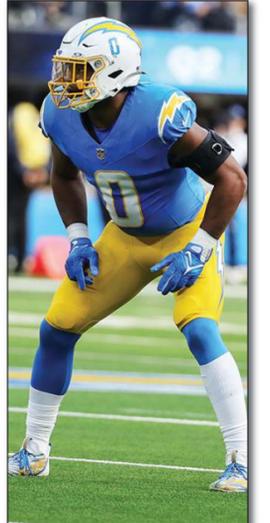
James (3) and Henley (0) tackle Tennessee Titans running back Tony Pollard.

James is the fastest defensive back in the league to earn 500 tackles in a game, executing the feat in 67 games. In his first 60 games, James had 445 tackles, 22 tackles for loss and 9.5 sacks. James mentioned how the culture of the defensive line allowed him to have fun this season.

"Just coming to work

with the coaches we have, coming to work with the guys, everybody bought in," James said. "It feels good to come to work with guys like that."

James and Henley has developed a strong bond since they became teammates. James believes in Henley and his abilities while Henley works hard to



Chargers linebacker Daiyan Henley (0) had 94 total tackles and five pass deflections in 10 games.

make James proud. "From the first day he met me, he said he wants to see me succeed and that right there stuck with me," Henley said. "I try my hardest to just prove him right."

Lakers Hoops for Troops Clinics Pays Homage to Vets

BY AMANDA SCURLOCK
Sports Editor

The Los Angeles Lakers honored military veterans with their Hoops for Troops clinic. Military members were able to practice their basketball skills and scrimmage on the hardwood of Crypto.com Arena. The Hoops for Troops clinic was done in partnership with Pechanga.

Showtime Lakers Michael Cooper and James Worthy participated in the clinic, encouraging the vets as they completed running, ball handling, and passing drills.

"The Hoops for Troops, sponsored by Pechanga, has been one of my favorite events of the year," Worthy said. "It's a special day to

appreciate veterans and troops both active and veterans to come out here and give them a piece of Laker land."

The vets also took part in playing two-on-two scrimmages, their teammates chosen at random. Two of the military members battled against Cooper in a shooting contest before going head-to-head in a knockout game.

"They do so much for our country and they're putting their lives on the line and their significant others are away," Cooper said. "This is our opportunity to give back to them ... just a fun time for them."

Gabriel Concepcion, who is in his fifth year serving in the Air Force,



Showtime Lakers stars Michael Cooper (left) and James Worthy (right) pose with participants of the knockout game during the Hoops for Troops clinic.

won the knockout game. Both competitors left the clinic with basketballs autographed by Worthy and Cooper.

"It's grateful to know

that there's organizations out there that recognize what we do, no matter the sacrifice for our family, our friends and then the service members themselves,"

Concepcion said. "It's been awesome ... just brings great pride and all the more reason to keep pushing on."

Basketball skills were not the only thing the veter-

ans practiced. Cooper had the vets stand in a big circle on the hardwood and take turns dancing to the music.

"Whenever I get around basketball, I kind of become that kid again," Cooper said. "I'm always enjoying myself out on the court and if they put music on, that's double trouble because I'm dancing and having a good time."

Worthy and Cooper were teammates for eight seasons during one of the most dominant eras of Lakers history.

"Since [Cooper] most recently went into the Hall of Fame, we're both in there now, so we're in the fraternity together," Worthy said. "Cooper's a great people guy. He's coached, he's won championships as a player and a coach with the WNBA, so it's nice to always see him."



Cooper participates in a basketball drill with military members.



Cooper plays one-on-one with a military member.

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