

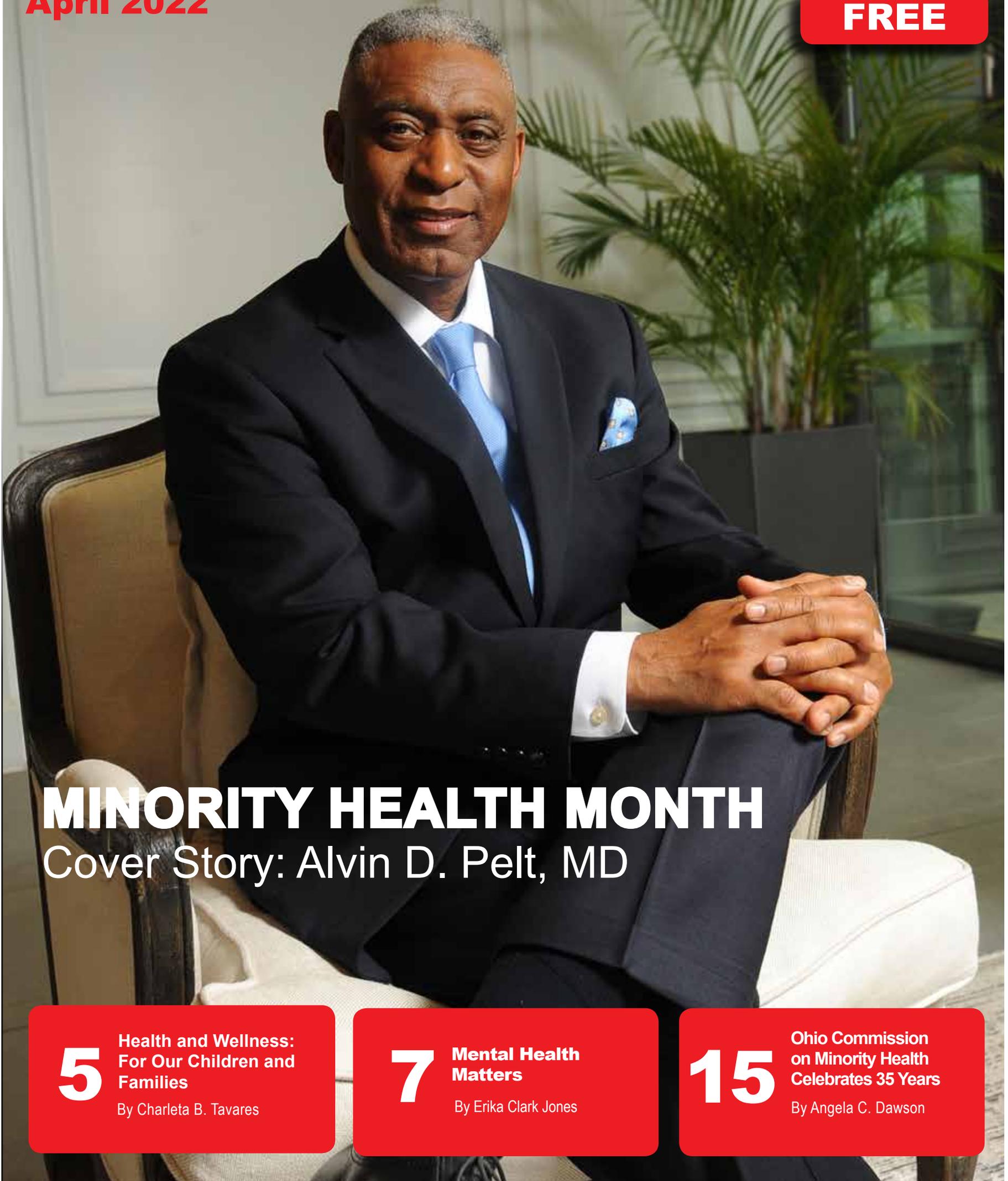
Columbus & Dayton

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FREE



MINORITY HEALTH MONTH

Cover Story: Alvin D. Pelt, MD

5

Health and Wellness:
For Our Children and
Families

By Charleta B. Tavares

7

Mental Health
Matters

By Erika Clark Jones

15

Ohio Commission
on Minority Health
Celebrates 35 Years

By Angela C. Dawson



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PUBLISHER'S PAGE



There are a number of factors that are essential to know and understand if one is to successfully be engaged in the development of progressive public policy. Allow me to state very clearly that campaign contributions are not the sole determinant of success in the political arena. This may come as a surprise to many, but genuinely caring about a significant public policy or government-funded program still matters. Knowing the history of an issue and its supporters and opponents still matters. And, one's knowledge of the legislative, political, and budgetary process, unequivocally, still matters. After having served as a Member of the Ohio House of Representatives for 16 years and 8 years as a State Senator, I can assure you that what carries the day, particularly for African Americans and people of color, is what's in your heart and life experience, not simply what's in your bank account.

I have had people over the years who have said to me, "Well Ray, you had a Black District, that's how you were able to get so many things done." Not true--I was elected to a number of Districts that were 65 to 70 % Caucasian. Over the course of the years, I represented the entire City of Whitehall, German Village, and the Short North, and still got major initiatives funded and enacted into law.

Why am I sharing all of this with you? Because, unfortunately, too many of our elected officials, regardless of their skin color, are not demonstrating their knowledge of the process, the need to develop a legislative agenda, or even in many instances, some semblance of genuine concern for their constituents. Racism in America has not gone away. Discrimination and prejudice are still embraced by too many people who call themselves Christians and proud Americans--all while enacting public policies aimed at stripping you of your voting privileges, housing options, environmental safety and cleanliness, and quality, affordable education.

It's hard to win! You've got to bring your "A" game! The bigger the idea, the greater the challenge of accomplishing your goal! Here's a real example of what I am talking about. The National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) represents the legislatures in the states, territories, and commonwealths of the United States. Its mission is to advance the effectiveness, independence, and integrity of legislatures and to foster interstate cooperation, and facilitate the exchange of information among legislatures. Fortunately, during my tenure, I was elected by my peers nationwide to serve as the Vice-Chairman of the Health and Human Resources Committee of the NCSL. Please don't misinterpret my sharing this information with you as any form of selfishness. It is important for legislators to cultivate friendships with their colleagues from throughout the nation. "Iron sharpens Iron."

In addition to the NCSL post, I was selected by Robert A. Fordham to join 25 of the nations leading healthcare experts in Rensselaer, New York. Fordham was widely admired as the creator of a new approach for convening and informing state health leaders about health policy and research, bringing leading experts to meet with elected and appointed officials. Inside government, Mr. Fordham (now deceased) was the original Director of the User Liaison Program which he designed to convey the findings of health services research to state and local officials. In addition, he was employed by the Milbank Memorial Fund and was the original program officer for the Reforming States Group. It doesn't take much thought to see where I am going with these connections and select relationships all in the health arena. The point of citing these relationships is to underscore the resulting entree to forums that became essential to my proposing and providing leadership for the development of the Ohio Commission on Minority Health. It was Rob who posed this interrogative regarding what each of the legislators planned to do relative to the new research and data that was presented to us.

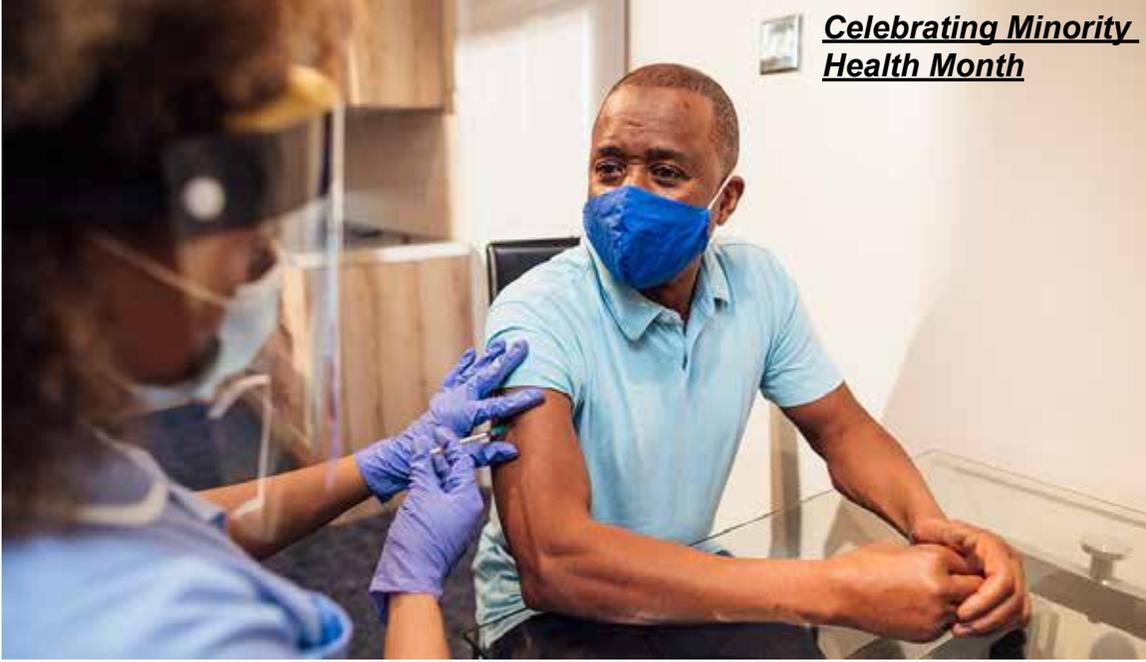
To make a long story short, I immediately raised my hand and completely spelled out in substantial detail, the design, organization, staffing, goals, and outcomes of what would become the Ohio Commission on Minority Health. I heard and received the disparaging data presented by each researcher--cardiovascular disease, cancer, cirrhosis, HIV and Aids, infant mortality, homicide, kidney failure, obesity, and on and on.

We must build the relationships, develop the programs and policies, secure the financial resources, outline the strategies, reduce the social determinants of healthcare, and continue to hire the very best staff in the nation to save our brothers and sisters' lives! People like our phenomenal Executive Director, Angela Dawson; Emeritus Executive Director, Chery Boyce; and my former Legislative Assistant, Senator Charleta B. Tavares who contributed greatly to the development of the Ohio Commission on Minority Health. Now is the time! Tomorrow will be too late!

With Appreciation and Respect,

Ray Miller
Founder & Publisher

In This Issue



Celebrating Minority Health Month

33 **Ohio Survey Details Views on Racial Bias in Healthcare Settings**
By: Julie Washington

35 **Breathe Easy: Addressing Air Pollution in Urban Communities**
By: Niel Jurist

37 **Hon. Grady L. Pettigrew: Lawyer, Judge and Community Servant**
By: Rodney Blount, MA

- 5 Health & Wellness: For Our Children & Families
- 6 Racism is a Public Health Crisis and Public Policy Predicament
- 7 Mental Health Matters
- 8 The Quest for Health in America
- 10 RISE: Reaching Individual Success Everyday
- 15 Ohio Commission on Minority Health Celebrates 35 Years

- 17 Legislative Update
- 18 Expanded Tax Credits Can Help Families Meet Their Basic Needs and Thrive
- 20 Cover Story
- 22 Commissioners Announce New Child Care Initiative
- 23 What Makes You So Strong?
- 24 DeRolp: 25 Years Later - Statement on Historic Ruling

- 24 City Attorney Klein Applauds Judgement Holding Owners in Contempt
- 25 PrimaryOne Health Receives Grant for New School-Based Health Center
- 25 Pushing Back Against Hate
- 27 Book Bags & E-Readers
- 28 Providing All Students with High-Quality STEM Education
- 29 Biden Signs Bill Making Lynchings A Federal Hate Crime
- 30 PrimaryOne Health Receives Grant for Northside School-Based Health Center
- 31 Will Smith's Unexpected Performance At The 2022 Oscars
- 32 Central State Plans \$65 Million Expansion
- 33 Ohio Survey Details Views on Racial Bias in Healthcare Settings
- 35 Breathe Easy: Addressing Air Pollution in Urban Communities
- 36 Is It Time for a Technology Reset?
- 37 Hon. Grady L. Pettigrew: Lawyer, Judge and Community Servant
- 38 Community Events

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HEALTH AND WELLNESS: FOR OUR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES



By Charleta B. Tavares

This month we celebrate “Minority Health Month” and the 35th Anniversary of the Ohio Commission on Minority Health. I am particularly proud of both of these achievements as I was the Legislative Assistant, to then state Representative Ray Miller, Jr. when he first created the Taskforce on Black and Minority Health and later the Ohio Commission on Minority Health. We are the first independent agency – a Commission in the United States.

In July 1987, the Ohio General Assembly, passed an amendment sponsored by Rep. Ray Miller, Jr. in the state’s Operating Budget (Amended Substitute House Bill 171), creating the Ohio Commission on Minority Health. The Commission was the first concerted effort by a state to address the disparity in health status between majority and racial/ethnic populations. The Commission is an autonomous state agency with an original biennial appropriation of \$3.5 million dollars of general revenue funds. **Congratulations, Director Angela C. Dawson, chair Emelia S. Sykes and Commissioners on this historic celebration of your history and accomplishments.**

The focus areas of the Commission are Infant Mortality, Cancer, Diabetes, Cardiovascular Disease, Substance Use, Violence and Lupus among racial and ethnic populations. As we look at these diseases, many of them are presented today very early – among children and youth. Why? We have loaded our foods with corn syrup, hormones, sugars, artificial and dangerous chemicals and preservatives in order to lengthen shelf life and reduce spoilage (profits). These tactics have endangered the lives of our children and have exacerbated diabetes, hypertension, and overweight (precursors or contributors to cardiovascular disease). The racial and ethnic populations include African American, Asian/Pacific Islanders, Hispanic/Latino and Native American Indians.

One of the solutions to address child and youth health and wellness is to develop more School-Based Health Centers throughout the state of Ohio and the USA. On March 4th the Governor announced that \$25.9 million would be awarded to 136 new or expanded School-Based Health Centers throughout Ohio. These partnerships between healthcare providers and schools supports the whole child and ensures that every child may realize their full potential. The Ohio Department of Health has awarded 15 contracts, totaling \$25,910,983, to create 29 new School-Based Health Centers and expand services in 107 existing School-Based Health Centers.

PrimaryOne Health was awarded two grants along with our partners Columbus City



Schools (CCS) and Groveport Madison Local Schools. The CCS School-Based Health Center partnership is at the North International Global Academy located at 4007 Karl Road in Columbus, Ohio (Formerly Brookhaven High School). The SBHC grant totaling \$1,306,331 will be used for an approximately 2,700 square-foot renovation project providing comprehensive SBHC services including primary care, oral health, behavioral health, substance use disorder, comprehensive vision, and mobile health care. Services will be provided to students, families, staff, and community members, at the SBHC through face-to-face and/or telehealth visits.

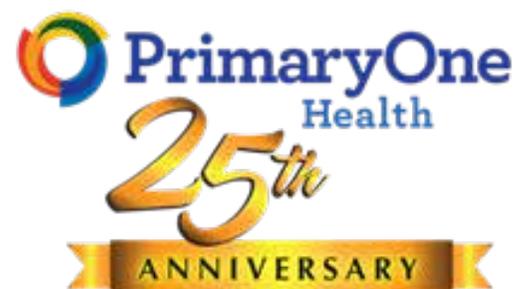
PrimaryOne Health in partnership with Groveport Madison Schools were awarded a SBHC grant totaling \$3,047,486. The Groveport Madison Local Schools Board of Education approved their new Community Wellness Center project as a “one stop shop” family oriented facility. It will include a 4,000 square-foot community health center. The new Community Wellness Center will be a renovation project providing comprehensive SBHC services including primary care, oral health, behavioral health, substance use disorder, comprehensive vision, and mobile health care. Services will also be provided to students, families, staff and community members, at the SBHC through face-to-face and/or telehealth visits.

School-Based Health Centers (SBHC) have emerged as effective models in improving student access to health care and closing the gap experienced by racial, ethnic and cultural communities experiencing health inequities. Students who receive essential preventative and primary care services are more likely to be attentive, and successful learners. Healthy students are better on all levels of academic achievement: academic performance, behavior, and cognitive skills and attitudes. Investing in the health of

students contributes to healthy communities in the future.

These SBHCs are one of the solutions to addressing racial and ethnic inequities in health and wellness among our children, youth and families. We have to be the answer to the health and advancement of our communities. We have to stand up, speak up and take the actions needed to ensure that we are doing all that we can to inspire and support others to be change makers, like the partnerships highlighted. Each of us have the ability to contribute to the advancement of our community but do we have the tenacity, love of our people and resolve to get it done?

Join us in November 10, 2022 for our 25th Anniversary and Healthcare Justice Awards!



We are all in this – together. We are One!

Charleta B. Tavares is the Chief Executive Officer at PrimaryOne Health, the oldest and largest Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) system in Central Ohio providing comprehensive primary care, OB-GYN, pediatric, vision, dental, behavioral health and specialty care to more than 48,000 patients at 12 locations in Central Ohio. The mission is to provide access to services that improve the health status of families including people experiencing financial, social, or cultural barriers to health care. www.primaryonehealth.org.

RACISM IS A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS AND PUBLIC POLICY PREDICAMENT



By William McCoy, MPA and Ludmilla Scott, PhD

“Out damned spot! Out I say.”

Lady Macbeth screamed those words as she frantically tried to wash her blood-stained hands (William Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* (Act V, Scene I). Lady Macbeth could not rid herself of the guilt she felt for her involvement in King Duncan’s murder. The hyper-ambitious, manipulative, and devious character now appears fragile, broken, and consumed by shame in this scene. Lady Macbeth is full of regret for her criminal conduct, yet refuses to acknowledge or accept responsibility for her evil deeds.

If this sounds familiar, it should. This scene is being re-enacted, albeit with different characters and context, by elected and appointed officials, educators, parents, and others who are trying to purge history, censor dialogue, and cleanse America’s collective conscience of its sins against humanity. America’s “original sin” (slavery) was fueled by racism, hate, and the lust for wealth and power. The importation of slaves in 1619, institutionalized dehumanization of African-Americans with the U.S. Constitution’s “3/5 Clause,” transition to Jim Crow and the Black Codes, and continuing attacks on African-Americans’ personal liberties, legal and voting rights, and psyche laid the foundation for today’s reality. Racism is a public health crisis and public policy predicament.

By April 2021, over 210 cities, counties, states, and other governmental bodies had issued proclamations, passed resolutions, and taken official action to declare or designate racism as a “public health crisis” or “serious threat” to public health. Most of this activity occurred during the aftermath of George Floyd’s murder by Minneapolis (MN) police officers, which sparked Black Lives Matter protests on five continents by tens of millions of people.

136,818 Black Americans are known to have lost their lives to COVID-19 through March 5, 2022. Yet, the costs and consequences of racism far outweigh even these African-American casualties. 126 years ago, W.E.B. DuBois concluded that morbidity and mortality among Black Americans was largely a matter of socioeconomic conditions, and not simply access to health care (The Philadelphia Negro, 1896). Access to health care has greatly improved in the 1¼ century since DuBois’ seminal work. However, institutional racism continues to produce



unequal treatment, justice, and outcomes for African-Americans.

The effects of racism experienced over a lifetime include stress responses, hormonal adaptations, and disparities in health-related conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, stroke, kidney disease, respiratory illness, and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). Societal and institutional racism within public health systems contribute to elevated depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, and other mental health problems among African-Americans. If we factor in the daily micro-aggressions, harassment, and violence experienced by Black people, it is a miracle that African-Americans are not in worse shape, physically and mentally. Yes, everyday racism, racism everyday.

Racism is not just a “public health crisis.” It is also a “public policy predicament.” The stain of America’s “original sin” (slavery) and the racism it wrought continue to haunt many Americans even now. Some politicians, public officials, and political partisans- like Lady Macbeth- are trying to remove the ugly reminders of our nation’s racial transgressions from school curricula and textbooks, corporate and governmental training programs, and elsewhere through legislative and executive action, censorship, protest, and other tactics. All of these ill-intentioned efforts seek to obscure America’s true racial history.

Take the case of “critical race theory,” for example. Republican lawmakers in Ohio, Arizona, Florida, and Texas are among 20-plus states that have introduced and/or enacted legislation which ban or greatly

restrict schools from teaching or exploring the historical and contemporary role of race and institutional or structural racism in our country. These attacks on “critical race theory” are a blatant attempt to erase repugnant reminders of the USA’s true racial history. Critics of “critical race theory” argue the unvarnished truth is divisive and demeans the people, places, and institutions that “made America great.” Supporters say, truth is the light.

Some view these efforts to abuse public policy as censorship, an admission of guilt and culpability, and an attempt to re-write history in a way that does not make White people “feel bad” about their mistreatment of people of color. Many believe, these attempts to wipe away the stain of racism from “his-story” will eventually fail, like Lady Macbeth’s futile attempt to wash away the blood, guilt, and shame of her wrong-doing.

A growing number of academics, authors, and activists, say the “denial of racism is the new racism.” Some claim the denial of racism is delusional. Others say, it is downright dangerous. No matter what you think, the denial of racism is a barrier to meaningful dialogue, heightened awareness, and (ultimately) change.

In conclusion, racism is a both a public health crisis and public policy predicament. Racism is truly the elephant in the room and cannot be ignored. Someone asked, “How do you eat an elephant?” Answer: one bite at a time.

William McCoy is principal consultant for The McCoy Company- a personal services consulting firm specializing in planning, training, and development. Mr. McCoy has served all levels of government, foundations, nonprofits, and the private sector. Prior to establishing The McCoy Company, he served 12 years in public service highlighted by two White House appointments. Mr. McCoy holds BA and MPA degrees. He is author of the upcoming book, Everyday Racism, Racism Everyday, profiled in Who’s Who in the World and elsewhere. Call William McCoy at (614) 785-8497 or e-mail wmccoy2@themccoycompany.com. Visit his website at <https://wmccoy29.wixsite.com/mysite>.

Dr. Ludmilla Wikkeling Scott is a public health policy expert, researcher, adjunct professor at Morgan State University School of Community Health and Policy, and practitioner. Dr. Scott has worked with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, federal Office of Minority Health, U. S. House of Representatives, and Maryland public health commission. She has taught hundreds of college students, and presented her research at numerous conferences and symposia in North America, Europe, and the Middle East. Dr. Scott holds a Doctor of Public Health (DrPH), along with MA and BA degrees. You can e-mail Dr. Scott at Ludmilla.scott@morgan.edu.

MENTAL HEALTH MATTERS



By Erika Clark Jones

April is National Minority Health Month, a time when the spotlight is on health disparities that continue to affect the African American community and to encourage action through education, early detection and better overall management of health issues.

The Columbus African American News Journal is commended for wisely using this annual observance to focus on mental health. The underlying trauma associated with confronting racism as a person of color has long-term impacts on both physical and mental health. In fact, Mental Health America has recognized racism as a mental health issue.

Mental wellness matters and there is a strong intersection between physical health and mental health. Individuals with depression have a 40% higher risk of developing cardiovascular and metabolic diseases than the general population. People with serious mental illness are nearly twice as likely to develop these conditions, according to the Lancet Psychiatry Commission's Blueprint for Protecting Physical Health in People with Mental Illness.

The rates of mental illnesses in African Americans are similar to those of the general population – impacting about one in five Americans. While mental illness does not discriminate, this annual observance serves as a reminder that African American communities struggle with similar challenges to accessing quality mental healthcare as they do with physical healthcare needs.

According to the American Psychiatric Association, only one in three African Americans who need mental health care receive it. In comparison to the white population, African Americans are less likely to receive evidence-based care and are more likely to visit emergency rooms or primary care doctors instead of receiving help from mental health specialists.

It is time to address the barriers that keep many in our community from accessing the care they need which include:

- Stigma associated with mental illness
- Distrust of the healthcare system
- Lack of providers from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds
- Lack of culturally competent providers
- Lack of insurance, underinsurance



Dr. Ameena Kemavor - Director of Advocacy and Engagement at ADAMH of Franklin County

The first step to change this dynamic is to remove the stigma so often associated with mental health as well as addiction and acknowledge, as a community, that it is ok not to be ok. Mental illness is a medical condition and addiction is a disease. Neither are choices anyone makes.

It is a sign of strength, not weakness, to admit that you may be struggling. We have all been through a lot over the last two years. There is additional loss and trauma in our community that has only amplified existing mental health needs. Talking to someone can help.

There is support available to every Franklin County resident, every day through a single phone call. Anyone in Franklin County can call 614-276-CARE (2273) for emotional support and crisis services. This line is staffed by licensed counselors 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

This hotline is just one of the many services provided through the Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Board of Franklin County (ADAMH) and its network of more than 30 community-based mental health and addiction service providers. As a levy-funded county agency, ADAMH is the behavioral health safety net for the community, providing help to anyone in need, regardless of ability to pay. A full list of providers and services can be found at adamhfranklin.org.

As we encourage you to make that first call, ADAMH also is committed to creating a more equitable and accessible network of care. We are working with our provider partners to address workforce challenges that include building a more diverse workforce that better reflects the people we serve.

Ensuring greater access to equitable care requires more engagement with diverse communities and input from a variety of voices across Franklin County. ADAMH recently created a new office of Advocacy and Engagement, led by Ameena Kemavor, Ph.D.

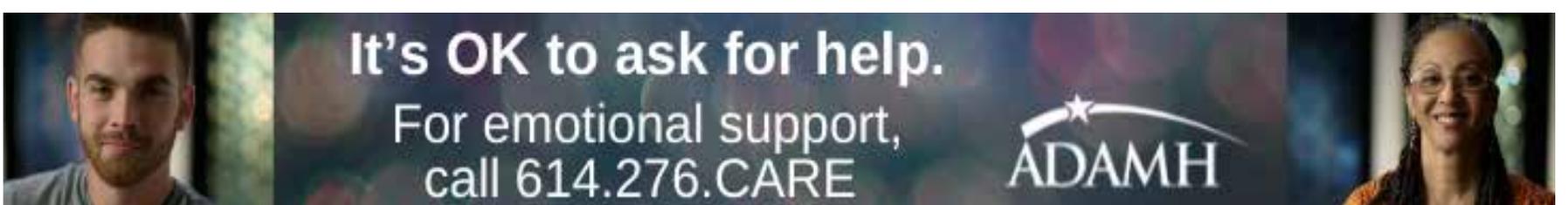
Dr. Kemavor joined ADAMH with more than 27 years of experience working in the field of mental health and community services and more than nine years of leadership experience working with diverse populations and advocating for culturally and linguistically competent clinical care. She is an independently licensed professional clinical counselor with a supervision endorsement in the State of Ohio. She has a bachelor's degree in psychology, a master's degree in clinical counseling, and a doctorate in counselor education and supervision.

Through Dr. Kemavor's experience, our advocacy and engagement team is making new connections and enhancing relationships with a wide range of partners to ensure that the ADAMH is responsive to the needs of all in our community.

ADAMH continues to listen and learn by engaging faith leaders, community leaders, individuals with lived experience, business leaders, elected officials, educators, and grassroots organizers on how best to meet people where they are to better deliver mental health and addiction services. Together we will work to build a healthier community that supports us all.

You can find more information about ADAMH at adamhfranklin.org. If you or someone you know needs connection to mental health or addiction resources, call 614-276-CARE (614-276-2273) or go to netcareaccess.org and click on the red Chat Now button. A licensed clinician will be available to help you find the right resources.

Erika Clark Jones is CEO of the Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Board of Franklin County



THE QUEST FOR HEALTH IN AMERICA



By Moses Don Mosley

In an examination of the health issues that have plagued African Americans, statistics show that the leading causes of death of African Americans actually decreased from 1999-2015 by 25%. However, younger African Americans are living with diseases usually associated with the older population and African Americans continue to die from diseases at a higher rate than those in the majority population (<https://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/aahealth/index.html>). These diseases are diabetes, high blood pressure, stroke, cancer and include infant mortality. While it is notable that most of these diseases relate to diet and lifestyle, the treatment of them and/or access to preventative health care shows a disparity when compared to that of the majority culture. What follows is an examination of three “isims” that will illustrate how they caused these disparities, continue to inhibit unbound access to wellness for all, and what we can do moving forward. The three “isims” are Capitalism, Racism, and Consumerism.

“All that glitters is not gold” —William Shakespeare, Merchant of Venice, Act II Scene 7

“The Dutch Golden Age was a period in the history of the Netherlands, roughly spanning the era from 1588 to 1672 in which Dutch trade, science, art and the military were among the most acclaimed in Europe. In the 17th century, the Dutch – traditionally able seafarers and keen mapmakers – began to trade with the Far East, and as the century wore on, they gained an increasingly dominant position in world trade, a position previously occupied by the Portuguese and Spanish. In 1602, the Dutch East India Company (VOC) was founded. It was the first-ever multinational corporation, financed by shares that established the first modern stock exchange. The Company received a Dutch monopoly on Asian trade, which it would keep for two centuries, and it became the world’s largest commercial enterprise of the 17th century. To finance the growing trade within the region, the Bank of Amsterdam was established in 1609, the precursor to, if not the first, true central bank. In the Netherlands in the 17th century, social status was largely determined by income. The landed nobility had relatively little importance, since they mostly lived in the more underdeveloped inland provinces, and it was the urban merchant class that dominated Dutch society. Wealthy merchants bought themselves into the nobility by becoming landowners and acquiring a coat of arms and a seal. Aristocrats also mixed with other classes for financial reasons: they married their daughters to wealthy merchants, became traders themselves or took up public or military office. Merchants also started to value public office as a means to greater economic power and prestige.”([https://](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dutch_Golden_Age)



en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dutch_Golden_Age). This was the beginnings of mercantilism and capitalism, the model that would be used by other European countries as well as the colonies in the new world.

The Master said, “If your conduct is determined solely by considerations of profit you will arouse great resentment.” — Confucius

In the production of goods and services, the goal of capitalism is profit above all by minimizing production costs. In the new world and its developing economy, the best way to keep production cost to a minimum was to utilize free labor, i.e. slaves. Closely tied to this fledgling economy was racism. The captured Africans were stripped of all belongings, family, language, culture and these were replaced by beatings, torture, malnutrition, and death. In the book, Post Traumatic Slave Syndrome, by Dr. Joy DeGruy, describes how African Americans continue to suffer from cultural trauma inflicted during and after the slave period. It is incomprehensible to fathom the trauma of seeing a loved one beaten unrelentingly, or a child sold away, never to be seen again, or having to endure sexual assaults at the whim of any slave holder. This trauma may have taken the form of physical as well as mental health issues and may well be another factor in the continuing disparities in the health and wellness of African Americans today. Profit above all is the mantra of capitalism and is alive and well today. As Putin’s war rages on in Ukraine, gasoline prices worldwide continue to rise as the people of the world have to continue to suck it up, dig deeper and pay. The powers to be are quick to request that we all hold on in support of Ukraine and pay what we have to at the pump. Sacrifice for Democracy. Those same powers have been silent by not asking the CEO’s of the major oil companies to not raise the price of gas as they continue to earn unbelievable profits and bonuses. Why are they not asked to suck it up and dig a bit deeper? As with the aristocrats in the Netherlands, the oligarchs in America continue to rule

in an unchecked environment within which the people continue to struggle to survive. It is easy to understand why the health of African Americans continues to decline with such rampant capitalism so readily apparent. Capitalism requires inequality and in America, African Americans provided the capital, the labor, for the oligarchs to acquire the wealth, power and position that they now hold. That acquisition of wealth and power was launched from the backs of the slaves and sustained by racism. The descendants of those slaves continue to bear those scars in the form of diabetes, heart disease, strokes, cancer, mental health issues.

Prior to the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, the sale of goods and services was done in the marketplace. A provider would bring the wares, display them, sell them for money or barter, and in turn use that revenue to purchase other goods and services that were usable for him. With the advent of the factories and larger scale production methods, more goods could be produced quicker and cheaper which provided more readily available capital for the producers and a wider variety of choices for the consumer. This method increased the supply of goods and services; increased the amount of capital in the economic system; provided more workers and better wages for the factories in the production of goods; and the development of a middle class all of which contributed to the genesis of consumerism. As wages and production increased, the buying power of the consumer increased as did marketing savvy.

“Americans used to be ‘citizens.’ Now we are ‘consumers.’”
— Vicki Robin, Your Money or Your Life

“Consumerism further developed in the 20th century. For example, some people consider the 1950s and 1960s as the ‘golden age of consumerism.’ During this time period, goods became much less expensive and some

Continued on Page 9



products were able to sold on a very large scale due to effective marketing campaigns.” (<https://www.historycrunch.com/history-of-consumerism.html#/>) In terms of disparities in minority health care in the African American community, the most devastating effects of consumerism may have been in terms of diet and access to health care services. As illustrated above, capitalism and racism are primary instruments to a longstanding distrust of the majority culture. However, clever targeted marketing strategies have been successful in gaining access to African American dollars in the purchase of oftentimes substandard goods and services. Under the guise of equality for all, many African Americans continue to live barely about poverty levels. Many communities are food deserts (“a geographic area where access to affordable, healthy food options (aka fresh fruits and veggies) is limited or nonexistent because grocery stores are too far away” (Google). The same is also often true of health care providers. Being bombarded with targeted advertising and limited cash, African Americans are forced to choose lower priced low nutrient-rich foods which stave off hunger but does little to elevate their diet to healthy levels. This situation leads to a greater susceptibility to disease.

Think Globally...Act Locally

A major change in our mentality and well-being could rest on how we see ourselves. On the next questionnaire when prompted to choose ethnicity, check HUMAN. Why is it that only people of color have to choose an ethnicity? What happened to declaring one to be Irish American or Italian American? Why is it that, in news broadcasts, only people of color are identified by race? African Americans have a history of confusion regarding what to be called. We were first identified as Negro...a Spanish word for Black. That label was morphed into the so-

called “N-word”, and then colored, Black, along with Octoroon, Quadroon, Quintroon, Terceroon, Mulatto, and a whole host of other derogatory labels. African American has lasted quite a while as socially acceptable yet all of these labels continue to designate different-ness. One of the major problems with the African American presence in America has been that we have always been different and never accepted into the culture of America and the labels identify that difference. In other countries in which there are different races, all are identified by the nationality, not by their color. Now is time for that in America and to identify ourselves as American and Human and no longer by race; no more immediate difference notation and onward to healing some of the past cultural trauma of the slavery days.

“The U.S. will never be a free and happy nation while they continue to exploit and marginalize the Third World. The Third World will never be happy or free so long as there is a First World stuck in the mire of consumerism, alienation, indifference. (Clodovis Boff, p. 161)” — Mev Puleo, *The Struggle Is One: Voices and Visions of Liberation*

In order to combat this racism, capitalism, and consumerism, the following suggestions may help mitigate some of these issues and help each of us to thrive instead of continually trying to merely survive.

1. Drink half of one’s body weight in ounces of water each day (150 lb =75 oz of water or 8-9 glasses or 1/hr). It is easy to think hunger when we are thirsty as advertisers tell us to snack but rarely tell us to drink.
2. Read: *Your Body's Many Cries for Water* by Fereydoon Batmanghelidj – he describes how many diseases are the result of dehydration
3. Instead of buying bottled water, investigate the quality of the city’s water and buy a

filtering system that with clean the water to the desired level and save money in the long run. There is no guarantee that bottled water is any substantially better than tap water and unrecycled bottles create pollution.

4. Go to the doctor or seek out free clinics at least once a year for a physical
5. Go to the library and read and research any disease that causes concern
6. Turn off the TV - go outside – Walk - Exercise – Move – Regularly!!
7. Try to eat an entire plant each day (a root –carrot; a stalk –celery; a leaf-lettuce; a flower-broccoli; a fruit –tomato/cucumber/pepper
8. Learn to eat other protein aside from animal protein (rice and beans; apples and peanuts; both combinations are complete proteins examples)
9. Learn to use other herbs and spices instead of salt...use more pepper
10. Learn to eat this way: Breakfast like a king-Lunch like a Prince- Dinner like a Pauper – eat the largest meal early in the day
11. Don’t believe the HYPE of Capitalism and Consumerism. \$300 Jordan’s are nice but Skechers under \$100 are probably more comfortable and affordable
12. Think Globally...Act Locally- be a part of the larger collective but actively participate on the local level.

“Armaments, universal debt, and planned obsolescence—those are the three pillars of Western prosperity. If war, waste, and moneylenders were abolished, you’d collapse. And while you people are overconsuming the rest of the world sinks more and more deeply into chronic disaster.” — Aldous Huxley, Island

Moses Don Mosley is a retired carpentry teacher from the Columbus City School System. In retirement, he spends his time growing, cooking, sharing good food, wine, music, and stories with family and friends. As a carpenter, much of his time is spent as a purveyor of antiques and object d’art from the past, for fun and profit through restoring, refinishing, and re-selling pieces

RISE: REACHING INDIVIDUAL SUCCESS EVERYDAY



By Hon. Sheryl Munson

When I took the bench in the Franklin County Court of Common Pleas, General Division in December of 2020, I had on my list of priorities the creation of a mental health specialty docket. In February of 2022, I formally launched the RISE: *Reaching Individual Success Everyday* docket.

This critical program is aimed at moderate to high-risk felony offenders who are justice-involved due to untreated mental health issues. The objective of RISE is to improve the quality of participants' lives, to reduce or eliminate their re-offending, and to provide alternatives to incarceration—to stop warehousing individuals with mental health issues in our jails and prisons.

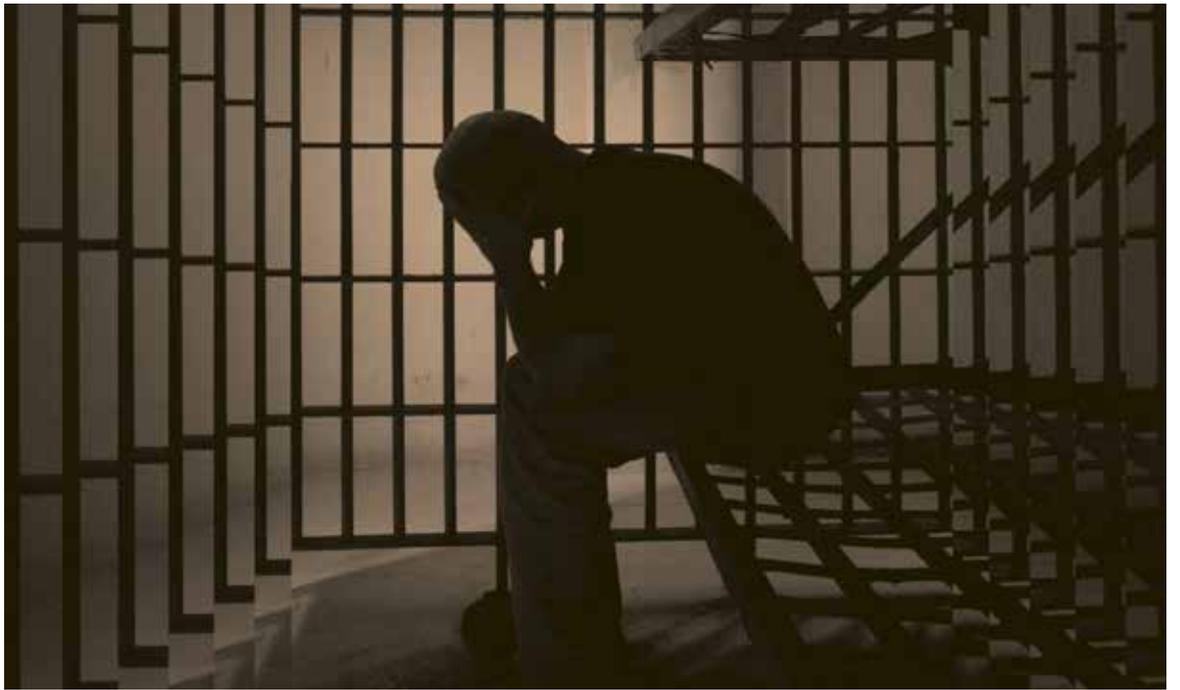
The RISE docket will also benefit our community, as participants commit fewer crimes and join-in as productive community members.

Prior to taking the bench in 2020, I was a career public defender with the Franklin County Public Defender Office. During my twenty-six years of service to underserved and marginalized residents of Franklin County, it became clear that there was a gap within the criminal justice system—a hole into which justice-involved individuals with serious mental health issues fell, again and again. A disproportionate number of these folks were—and remain—members of minority populations.

Having the necessary tools to maintain good mental health is a fundamental right shared by ALL of us. When not having those tools leads an individual into the criminal justice system and repeated periods of incarceration, the need to provide those tools becomes even more critical.

As we developed the RISE docket, we traveled throughout the state of Ohio to observe similar dockets. While many municipal courts, which deal with misdemeanor offenses, have mental health dockets, fewer Common Pleas courts have such dockets. However, several jurisdictions, recognizing the need for a specialized mental health docket for those charged with felonies, have created strong programs to assist those individuals. I am indebted to the judges who run these dockets and their teams for their generosity and support in helping us create the RISE docket. They serve as tremendous models and great inspiration.

The RISE docket will provide participants with individualized plans that include case-work, mental health/substance use disorder treatment, medication compliance support, peer support, and assistance with financial, food, and housing stability as we know that, without the stabilization of essential needs,



an individual cannot focus on maintaining their mental health.

Dealing with mental health issues is a struggle for anyone but for members of minority populations that struggle is often greater. Members of our underserved populations are often so busy trying to put food on the table and a roof up above that they do not have the time or resources to focus on their mental health. Add to this, the stress and trauma that comes from living in instability and in a society fraught with racial bias and discrimination and the ability to find and access mental health resources can become almost impossible. Once an individual becomes justice-involved and their very liberty is at stake, the crisis magnifies. It is within these critical situations that specialty dockets can make life-changing differences.

However, as is the case in general with our criminal justice system, specialty dockets can function unequally when it comes to creating therapeutic and restorative justice opportunities for eligible offenders. It appears that there is a tendency toward under-representation of members of minority populations entering and successfully graduating from specialty dockets. It, therefore, becomes incumbent upon the specialty docket judge and their team to make sure that minority offenders are benefitting from their docket.

The RISE docket is committed to being intentional when it comes to considering eligible offenders so that minority participants are not being excluded due to implicit or explicit bias. When considering minority offenders for the RISE docket, their prior criminal records, the availability of a formal mental health diagnosis, and even their expressed desire to participate in mental health treatment will be viewed within the context of their unique experiences as minority members of our community.

An individual's prior criminal history must be considered with the knowledge that people of color and members of underserved

and marginalized communities are coming into contact with law enforcement more frequently and are, often, under greater scrutiny by law enforcement than are members of the majority, more privileged population.

Likewise, a potential RISE docket participant may not have a prior, relevant mental health diagnosis because they have not had the opportunity to receive such a diagnosis and may also be struggling with the stigma of mental illness when it comes to acknowledging a desire to engage in treatment. The RISE team is committed to conducting program eligibility assessments that consider all of these relevant factors.

We do not intend to simply hope that our efforts lead to members of minority populations benefitting from the RISE program; we have developed a statistic-keeping protocol that will give us a clear picture of who is entering and successfully completing the docket.

We began our journey to create the RISE docket just under a year ago. Countless hours have been invested in research, observation, writing, resource building and community networking--everything that goes into creating this type of docket. The team that surrounds me has gone above and beyond to make our vision a reality. My colleagues on the bench and community-service providers have been incredibly supportive throughout the entire process. I am filled with gratitude. Just recently, the RISE team met for the first time to consider the initial candidates for our docket. We are so grateful and excited to have the opportunity to help improve the lives of our participants and assist them as they work to find health, happiness, and a productive, crime-free role within the community—as they work to create the lives they deserve. It is our hope that each and every one of them will RISE and come to know the feeling of Reaching Individual Success Everyday.

Hon. Sheryl Munson is a Judge with the Franklin County Court of Common Pleas.

MEET THE ADAMH

ADVOCACY & ENGAGEMENT TEAM

Introducing the new Advocacy & Engagement team for the Alcohol, Drug and Mental Health Board (ADAMH) of Franklin County.

Enhancing ADAMH's community engagement, legislative and policy efforts and grassroots advocacy. Working with diverse communities to better meet the mental health and addiction service needs for all Franklin County residents.



Dr. Ameena Kemavor
VP, Advocacy & Engagement



Monica Cerrezuela
Director, Policy & Legislative Affairs



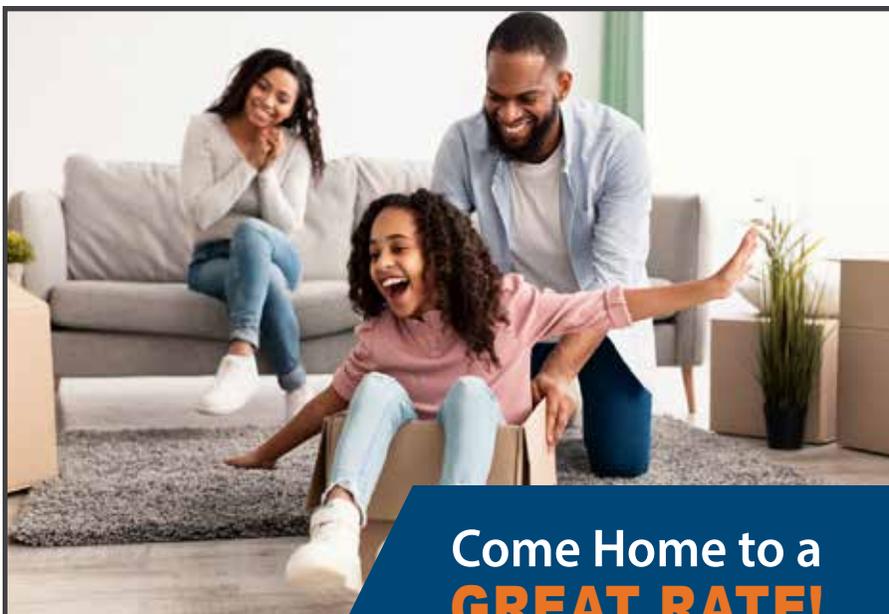
D Malone
Director, Faith-Based & Community Education



W. Shawna Gibbs
Director, Education & Special Initiatives



Contact Executive Assistant Candace Carter (ccarter@adamhfranklin.org, 614.222.3755)



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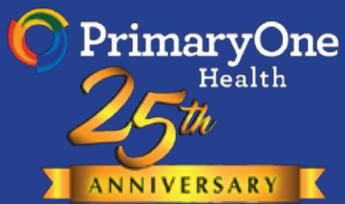
Erica C. Crawley



John O'Grady



Kevin L. Boyce



April is **Minority Health Month**. Racial and ethnic populations are at a higher risk for many treatable diseases including COVID-19, heart disease, stroke, cancer, and diabetes. Take control of your health, call 614.645.5500 to schedule your appointment or text VACCINE to 614.502.5329 to get your COVID-19 vaccine or booster.

Minority Health Month



📞 614.645.5500
 🌐 www.primaryonehealth.org

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Ohio Commission on Minority Health

-Celebrating 35 Years of Service-

“April is Minority Health Month!”

“Creating System Change to Achieve Health Equity”

A 30-Day Wellness Campaign

2022 MINORITY HEALTH MONTH
CALENDAR OF EVENTS

VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR A
STATEWIDE CALENDAR OF EVENT

Website: www.mih.ohio.gov



**Good Health
Begins With You! ®**

THE OHIO COMMISSION ON MINORITY HEALTH CELEBRATES IT'S 35TH YEAR CREATING SYSTEM CHANGE TO ACHIEVE HEALTH EQUITY

It's hard to believe it has been thirty-five years since the creation of the Ohio Commission on Minority Health. In 1987 the Commission became the first state agency in the nation set aside to examine health disparities between majority and minority populations. While 35 years have passed, the mission remains the same, "...to eliminate disparities in minority health through innovative strategies and financial opportunities, public health promotion, legislative action, public policy, and systems change." Through this work, the Commission has witnessed the establishment of national, state, and local infrastructure to address racial and ethnic health disparities. This includes the creation of the National Association of State Offices of Minority Health, as well as the Ohio Local Offices of Minority Health, Ethnic Health Coalitions, and the continuation of the Local Conversation initiatives. The Commission supported the establishment of state level offices of minority health, today they exist in over 40 states across the country.

Matthew 9:37 says, "...the harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few." Such was the work of a mighty few who banded together to establish the Commission. So, for this reason, we give honor where honor is due. We salute Former Senator Ray Miller, Members of the Governor's Task Force on Black and Minority Health, Executive Director Emeritus Cheryl Boyce, Former Senator Charleta Tavares, as well as Commissioners, designees, and staff past and present, for their tireless efforts in establishing this important work. It is upon your shoulders that we stand, and we are forever indebted for your time, expertise, and service.

The work in Ohio was groundbreaking! The efforts resulted in culturally and linguistically appropriate chronic disease prevention initiatives, replication and expansion of effective models and targeted strategies to impact disparities. Policy efforts expanded service delivery to targeted health disparity hot spots, increased allocations to impacted populations as well as the inclusion of health disparities language in the Medicaid Managed Care contracts. The creation of the Research Enhancement Evaluation Program ensured a consistent level of support and capacity building for our funded programs along with a myriad of conferences and educational opportunities tailored to expand the capacity to serve racial and populations. Commission funding opportunities focus on the prevention of chronic diseases and conditions such as cancer, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, substance abuse, violence, and infant mortality, which account for eighty-five percent of excess deaths in racial and ethnic populations. Recent efforts have resulted in obtaining funding to scale the Pathways Community HUB model, initially seed funded by the Commission, across the state.



(L to R) Ray Miller, Founder of Ohio Commission on Minority Health, Angela C. Dawson, Current Director, Cheryl Boyce, Director Emeritus

Once established, the Commission created Minority Health Month. This 30-day, high visibility, health promotion and disease prevention campaign was created in April 1989 and became nationally celebrated in 2000. Minority Health Month was designed to: promote healthy lifestyles; provide crucial information to allow individuals to practice disease prevention; showcase the providers of grass roots health care; highlight the resolution of the disparate health conditions between Ohio's minority and non-minority populations; and to gain additional support for the on-going efforts to improve minority health year-round.

Fast forward to 2022, the Commission celebrates its 35th anniversary. This year's Minority Health Month theme is "Creating System Change to Achieve Health Equity." The Commission hosted two virtual events on March 29, 2022, which was made possible by the generous sponsorship of CareSource, Buckeye Health Plan, Humana, Molina, ProMedica, and Nationwide Children's. The first was the 2022 Virtual Minority Health Month Statewide Kickoff and Awards Ceremony. During the event, the national theme for Minority Health Month was highlighted, "Give your Community a Boost." This national effort is focused on the continued importance of the COVID-19 vaccinations, including boosters as one of the strongest tools we have to end the COVID-19 pandemic that has disproportionately affected communities of color.

Ms. Tracy Townsend of WBNS 10 TV served as our Mistress of Ceremonies. Visionary and Founder, former Senator Ray Miller provided the historical lens and continued need for the agency, while former Senator Charleta Tavares outlined the strategic policy path forward. In addition, the agency received proclamations from the Governor's Office, Ohio Senate, and the Ohio House of Representatives. The keynote speaker was Dr. Camara Jones, past President of the American Public Health Association and a national thought leader on how acknowledging racism is a path to achieving health equity. Dr. Jones's address outlined the importance recognizing how racism

is sapping the strength of the entire nation and how we must move from declarations to determined action. Her presentation emphasized the need to initiate organizational change by asking "how is racism operating here" and examining internal policies, practices, norms, and values and removing unjust processes. Finally, the ceremony honored those individuals who have worked tirelessly to eliminate health disparities, create system change and challenge systems to take steps toward equity.

The second virtual event was a systems level panel discussion entitled "Achieving Health Equity: Naming Racism and Moving to Action" featuring keynote speaker, Dr. Camara Jones, Director Maureen Corcoran of the Ohio Department of Medicaid, Director Lori Criss of the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, President Amy Rohling-McGee of the Health Policy Institute of Ohio, and Dr. Deena Chisolm of Nationwide Children's Hospital serving as moderator. Director Angela Dawson of the Ohio Commission on Minority Health provided a reaction at the conclusion of the panel.

The panel discussion focused on the intersection of race, policy, and health. The panel initiated with a review of lessons learned over the past two years after COVID-19 severely impacted communities of color and revealed the grim truth of the historic disparities that exist for racial and ethnic populations. Of the many factors that contribute to health disparities, structural racism lies at the center perpetuating unfair opportunity structures which lead to challenging social determinants that cause a disproportionate burden of disease and death, especially for minoritized groups. Based on our experiences with COVID-19 and ongoing discussions about race and racism, this discussion could not have been more timely.

The panelist discussed how health equity is achieved when we assure everyone has fair and just opportunities to be healthy. They emphasized how the challenge of health equity requires removing systemic barriers, such as poverty, discrimination, the lack of access to good jobs, quality education, housing, safe environments, and high-quality health care.

The significant ubiquitous effect of racism impacts every facet of our lives, the panelists agreed, especially the health of Ohio's racial and ethnic minoritized populations. This candid conversation highlighted the opportunities and challenges to create system change, address systemic racism and achieve health equity and reminded viewers that racism diminishes the strength of the entire society, negatively impacting everyone.

Continued on Page 16

Continued from Page 15

The panelists concluded with a lens on data to leave those viewing the event with an understanding of the magnitude of the challenges before Ohioans. They each explained the opportunities to achieve health equity through a variety of initiatives. The panelist provided examples of steps they have taken such as: educating on the connections between racism and health; encouraging systems to acknowledge the unjust historical and modern-day policies and practices that impact health; inviting those who are impacted to the table and to hear their concerns and being responsive; allocating resources over a protracted period of time in proportion to the need; as well as reviewing and evaluating implemented strategies and adjusting them as needed. One thing the panelists made perfectly clear: key policy strategies are still needed to dismantle systemic racism.

Director Dawson's panel reaction reminded the audience, in Ohio, we continue to see the widening of gaps in health disparities and health inequities for racial and ethnic populations. These inequities are evident when we examine infant mortality rates, maternal mortality rates, the opioid epidemic, lower life expectancy and the disproportionate burden from diseases such as cancer, cardiovascular disease, and diabetes, which are all at unacceptable levels. Allowing these disparities to continue, will negatively impact Ohio's economic stability as well as the health status of our populations. Director Dawson commended HPIO's release of health policy fact sheets that educate state and local policy makers, private sector organizations as well as individuals and community groups on the connections between health and racism and provided recommended steps that can be taken to move toward equity.

Dawson shared examples of the analysis from the 2021 Health Value Dashboard, which highlights opportunities in areas such as housing affordability, where when 68,009 Black Ohioans and 7,143 Hispanic Ohioans would NOT spend more than 50% of their income on housing, we can level the playing field. These attainable opportunities exist across multiple areas that connect to social determinants of health, those essential resources that impact health.

State and local policy makers have both an obligation and an opportunity to assure that every Ohioan has fair and just opportunities to be healthy which will benefit all Ohioans. Assuring this access to achieve health and well-being is a shared value in both the public and private sectors.

Dawson noted that Ohio was second in the nation for the number of declarations declaring that racism is a public health crisis and Governor DeWine's acknowledgement that racism is a public health crisis and subsequent release of a state level health equity plan. This plan creates a challenge and an opportunity to examine our state system's policies, practices, values, and norms and commit to make continuous changes to advance equity. Our work must continue across systems and overtime until we achieve equity for all populations. Regular transparent reporting of these efforts can encourage constituents and other public and private partners to stay engaged in equity work.

Dawson issued a clarion call reminding the audience that all Ohioans can take meaningful action to eliminate racism and improve health. This must be done across races, ethnicities, faiths, political parties, and regions of the state.

Director Dawson challenged the audience to use their power and influence, voice, and experience where they live, work, play and age to achieve equity. She concluded by quoting the African proverb "If you wish to move mountains tomorrow, you must start by lifting stones today."

The Commission funded organizations will host safe in-person and virtual events during April, in communities across Ohio.

All events are free and open to the public. You can access the 2022 calendar of events on the website at www.mih.ohio.gov

The Commission currently has one-time grant funding available for demonstration grants and opioid prevention education, visit our website to apply.

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LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

SUPREME COURT REJECTS THIRD MAP FOR LEGISLATIVE DISTRICTS



By Senator Charleta B. Tavares (Ret.)

The Ohio Redistricting Commission (ORC) again failed to meet the approval of the Ohio Supreme Court with their legislative maps. The Supreme Court once again said the third iteration of the maps unduly favored the Republican Party. After the third set of rejected legislative maps, the ORC on March 22, 2022 voted on a set of eighteen rules to be employed by the two selected outside mapmakers to craft new maps.

The two hired bi-partisan mapmakers are University of Florida Professor Michael McDonald and National Demographics Corporation President Douglas Johnson. They will be joined by legislative staff and consultants and will devise the maps in “public”. The Ohio Government Television (OGT) will live-stream the mapmaking process taking place in Room 116 in the Ohio State House starting on Thursday, March 24 at 8:00am until completion. The maps are due to the Supreme Court on Monday, March 28, 2022. Stay tuned...

House and Senate Races Bounced Off of May Primary Ballot

Due to the legislative map fiasco (see above), the Ohio Secretary of State has ordered the eighty-eight County Boards of Election to remove the candidates for the Ohio House of Representatives and Senate since their district lines have not been drawn and approved by the Ohio Redistricting Commission and the Ohio Supreme Court. The Primary Election for the legislative races will be conducted on a new date after the district maps are approved. This will cost Ohioans millions of dollars in additional spending by County Election Boards to in essence conduct two Primary Elections. In addition, the Ohio Republican Party and Ohio Democratic Party state central committee races are also affected. The statewide offices including Governor, Treasurer, Auditor and Secretary of State along with local races will still be on the May 3rd Primary Election ballot.

Important Election Dates:

- Deadline to Register to Vote: April 4
- Early In-Person Voting: Begins April 5 and includes the Saturday, Sunday and Monday before Election Day
- Absentee Voting By Mail: Begins April 5
- April 30: Deadline to Request an Absentee Ballot (Noon)
- Election Day: May 3 (Polls Open 6:30 a.m. - 7:30 p.m.)

EARLY IN-PERSON VOTING HOURS FOR APRIL (MAY 3, 2022 PRIMARY ELECTION)

April 5-8: 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.



Reporters interview Rep. Bob Cuff, Ohio Speaker of the House and State Senator Vernon Sykes, D-28 Akron

April 11-15: 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
April 18-22: 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
April 25-29: 8:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.
April 30: 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

MAY

May 2: Mailed absentee ballots must be postmarked by this date

May 3: Primary Election: Polls are open from 6:30 a.m. - 7:30 p.m.

May 3: Absentee Ballots may be returned by mail or personally delivered to your County Board of Elections. If not returned by mail, absentee ballots must be received by your Board of Elections by 7:30 p.m.

May 13: Last day for boards to receive mail-in ballots that have been postmarked on or before May 2.

EARLY IN-PERSON VOTING HOURS FOR MAY

May 1: 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.
May 2: 8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Bill Updates

Senate Bill 27 – a bill that would exempt employers from paying overtime to employees for performing small tasks off the clock for which their bosses never asked – checking email, checking their schedule and commuting to work.

House Bill 29 – allows sports betting in Ohio. (Signed into law by the governor)

House Bill 41 – creates additional safety and security measures for mental health professionals. (Passed the House)

House Bill 95 – establishes a tax credit to assist beginning farmers. (Passed the House)

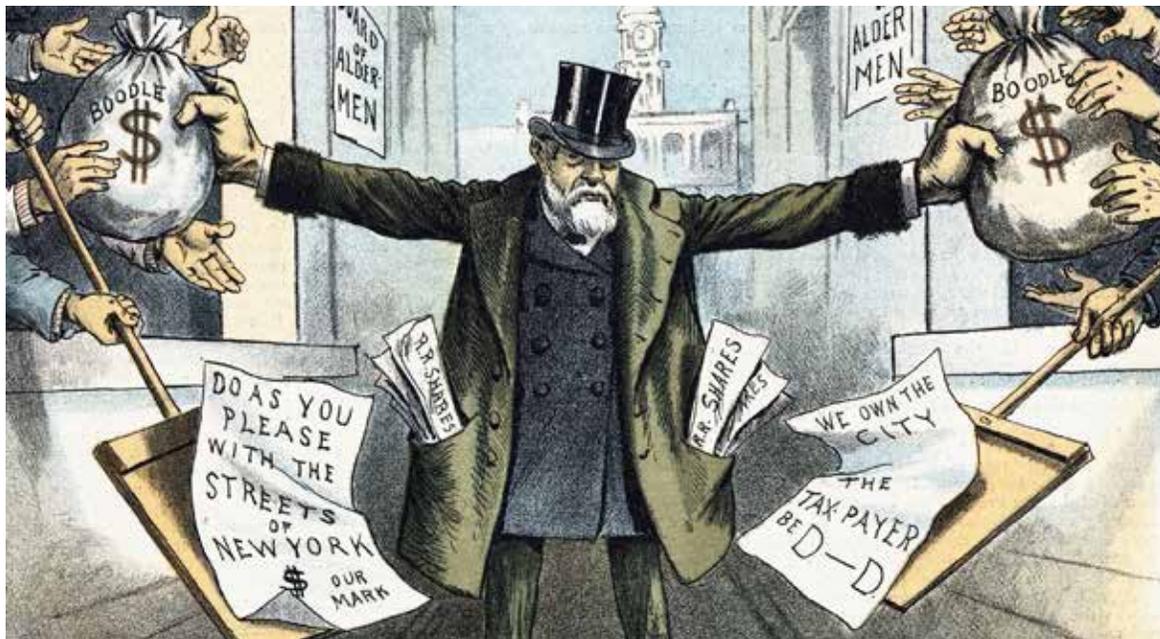
House Bill 6 and FirstEnergy Scandal Update
The saga continues in the scandal that has rocked the energy industry, Public Utilities Commission and the Ohio General Assembly. As outlined in previous editions of the Columbus/Dayton African American news journal, Ohio was rocked in 2020 with a bribery and dark money scheme hatched by FirstEnergy and GOP operatives including the then Speaker of the Ohio House, Larry Householder.

According to The Ohio Capital Journal, “*FirstEnergy and its shareholders were on the verge of a settling the shareholders’ derivative lawsuit, announcing an agreement in February pending judicial review. The agreement had called for FirstEnergy’s insurers to pay the company \$180 million for damages suffered in the scandal. According to the proposed settlement, it would also force out six members of the board of directors once their current terms expire and require corporate reforms related to “political and lobbying activities.” A federal judge has demanded that lawyers for FirstEnergy, answer his question about which company officials ordered what has been described as the largest political bribery scheme in Ohio history, within 24 hours.*”

U.S. District Judge John R. Adams, has refused to approve anything until plaintiffs’ counsel answer one critical question: Who at FirstEnergy ordered the \$64 million in political bribes?

In his order, Adams emphasized the public’s interest in the case: FirstEnergy, a publicly traded company, admitted to bribing public officials. The public cannot trust or even evaluate any corporate reforms from FirstEnergy if the company is allowed to leave such gaping holes in the plotline, he said.’”

Continued on Page 18



it is that the political process was so easily corrupted.”

This is one of the most heinous and politically corrupt schemes devised in Ohio’s history. The ramifications and fallout will be felt for years to come. Let us make sure that our elected and appointed officials adopt policies and protections to prevent this kind of bribery and theft from taking place again in Ohio.

Foot Notes:

¹By: Jake Zuckerman - March 22, 2022, Ohio Capital Journal

²Ohio Capital Journal, Jake Zuckerman, March 22, 2022

It appears that FirstEnergy believes its only obligations are to the shareholders of the company and not the public (even though it is regulated by the state’s Public Utilities Commission of Ohio to do business in the state and is publicly traded). “Adams emphasized the public’s interest in the case: FirstEnergy, a publicly traded company, admitted to bribing public officials. The public cannot trust or even evaluate any

corporate reforms from FirstEnergy if the company is allowed to leave such gaping holes in the plotline, he said.

“It is not only the trust of FirstEnergy that must be rebuilt,” Adams wrote. “This bribery scheme has undoubtedly shaken whatever trust that Ohioans may have had in the political process used by their elected officials. The public has a right to know how

Former Sen. Charleta B. Tavares, D-Columbus, is the 1st Democrat and African American woman to serve in the Ohio House of Representatives and the Ohio Senate from Franklin County. She is also the first African American woman to serve in leadership in the history of Ohio and the 1st Democrat woman to serve in leadership in both the Ohio House of Representatives and the Ohio Senate (House Minority Whip and Senate Assistant Minority Leader).

EXPANDED TAX CREDITS CAN HELP FAMILIES MEET THEIR BASIC NEEDS AND THRIVE



By Will Petrik

All of us, no matter what we look like or where we live, deserve to thrive and pursue our dreams. COVID-19 forced businesses and schools to close, and many people to put their dreams on hold. The federal government expanded tax credits to put more money in people’s pockets to help pay for the basics, like groceries, rent and child care; and to build toward a brighter future.

You could get thousands of dollars back when you file your federal taxes this year. Here are several cash benefits to be aware of:

- **The child tax credit:** Most families with children under 18 are eligible for the expanded child tax credit, including families who don’t usually file taxes. If you received monthly checks between July and December 2021, you must file a tax return to get the rest of the tax credit. Those who didn’t get monthly payments can get the full credit when they file. People who had a baby in 2021 are likely eligible for \$3,600.
- **The earned income tax credit:** If you were paid low wages in 2021, you may be eligible for a refund or to decrease the federal taxes you owe. More people than ever are eligible for this credit.

- **The child and dependent care tax credit:** Working people or jobseekers who paid for the care of an adult dependent or for child care could be eligible for up to \$8,000.
- **The third stimulus check:** If you didn’t receive the third stimulus check for \$1,400 per person last year, you can get your payment when you file taxes. People who had a baby in 2021 could be eligible for an additional \$1,400.

How much money could I receive?

Each of the tax credits have different eligibility levels, based on filing status, income, and number of eligible children or dependents. Use the calculators below to see if you’re eligible for any of the tax credits and how much you might receive based on your unique household and situation:

- How much can I receive from the child tax credit? <https://bit.ly/36hRZTs>
- How much can I receive from the child and dependent care credit? <https://bit.ly/3ujxk9r>
- How much can I receive from the earned income tax credit? <https://bit.ly/3Nh1PFy>

Get your refund today

To get the payments you’re entitled to, you need to file a 2021 tax return this year. The deadline to file is April 18, 2022. Even if you have never filed taxes or aren’t required to file taxes because you’re paid very low wages or

have no income, it is worth filing this year to get money back to help pay for things like groceries or car repairs.

- Visit <https://GetYourRefund.org/CTCOH> to file online with virtual help.
- Find a Volunteer Income Tax Assistance site near you (<https://bit.ly/3IwQUEb>), where you can get help to file your taxes in person.

Tax credits provide economic security and stability

More than 1.2 million Ohio families received monthly child tax credit payments between July and December of 2021. These payments had an immediate impact, taking stress off families and making it easier for more families to afford the basics, like groceries, rent, child care and educational expenses. People also spent money at local businesses, saved for a house, and paid off debt.

Research shows that when families have enough resources to meet their basic needs, kids are healthier, get better grades in school, and are paid more during their lifetime compared to kids living in deep poverty. This is why it is critical for everyone to get the money that belongs to them.

Will Petrik is a Budget Researcher for Policy Matters Ohio.



Need help at home? Caring for a loved one? Call COAAA today!

Central Ohio Area Agency on Aging (COAAA) helps older adults and individuals with disabilities live independently at home for as long as possible. COAAA can assist you in finding the information, resources, and services you need.



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Also offered at COAAA!

COAAA will host a **FREE** virtual 'Medicare for Beginners' workshop via Zoom on

Wednesday, April 13 at 5:30 p.m.

If you're new to Medicare, have questions about your options, or want to learn more about navigating the Medicare system, this workshop offers free unbiased information to help you make informed decisions.

Registration is required. Email Andy Haggard, COAAA Medicare Outreach Manager, at ahaggard@coaaa.org. For a complete 2022 'Medicare for Beginners' workshop schedule, visit www.coaaa.org/medicare.

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³Borrower income must be below 80% of the area median income, or property must be located in a low- to moderate-income census tract, as updated annually by the FFIEC (Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council).



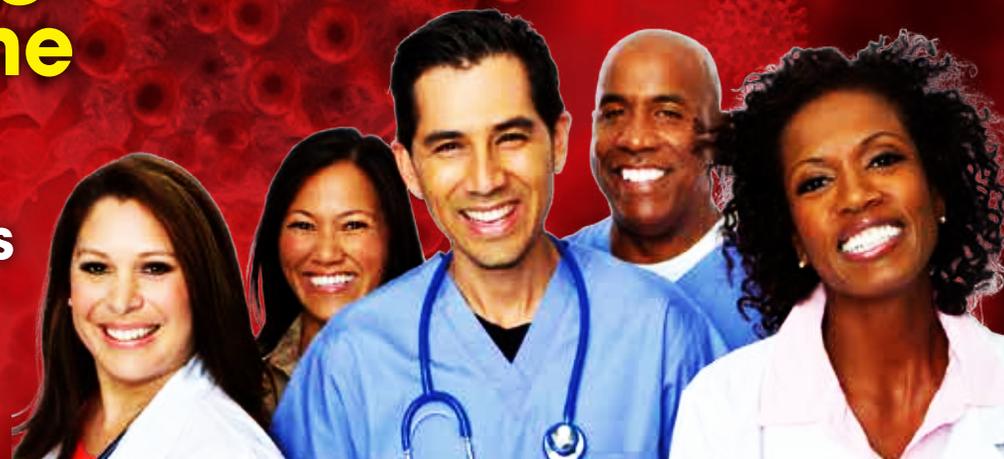
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COVER STORY

THE PELT CLINIC: BETTER TREATMENT, BETTER OUTCOMES



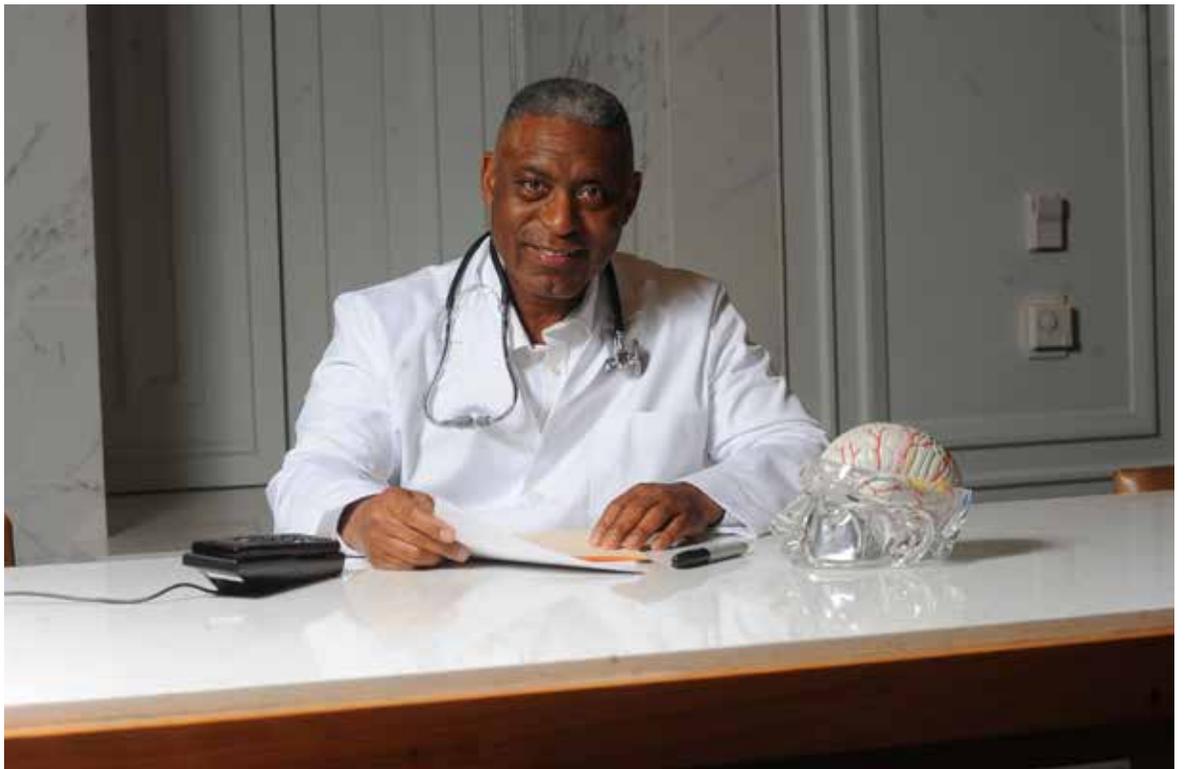
By Marty Miller

Maya Angelou, the great African American poet, author, and civil rights activist, once said, “I did then what I knew how to do. Now that I know better, I do better.” Oprah Winfrey, who was greatly influenced by Angelou, put it like this, “When we know better, we do better.”

For more than three decades, treatment for substance abuse disorders utilized a fee-for-service model. Charges are based on individual services such as tests ordered, prescriptions written, and treatment given. This has resulted in more emphasis being placed on the number of services rendered to make money rather than quality patient outcomes.

Dr. Alvin Pelt is a well-known and respected addiction psychiatrist in Central Ohio where he has practiced since 1989. He has served as the medical director for numerous addiction treatment facilities in Columbus and Franklin County. He knows that giving patients the same treatment regardless of the diagnosis and presenting problem only contributes to a repetitive cycle of relapses. “I was raised by people with drug addictions and mental health challenges, and I have more than 25 years of experience working in the field of mental health and addiction. Being African American and growing up in Detroit, I’m also attuned to our culture and the need for high-quality care,” said Pelt, “and what I know is that we must make a shift to individualized assessments and treatment plans or continue to suffer the consequences of an outdated system of care.” That conviction led Pelt in 2020 to open The Pelt Clinic which focuses on helping people with both addiction and mental health problems restore their family connections, employment options, and social relationships so they can once again function in the mainstreams of life.

As is often the case, it took a tragedy to move the treatment community from a fee-for-service model to individualized treatment plans. In 2011, a young man named Brian Mendell died from his opioid addiction. Shortly before his death, he shared with his father his hope that one day our society would realize that he was not a bad person but rather that he suffered from a disease. This raised the question of why did all of Brian’s attempts at recovery fail? That simple question led to the movement in 2020 to look at high quality programs with individual treatment plans, outcome measurements, and the role of emerging technologies to enhance the quality of care. “The standards are being set by the American Society of Addiction Medicine and the American Psychiatric Association,” Pelt said, and the insurance industry is preparing to launch national patient outcome requirements that will raise the bar on the delivery of quality care at a lower cost.”



Dr. Alvin Pelt, Founder of The Pelt Clinic which addresses addiction and mental health issues.

“Addiction is a very complex disease. At its core, addiction is a brain disease which is oftentimes transmitted through the genes of certain families,” Pelt explained. “This disease affects one’s ability to think. Decision-making takes the biggest hit and motivational deficiencies also emerge. As a result, the addicted person demonstrates irrational, foolish behaviors.” Pelt went on to explain that one’s memory is also affected so what the person remembers is the euphoric feelings they got from using which helps explain why a person cannot stop using no matter how much they try.

Dr. Pelt also pointed out that 48-50% of patients with addiction also have mental health issues. “They could be depressed over the losses they endured while addicted, i.e., loss of connections to family members, social engagements, working, friends, etc. “It’s what I refer to as the ‘country western record losses.’ “I lost my house, my car, my job, my dog.” For the patient, it becomes déjà vu all over again. We simply cannot treat everyone the same and expect a good outcome.”

Better Treatment: The Pelt Way

In the document, Facing Addiction in America: The Surgeon General’s Report on Alcohol, Drugs, and Health, Surgeon General Admiral Vivek H. Murthy, M.D. is quoted as saying that we (as a country) need a cultural shift in how we think about addiction. He states that for too long, too many in our country have viewed addiction as a moral failing. Dr. Pelt agrees with Dr. Murthy and is “walking the walk.”

“The Pelt Clinic is leading the way for patients and their loved ones to experience a lifetime of recovery,” declared Pelt. “Our goal is to move patients from living on the fringes of life to

mainstream living with family, friends, and co-workers. We use a multi-dimensional approach that focuses on the individual patient. For our curriculum, we thoughtfully and purposely selected Living In Balance; a program developed by the Hazelden Betty Foundation that conducts extensive addiction research and houses a fully accredited graduate school of addiction studies. Living In Balance is patient-focused and incorporates proven techniques for life-long recovery.”

In addition, The Pelt Clinic adopted an integrated care model that is endorsed by the American Psychiatric Association. “I am a medical doctor, and we are privileged to have an advanced practice psychiatric nurse, Dr. Patricia Bailey, on our team. Together, we can assess and treat the whole person which contributes to long-term recovery. In short, we apply research-based treatments that are specifically created to meet the individual needs, preferences, and cultural expectations of the patient.

The Pelt Clinic staff are trained on the latest evidence-based assessment and treatment criteria developed by the American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM). “One of the ASAM criteria deals with the patient’s motivation for seeking treatment. “Treatment,” Pelt said, “doesn’t work without motivation.” Change is challenging. We don’t like change which begs the question: what causes our “change agent” to activate? Dr. Pelt said we only need to look back over our past to understand that our “change agent” is activated when we either gain a new insight (5-10% of

Continued on Page 21

Dr. Pelt's patients use insight as a catalyst for change) or change comes about due to pain and suffering. "When pain reaches a critical point, which is different for all of us, then we seek to make a change," Pelt said. The clinic uses both Motivational Interviewing and Motivational Enhancement Therapy to improve the patient's motivation for change.

Another innovation of The Pelt Clinic is the use of telemedicine. Dr. Nora Volkow, Director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse, stated that the "probable reasons" for the rapid increases in overdose deaths in America are limited access to medication for opiate use disorders, limited access to peer support groups, and the stress of social distancing. One of The Pelt Clinic's core values is to embrace current and emerging technologies and they are doing just that by offering virtual counseling and treatment services. "If the patient has a smartphone, they can access treatment at The Pelt Clinic. They don't have to have transportation. Patients don't have to worry about trying to get their appointment during their lunch hour. Thanks to telemedicine, we are accessible," declared Pelt. The clinic continues to seek out partnerships that use technology to further expand patient access.

It's Time To Know the Facts & Take Action
In just 12 short months, from November 2019 to November 2020, the National Center for Health Statistics Provisional Overdose Death Counts reported a 28% increase in overdose fatalities in the United States with the stipulation that the number may be higher due to underreporting by states. However, according to Franklin County Coroner, Dr. Anahi Ortiz, overdose fatalities during the same time in Franklin County rose by 45.6% and a look back at the period of 2017 to 2020 shows an alarming 83.9% increase in overdose deaths. Overdose fatalities of African Americans in Franklin County surpassed the death rate of Caucasians in 2019 and continue to surpass all races and ethnicities. In 2020 the overdose death rate for African Americans was 75.8 per 100,000 compared to the next highest death rate of Caucasians of 65.4 deaths per 100,000. (Franklin County Overdose Fatalities Data Brief: 2020; Franklin County Forensic Science Center, Office of the Coroner)

Drug addiction and mental health issues come with a never-ending list of devastating losses to the person with the disease, their families, friends, workplaces, and our communities. We want to help but where do we begin? First, we need to separate myths from facts. The former Director of the National Institute on Drug Abuse, Dr. Alan Leshner, outlined a few widely held myths about drug addiction:

Myth: Drug addiction is voluntary behavior.

Fact: A person may start out as an occasional user which is a voluntary decision. But using addictive drugs over time changes the brain which results in compulsive and even uncontrollable drug use. Pelt added that battling one's way out of addiction is their greatest accomplishment in life.

Myth: Drug addiction is a character flaw.

Fact: Drug addiction is a brain disease; brain molecules and cells change with drug misuse which leads to behavior changes. The drug becomes the single most powerful motivator.

Myth: You must want drug treatment for it to be effective.

Fact: Persons with addiction usually face some sort of intense pressure to go into treatment. There may be family pressure, or they may be court-ordered into treatment. Dr. Pelt reiterated that a person's "change agent" is activated through insight or pain and suffering.

Myth: Treatment for drug addiction should be a one-shot deal; we should strive to find "a magic bullet" to treat all forms of drug abuse.

Fact: Drug addiction is a chronic disorder. Dr. Pelt explained that because of the physiological changes to the brain, it is necessary to keep persons with an addiction engaged in outpatient therapy for an extended period, i.e., at least five (5) years. He drew an analogy to a person receiving dialysis because of kidney failure. According to Pelt, with addiction, there is a brain failure that requires long-term treatment. Researchers are looking into a cure for addiction but presently there is no cure; there is no "magic bullet."

When asked what families, friends, places of worship, and workplaces can do, Dr. Pelt revisited the key role of motivation in recovery. The Pelt Clinic works with family members and significant others who impact the person in treatment. With professional guidance, family and friends may use a 'carrot-and-stick' technique to encourage their loved ones to commit to treatment. "For example," Pelt said, "I might say that you can stay with me (carrot) if you continue to receive treatment (stick). Or you might offer to watch their kids (carrot) as long as they go to treatment (stick)." Pelt pointed out that there is a 'string' between the 'carrot' and the 'stick.' That string is this: I don't mind helping you as long as it doesn't hurt me.

"What we know is that negative motivation or coercion can have just as much efficacy as positive motivation," said Pelt. "Medical doctors have one of the highest success rates on the planet because they stand to lose their license to practice and more unless they get treatment for their addiction." Pelt went on to explain that the State Medical Board offers good treatment and monitoring for up to five (5) years. The Medical Board, in effect, uses the 'carrot' and 'stick' at the same time.

Workplaces are generally straightforward with the 'carrot and stick' approach and don't tolerate drug misuse. Many companies through their Employee Assistance Programs offer treatment for drug and mental health issues. An employee stands to lose their job unless they enter into treatment.

Regarding places of worship and how they can help, Dr. Pelt noted that more churches are starting to engage in addiction recovery. He points to Celebrate Recovery, a Christ-centered movement to support persons with addictions. Celebrate Recovery churches receive specific training and resources. The movement has grown worldwide to more than 35,000 places of worship with millions of persons completing their Step Study program. In addition, some churches are getting into sober living homes which provide safe, drug-free residential living environments for persons working on being drug-free.

Finally, Pelt offered that perhaps we all need to examine ourselves and change our perspective about those with addiction and see them as "the least of" our brothers and sisters. Their behaviors are erratic and senseless and some of them don't smell so good, but they are 'us' and they need us. Now that we know better, we can do better.

Dr. Alvin Pelt is the President and Medical Director of The Pelt Clinic, Central Ohio's premiere substance use disorder clinic.

Dr. Pelt is a well-known and respected addiction psychiatrist in the Central Ohio area where he began his practice in 1989. He is a graduate of Western Michigan University and Wayne State University School of Medicine.

Dr. Pelt is Board Certified with the American Board of Neurology and Psychiatry, with additional certification in Addiction Psychiatry; he is also a Diplomate of the American Board of Addiction Medicine (ABAM) and a Fellow with the American Society of Addiction Medicine. He has memberships with the American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM), the American Academy of Addiction Psychiatrist (AAP) and the American Psychiatric Association (APA).

Dr. Pelt has current affiliation with Ohio University as an Assistant Clinical Professor of Psychiatry and formerly with The Ohio State University. In 2002, Dr. Pelt was part of the National Institute of Drug Abuse (NIDA) Clinical Trials Network (CTN) that conducted the initial human trials for Buprenorphine, a medicine used for the treatment of opiate addiction. He has over twenty-five years of experience in treating addictions; with specialization in alcohol and opiate addiction-recovery.

Dr. Pelt and his wife, Pamela, have three sons and three grandchildren. He enjoys traveling, yoga, swimming, and walking.

The Pelt Clinic Mission & Vision

The Pelt Clinic utilizes Evidence Based Practices, assessment tools and treatment recommendations to deliver Individualized Substance Use Disorder Treatment that includes Medications for Addiction Treatment (MAT).

The Pelt clinic's aim is to help rebuild family units by mainstreaming the addicted person back into society as evidenced by them reestablishing their relationships or building new, healthy relationships, regaining employment, and resuming their role in the family.

If you or a loved one needs help, contact The Pelt Clinic at 614-304-1127 or send us a confidential email at mainstream@thepeltclinic.com or complete the intake form on our website at thepeltclinic.com.

Marty Miller is a contributing writer for the news journal. She currently serves as the CEO for the Pelt Clinic.

COMMISSIONERS ANNOUNCE MAJOR NEW CHILD CARE INITIATIVE

The Franklin County commissioners this morning announced a historic new investment in families and local child care providers called Franklin County RISE. The partnership with Action For Children will invest nearly \$23 million over two years to support Franklin County families who are struggling to pay for child care as well as child care providers and staff. This is the most significant investment ever in the local early childhood learning system, and builds on earlier funding from the City of Columbus. The funding comes from the American Rescue Plan and is intended to help families who are facing the “benefits cliff” in which they make too much to qualify for Publicly Funded Child Care (PFCC) but too little to actually afford child care, as well as the early learning centers and teachers on which they rely.

“As we reimagine what our child care system is going to look like coming out of the pandemic, some have tried to frame it as a choice between increasing affordability or improving quality,” Franklin County Commissioner Erica C. Crawley said. “As a single mom of twins, I can tell you parents don’t see it as an either/or proposition—and neither does Franklin County. Early care and education is an educational, workforce, and economic issue and must be top priority requiring our investment now. The county’s investment will yield invaluable dividends now and for our community years later.”

Nearly one in six of the child care centers in Central Ohio that closed during the COVID-19 pandemic has not reopened, and half of those remaining report that they are not able to cover their expenses. Families rely on child care to help prepare children for school and so that the parents can work, but high-quality care can cost more than college in Franklin County, and parents who make as little as \$25,000 per year don’t qualify for assistance. Franklin County RISE will help alleviate these struggles in three ways: early learning scholarships, incentive payments for child care programs, and financial supports for child care workers.

“Providing high-quality child care and running a business are both challenges even in the best of times,” said Commissioner John O’Grady. “So many of our providers have had to shut their doors over the past two years and others are struggling to survive even as the economy begins to recover. Our new Franklin County RISE funding for both child care centers and their staff will help to keep them afloat, incentivize quality, and ensure that great teachers don’t have to abandon their passion for jobs in other fields.”

Franklin County RISE includes \$11.4 million in scholarships for families facing the benefits cliff, and five hundred students are expected to be eligible for up to \$10,000



per year in scholarships. A recent report found that investments in quality child care for disadvantaged children yields a lifetime return of greater than 10:1, an economic impact of more than \$110 million for the scholarships.

The support to providers totals more than \$11.3 million in four funding areas: as many as 750 providers are expected to receive up to \$3,000 per year for taking on low-income families, up to \$10,000 for improving their state ratings, and up to \$5,000 per year for expanding to non-traditional hours. In addition, \$500,000 of the RISE funding is dedicated to emergency rental assistance for child care workers. These vital teachers are predominantly women and people of color and chronically underpaid, with an average wage for credentialed lead teachers averaging just \$12.22 per hour—about 41% of the median income for Franklin County. RISE teacher supports will offer an average of \$3,000 in rental assistance payments per household.

“What a cruel irony for parents to be told that even though their job doesn’t pay enough to afford child care, it makes them ineligible for child care assistance,” said Commissioner Kevin L. Boyce. “The benefits cliff is the result of federal policy that simply hasn’t kept up with the cost of child care. If we realistically want people in the workforce and moving up the economic ladder, we have to find ways to make child care affordable.”

Action for Children is a premier child care resource and referral agency for both families and providers in Central Ohio, offering parent education and seminars, training and technical assistance for teachers and providers, as well as advocacy and workforce development. Action for Children is already administering some child care scholarships and signing bonuses funded by the City of Columbus which will be rolled into the Franklin County RISE initiatives. Action for Children will administer Franklin County RISE, serving as the point of contact for families and early learning centers, determining program eligibility, and administering the scholarships and grants.

“This program is designed to empower families and provide resources they need to take advantage of the many benefits child care offers,” said Action for Children CEO Eric Karolak. “Quality child care delivers a lifetime of return for young minds, so it’s exciting to make an impact in our community with our local government partners.”

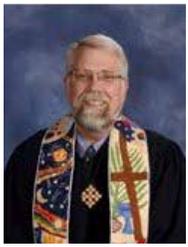
To learn more about the Franklin County RISE program, including detailed eligibility requirements, and to apply for the scholarships or incentives, visit RISE. FranklinCountyOhio.gov.

For more information on the Franklin County Board of Commissioners, call the Office of Public Affairs at (614) 525-3322 or visit commissioners.franklincountyohio.gov.

WHAT MAKES YOU SO STRONG?



Photo from *The Boston Globe*



By Rev. Tim Ahrens, DMin

Remember this moment in history. For two days and 23 hours in March, seated before the Senate Judiciary Committee, Federal Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson faced supportive and hostile questions about her ability to serve as the first African American woman on the Supreme Court of the United States. Through the tears and kind supportive testimony of Senator Cory Booker to the absurd line of questioning from Senators Tom Cotton and Ted Cruz, to Senator Marsha Blackburn asking Jackson to define, “woman,” the health and sickness in the Senate was on full display while the clarity and purpose of Judge Jackson shined brilliantly.

Through the entire proceedings, Judge Jackson maintained her poise. She responded appropriately to everything presented, even when some questions about child pornography cases kept being asked again and again. Somehow, she did not burst out laughing when challenged with stupid questions – most of which had nothing to do with the Supreme Court or her judicial record. I thought of millions of African American women and men who have faced ridicule, lies, the deluge of prejudicial poking and taunts and the bizarre behaviors of white women and men and through it all endured,

survived and prospered in the midst of the madness.

Judge Jackson reminds me of Deborah, the only female judge in the Bible, who excelled in multiple areas. One of the Bible’s most outstanding figures, Deborah served ancient Israel as a prophet, judge, military leader, songwriter and singer. In Judges 4-5, Deborah shows her exemplary moral character and the chapters reflect that the people gave her great love and respect. Like Moses before and David afterward, she fused in herself the roles of prophet, national leader, and military commander.

Deborah judged and led Israel for 60 years in the 12th century B.C. Her oversight covered approximately 20 years of national hardship before the Canaanite war and then a peaceful aftermath of 40 years. Arguably, Deborah first was recognized as a prophet, then as judge/leader, next in a military role (5:15), and finally as a songstress. She judged under a palm tree. Rabbinic tradition maintains that is validated her fairness, openness, and refusal to show partiality. Deborah is introduced, as are the other 11 judges in the Book of Judges, without fanfare. The Bible records no dissent or rebellion against her. She demonstrates for all time that true leadership never resides in gender but in character and gifting. Over 3,000 years ago, the Israelites recognized her abilities and prospered under her tenure. Judge Deborah remains to this day a hero in Judaism.

Watching Ketanji Brown Jackson handle the bitter biting commentary of Republican Senators with grace and peace convinced me that we have a great Justice of the Court emerging before us. She will thrive because of her strength character.

What makes you so strong, Judge Jackson? How did you become who you are? As I watch you face down the fury, I want to know how steel got in your spine and ice got in your veins. I think I know. I hope I am right. You stand on the shoulders of all who delivered you to this moment. You endure because they endured. You rise because they blessed you with a rising spirit. You are strong because they embodied strength in all they said and did before you were even born.

Let us remember this moment in history. We were all witnesses to the ascension of our first African American Supreme Court Justice. When the gavel drops on her powerful and long reign on the court, I am sure that Justice Jackson will go down in history alongside Brandeis, Warren, Holmes, Ginsburg and Thurgood Marshall as one of the greatest justices our nation has ever known.

Rev. Dr. Tim Ahrens is the Senior Minister of First Congregational Church, United Church of Christ in downtown Columbus. A church known for its witness to social justice since its birth as an abolitionist congregation in 1852. Rev. Ahrens is the fifth consecutive senior minister from Yale Divinity School and is a lifelong member of the United Church of Christ.

DEROLPH: 25 YEARS LATER E&A COALITION ISSUES STATEMENT

COLUMBUS - It has been 25 years since the Ohio Supreme Court ruled on March 24, 1997 that "Ohio's elementary and secondary schools are neither thorough nor efficient" and therefore unconstitutional in the landmark decision known as DeRolph.

William L. Phillis, executive director for the Ohio Coalition for Equity & Adequacy of School Funding that brought the lawsuit, said the ruling fundamentally changed and shaped many aspects of the education landscape in Ohio.

"But the governor and the Ohio General Assembly have yet to address the remedy ordered initially in 1997 and in three subsequent Ohio Supreme Court rulings for a public school funding formula that passes constitutional muster," Phillis said. "Still, there has been a significant amount of progress prompted by the decision."

Phillis cited new school buildings, a larger percentage of the state General Revenue Budget directed toward schools and a growing awareness of the need to address the serious discrepancies between have and have not school districts that emanated from the March 24, 1997 ruling.

"Due to DeRolph, the state and local districts through the Ohio School Facilities

Commission invested more than \$20 billion in more than 1,200 new school buildings in districts. Prior to DeRolph, children were attending schools in places like Flushing, Ohio that had no indoor plumbing in some of the buildings or wooden buildings in Morgan County that lacked sprinkler systems. Other schools lacked science labs, cafeterias, libraries and were ill-equipped to meet the demands of the Internet. The school building program, a state and local partnership, changed all that thanks to DeRolph," Phillis said.

"Due to DeRolph, the percentage of the state budget allotted to K-12 education grew from 34.5 percent to more than 40 percent so lawmakers and governors were on the right track putting their money where their priorities are," Phillis said.

"And due to DeRolph, parents, educators and members of communities across the state were made aware of the vast difference of educational opportunities offered our children based solely on their zip code. Some children were attending schools equipped with swimming pools, the latest textbooks, computers, you name it, while others in property poor districts were reading decades old history and science books in decrepit facilities that were shameful," Phillis said.

"So we are grateful to the four members of the Ohio Supreme Court - Andy Douglas, Paul Pfeifer, Alice Robie Resnick and Francis Sweeney - who stood strong for public school children in 1997," Phillis said.

"Unfortunately, their good work and the historic court opinion has been undermined by the pirates of privatization. The state has missed the opportunity to fix the single system of common schools open to all children for the good of all the people by siphoning away \$25 billion since 1997 for charter schools, directing funding to private schools, and unconstitutional private school voucher schemes," Phillis said.

On Jan. 4, the Coalition and Vouchers Hurt Ohio filed a five-count lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of the harmful private school voucher program known as EdChoice.

"DeRolph was the defining public school lawsuit of the 20th Century and the Vouchers Hurt Ohio lawsuit will be the defining public school lawsuit of the 21st Century," Phillis said.

For more information contact William L. Phillis, Executive Director of the Ohio Coalition for Equity and Adequacy of School Funding at 614.332.2886 or ohioeanda@sbcglobal.net

CITY ATTORNEY KLEIN APPLAUDS JUDGEMENT HOLDING OWNERS IN CONTEMPT

COLUMBUS, OH— Columbus City Attorney Zach Klein announced that Columbus Environmental Court Judge Stephanie Mingo entered judgement against the owners of the Colonial Village Apartments on the city's east side, holding them in contempt for failing to remediate numerous code violations at the 508 unit complex. Judge Mingo imposed a \$50,000 fine against the property owners. A new contempt hearing is set for April 25.

"When we say we're going to hold derelict landlords accountable in the City of Columbus, we mean it. If you can't provide safe, secure, and sanitary living conditions for tenants, you're going to pay the price," said City Attorney Zach Klein. "This judgement holds Apex Colonial accountable and is a step forward to ensuring a better quality of life for residents."

According to court documents, Apex Colonial failed to address a number of code violations on the premises, including pest conditions, internal health and safety violations within numerous apartment units, and broken windows, among other issues.

"We applaud Judge Mingo for entering judgement to hold these landlords



accountable for the deplorable living conditions at Colonial Village. The City will continue using every legal avenue to get these apartments to the standard residents deserve," said Assistant City Attorney Tiara Ross, one of the lead attorneys representing the City in the contempt motion against the Apex Colonial.

The City of Columbus has been engaged with Colonial Village for several years in an effort to hold property owners accountable for criminal activity, violence, and countless code violations that have harmed residents at the complex.

In Aug. 2021, the City secured a court order declaring the property a public nuisance, with an agreement of enforceable orders to bring the property into compliance with City Code by remediating outstanding emergency violations, increasing staff, and improving maintenance, security, cameras and lighting.

Earlier this month, the City delivered a major victory for residents as it obtained a court order to appoint a receiver to the Colonial Village Apartments on the city's east side. Since the order was granted, appointed receiver, Bob Weiler, and property manager Hayes Gibson have been on site remediating outstanding code violations and working to improve living conditions for residents. Once court mandated improvements are made, the property will be sold.

"If you're a landlord and you fail to provide safe, secure and sanitary living conditions, we will use every available tool to hold you accountable," said Assistant City Attorney Sarah Pomeroy, one of the lead attorneys representing the City in the contempt motion against the Apex Colonial. "This judgement is a path forward for residents who want nothing more than a good, safe place to call home."

PRIMARYONE HEALTH RECEIVES GRANT FOR NEW GROVEPORT MADISON SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH CENTER

Columbus, Ohio – As part of Gov. Mike DeWine’s \$25.9 million funding for 136 new or expanded SchoolBased Health Centers (SBHC) throughout Ohio, PrimaryOne Health in partnership with Groveport Madison Schools were awarded a SBHC grant totaling \$3,047,486.

The grant, School-Based Health Centers (SBHC) - Removing Barriers to Care is designed to develop new SBHC service sites in schools, expand services in existing sites, extend hours/days of operation, add services and increase populations served.

“PrimaryOne Health has a history of providing access to quality medical care to individuals and families in need,” said PrimaryOne Health Chief Executive Officer Charleta B. Tavares. “This School Based Health Center is another proven way to remove barriers to quality health care,” added Tavares.

The Groveport Madison Local Schools Board of Education approved their new

Community Wellness Center project as a “one stop shop” family oriented facility. It will include a 4,000 square-foot community health center. The new Community Wellness Center will be a renovation project providing comprehensive SBHC services including primary care, oral health, behavioral health, substance use disorder, comprehensive vision, vision/hearing/health screenings, community health workers, social workers, health education, language interpretation, mobile health care. Services will be provided to students, families, staff and community members, at the SBHC through face-to-face and/or telehealth visits.

School-Based Health Centers (SBHC) have emerged as effective models in improving student access to health care and closing the gap experienced by racial, ethnic and cultural communities experiencing health inequities. Students who receive essential preventative and primary care services are more likely to be attentive, successful learners. Healthy students are better on all levels of academic achievement: academic performance,

behavior, and cognitive skills and attitudes. Investing in the health of students contributes to healthy communities in the future.

The health center portion of the project is estimated to begin in March 2022 and be completed by March of 2023.

Working to provide access to services to improve the health status of families, PrimaryOne Health offers comprehensive primary care, OB-GYN, pediatric, vision, dental, behavioral health, nutrition, pharmacy, physical therapy and specialty care services to over 48,000 patients at twelve sites in Franklin and Pickaway Counties and two Mobile Health Centers. PrimaryOne Health is a proud member of the Ohio Association of Community Health Centers (OACHC) and the National Association of Community Health Centers (NACHC).

For more information about PrimaryOne Health and its programs, go to www.primaryonehealth.org

PUSHING BACK AGAINST HATE: THE YEAR IN HATE & EXTREMISM 2021 EXAMINES HOW COMMUNITIES WORK FOR JUSTICE



By Dwayne Fatherree

Sunflower County, deep in the Mississippi Delta, is typical of Southern agricultural regions that have weathered generations of oppression. Almost 35% of the population lives in poverty. The average per capita income is below \$16,000. Three-quarters of the population is Black.

But as a public school teacher in semi-rural Leflore County, which is adjacent to Sunflower, Ki Harris saw potential in his students every day. What he couldn’t see, though, was a way to lift up their gifts to make their prospects better than those of their parents.

“I found myself very disappointed with public school education,” Harris said. “I was always impressed with the brilliance of my students, but also just as jarred by all of the structures, policies and curricula designed to stymie that sort of brilliance.”

Two years later, in 2016, Harris joined up with the Sunflower County Freedom Project, an initiative designed to enhance educational opportunities and exposure for those students.

“It’s based on the Freedom Schools, the Freedom Summer of 1964,” Harris said, explaining the program. “It uses education as a tool for the liberation of communities.”

And, as it was during the early 1960s, not only is the battle for educational equity active, the rights that communities of color gained over the passing decades in every facet of life are under assault from forces on the right. Cloaked in the same racist ideology of the past and bolstered by four years of the Trump administration’s cozy game of footsie with white supremacists and hate groups, efforts to deny voting rights, economic equality and equal justice for Black citizens are on the move.

It’s against that backdrop that the Southern Poverty Law Center released its flagship annual report, *The Year in Hate & Extremism 2021*, online this week. Although the report shows a decrease in the number of active hate and antigovernment extremist groups, it also warns that the decrease isn’t a sign of far-right extremists being vanquished or diminished. Instead, they are emboldened to the point that what used to be said in a hushed whisper or through a dog whistle is now emblazoned on T-shirts and blared through loudspeakers.

“The big change is the political leaders embracing it at the very top,” said Nate Schenkkan, deputy director of research for the SPLC’s Intelligence Project. “Yes, you did have senators and governors at that time in the ‘50s and ‘60s backing up those policies of resistance to desegregation, backing up attacks on the civil rights movement. Now, it’s been the president labeling Black Lives Matter protesters ‘terrorists’ and trying to deploy the forces of federal law enforcement

— thankfully without success — trying to use them at times to investigate and to even shut those protests down.”

The SPLC has published its census of hate groups every year since 1990, adding far-right militias and other antigovernment organizations to the report several years later. Even though this year’s report shows a decrease in hate groups for the third straight year — from 1,021 in 2018 to 733 in 2021 — and a decline in antigovernment groups to 488 in 2021 from last year’s 566, the battle against hate is perhaps at its most active in the last 50 years, according to the report.

“After the efforts of the Trump administration to mainstream white nationalist ideology, we’ve seen a growing willingness on the part of extremists to openly embrace previously abhorrent views. Increasingly, these individuals are posting videos and using social media to call for the suppression of democracy, the banning of books, and even using violence to advance political agendas,” said Margaret Huang, president and CEO of the SPLC. “While the number of active organizations might be decreasing, the number of adherents to the ideology is not, and it’s important that we find ways to counter the spread of this extremism online and in other spaces.”

Schenkkan agreed.

Continued on Page 26

“It’s kind of interrupted right now by the change in administration,” he said. “But the direction of the far right continues in Trump’s absence. The momentum there is very much on that side.”

Fighting on all fronts

This year’s edition of The Year in Hate and Extremism report is a little different from its predecessors. That is because the landscape of hate and extremism has changed. Nowadays, much white supremacist and hate activity – including recruiting and radicalization – occurs online, so just having a headcount of physical, in-the-flesh groups gives an inexact picture of where those movements stand.

In addition to the numbers, the report also focuses on community resiliency in the face of extremism and the steps some people are taking against it in their communities.

Harris, for example, is featured for his work as the first executive director of the Freedom Project Network, which serves as an umbrella organization for all three Freedom Projects in Mississippi. In 2014, 15 years after the initial program opened in Sunflower County, the network’s second program opened in Meridian, Mississippi. A year later, another one began operating in Rosedale.

“We have this really powerful place-based, history-based student programming model, but we haven’t quite yet figured out how to scale it to maximize its potential as a collective,” Harris said. “We’re really shifting the narrative from these small little nonprofits to saying, ‘No, we’re actually a powerful statewide collective that’s trying to be a driver for progressive, liberatory education across this state and across this region.’ We’re not there yet, but that is the vision I am trying to sell people on.”

Education is a great inoculator against the growth of hate, said Susan Corke, director of the SPLC’s Intelligence Project.

“We feel the direction we need to go is not just exposing the hatred and the extremism,” Corke said. “We need to be putting forward real resources that can help make a difference. The big changes in the report this year are showing how you can make a difference.”

Communities in numerous locales over the last year have taken action, bringing the fight to the streets. In Philadelphia, residents confronted members of the Patriot Front when the openly white supremacist group attempted to conduct a “flash mob” march through their neighborhood on July 3. Community members gathered together and forced the marchers to retreat to the two Penske trucks they arrived in.

In New Orleans, one of the city’s largest Mardi Gras organizations — the Krewe of Nyx — all but vanished after its founder posted “All lives matter” on a social media

site in the wake of George Floyd’s murder in 2020. The ensuing fracas caused a huge defection of members, dropping the roster from around 3,500 to fewer than 250.

Krewe member Mimi Owens Crouere, wife of local right-wing pundit Jeff Crouere, caused additional damage in the runup to this year’s parade on Feb. 23 when she posted on social media her support for leaving Robert E. Lee’s name and statue at a site near the city’s center. That post pushed locals to boycott the parade, leaving large portions of its route sparsely populated.

“In the past couple of years, it has become more evident,” said Lydia Bates, senior research analyst for the Intelligence Project, about increased racist language and comments. “Trump has left people feeling emboldened to be racist, misogynistic, xenophobic and anti-LGBTQ. Consequently though, I think it has galvanized more of a resilient effort in communities and organizational networks across the country.”

Extreme responses

Steps like calling out hate and educating the next generation to stand up against extremism do not go unnoticed. Much of the extremist playbook being recycled today has been around for many years. But some white supremacist propaganda, like the “great replacement” theory – the notion that white people are being systematically replaced by people of color across the world – has become mainstreamed by pundits like Fox News’ Tucker Carlson. Such propaganda gains traction as progress toward equality becomes more apparent.

And with that traction comes violence, both physical and political. The white supremacist who in 2019 killed 51 people at two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand, in fact, left a manifesto titled “The Great Replacement.”

“I’d say our democracy is really in danger,” Corke said. “The fact that these fringe ideas have become mainstream and are very connected to the Republican Party, we’re at a place of real danger. We still have the traditional hate and extremist groups. The numbers are down, but we still have them. We also have a large number of individuals who are getting radicalized online and are in the dark spaces. The fact that those people are having more access to mainstream politics, including and increasingly at the community level, we are facing a severe challenge to our democracy.”

Eras of progress in racial equity have typically been followed by a white supremacist backlash.

“That is and has always been a part of it,” Schenkkan said. “That backlash has been going on, if you want, since Reconstruction. But it has definitely been going on since the 1950s and desegregation – massive resistance, like an overt policy of resisting desegregation, government officials refusing to desegregate schools. Then the backlash to the civil rights movement, which included

lots of terrorism, lots of violence. And that is definitely what we are seeing now in the mainstream – a willingness to continue those tactics in a 2022 form. It involves phones, it involves the internet, it involves devices that obviously weren’t around then, but that is just a matter of technology.”

The technology may not be the only driver for the growth of hate but it enables a small number of extremists, including terrorists like the Christchurch killer, to get their message out to the masses.

“One of the biggest dilemmas in this countering extremism space is that millions of people are exposed to extremist content, but only a handful, dozens, act on violence,” Schenkkan said. “This is the big problem with most of the intervention models. They can’t identify those people who will go towards violence.”

And the online megaphone exploited by extremists has enabled what were fringe movements to reach their kindred fringe dwellers no matter what physical distances may exist between them.

“It’s also enabled people to coordinate more easily,” Corke said. “They are able to mobilize and coordinate and fund raise. A lot of these individuals are making a living off of platforms on the internet. It’s happening on all sides, but a lot of our reporting is about how the right has really seized this ecosystem and grown around it.”

And, like that backlash, the hate that drives extremism has always been at our nation’s core, waiting to be fanned back into flame.

“It maybe is more visible in the mainstream today, but I would say hate has always been in the mainstream,” Bates said. “The United States is founded on hate and genocide. In the founding documents, it has always been there.”

But the same tools, the same factors that can cause the flame of hatred to grow can be used to mobilize a fire brigade to quench it. Recently, at the Selma Bridge Crossing Jubilee to commemorate the 57th anniversary of Bloody Sunday, advocates and supporters from across the country gathered in Selma, Alabama, to demand action to protect voting rights and our democracy at all levels of government.

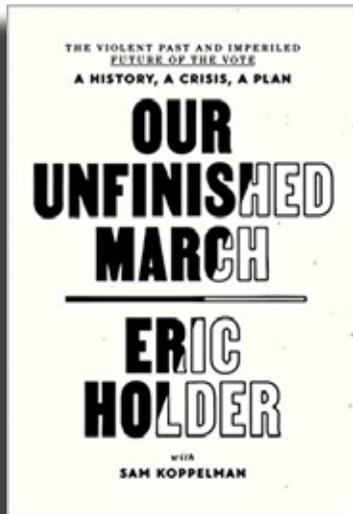
“When communities work together and lift up stories of hope and collective action to benefit all people, we find an energy and a momentum to reject hate and pursue a genuine democracy,” Huang said.

“People have a lot of power if they work together at the community level to push back against hate and extremism,” Corke said.

Dwayne Fatherree is a contributing writer for the Southern Poverty Law Center. Article from www.splcenter.org.

BOOK BAGS & E-READERS

By Ray Miller

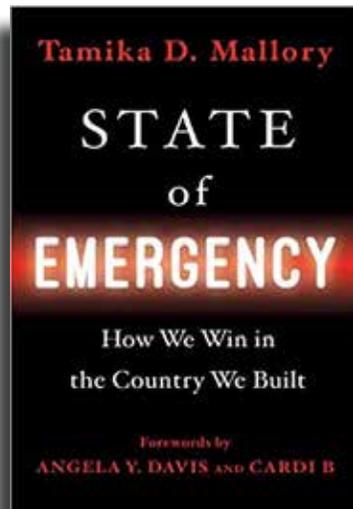


Our Unfinished March - The Violent Past and Imperiled Future of the Vote

By Eric Holder

A brutal, bloody, and at times hopeful history of the vote; a primer on the opponents fighting to take it away; and a playbook for how we can save our democracy before it's too late—from the former U.S. Attorney General on the front lines of this fight. Voting is our most important right as Americans—"the right that protects all the others," as Lyndon Johnson famously said when he signed the Voting Rights Act—but it's also the one most violently contested throughout U.S. history. Since the gutting of the act

in the landmark *Shelby County v. Holder* case in 2013, many states have passed laws restricting the vote. After the 2020 election, President Trump's effort to overturn the vote has evolved into a slow-motion coup, with many Republicans launching an all-out assault on our democracy. The vote seems to be in unprecedented peril.

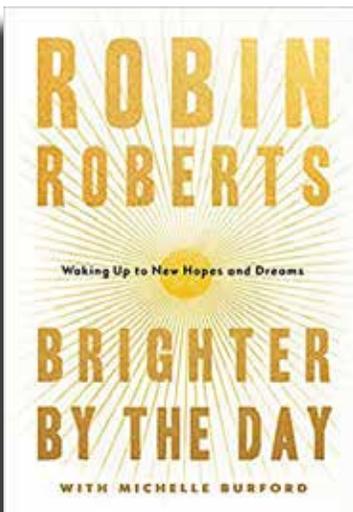


State of Emergency - How We Win in The Country We Built

By Tamika D. Mallory

Drawn from a lifetime of frontline culture-shifting advocacy, organizing, and fighting for equal justice, *State of Emergency* makes Mallory's demand for change and shares the keys to effective activism both for those new to and long-committed to the defense of Black lives.

From Minneapolis to Louisville, to Portland, Kenosha, and Washington, DC, America's reckoning with its unmet promises on race and class is at a boiling point not seen since the 1960s. While conversations around pathways to progress take place on social media and cable TV, history tells us that meaningful change only comes with radical legislation and boots-on-the-ground activism. Here, Mallory shares her unique personal experience building coalitions, speaking truth to power, and winning over hearts and minds in the struggle for shared prosperity and safety.

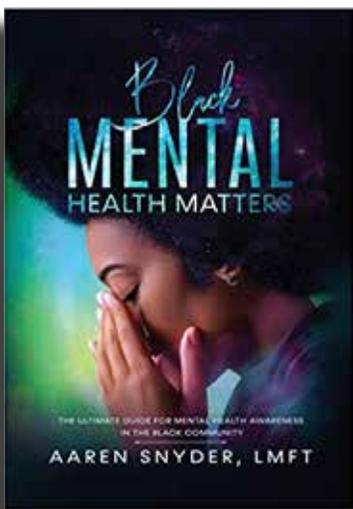


Brighter By The Day- Waking Up to New Hopes and Dreams

By Robin Roberts

From the beloved host of *Good Morning America* and *New York Times* bestselling author Robin Roberts, a guide to instilling hope and optimism into readers' lives, infusing their days with positivity and encouragement. Over the last 16 years as the esteemed anchor of *Good Morning America*, Robin Roberts has helped millions of people across the country greet each new morning, gracing our screens with heart and humility. She has sought to bring a bit of

positivity into each day, even in the most trying of times. Now, she shares with readers the guidance she's received, her own hard-won wisdom, and eye-opening experiences that have helped her find the good in the world and usher in light—even on the darkest days.

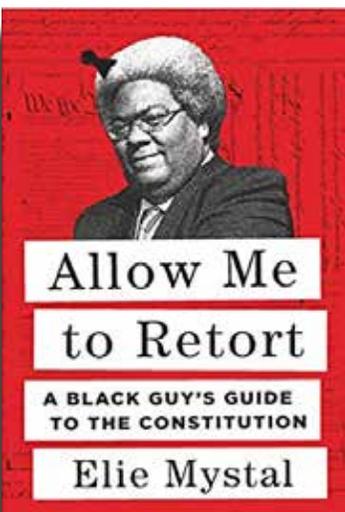


Black Mental Health Matters

By Aaren Snyder, LMFT

We're now living in an era where it's finally okay to talk about mental health. People all over the world are now unashamed to have open dialogues about their deepest, most personal insecurities and traumatic experiences. It's incredible that the conversation surrounding mental health has elevated to a level so high that it's become a mainstream topic. But the subject of Black mental health, specifically, is one that is often overlooked. Because of a legacy of oppression, Black people have a unique relationship with trauma, depression, anxiety, as well as many other issues. Therefore, to

truly understand Black mental health, a unique education is required. In *Black Mental Health Matters*, renowned Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, Aaren Snyder uses years of experience to increase mental health awareness in the Black community, through captivating real-life stories and simple, down-to-earth explanations of complex psychological problems that impact the black community. Snyder masterfully blends popular culture, social consciousness, and humor in this one-of-a-kind book.

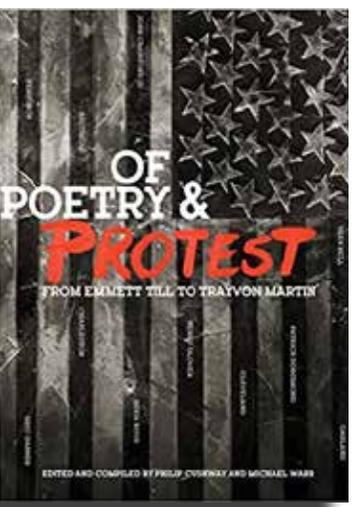


Allow Me to Retort - A Black Guy's Guide to The Constitution

By Elie Mystal

Allow Me to Retort is an easily digestible argument about what rights we have, what rights Republicans are trying to take away, and how to stop them. Mystal explains how to protect the rights of women and people of color instead of cowering to the absolutism of gun owners and bigots. He explains the legal way to stop everything from police brutality to political gerrymandering, just by changing a few judges and justices. He strips out all of the fancy jargon conservatives like to hide behind

and lays bare the truth of their project to keep America forever tethered to its slaveholding past. Mystal brings his trademark humor, expertise, and rhetorical flair to explain concepts like substantive due process and the right for the LGBTQ community to buy a cake, and to arm readers with the knowledge to defend themselves against conservatives who want everybody to live under the yoke of eighteenth-century white men.



Of Poetry & Protest - From Emmett Till to Trayvon Martin

By Phil Cushey & Michael Warr

This stunning work illuminates today's black experience through the voices of our most transformative and powerful African American poets. Included in this extraordinary volume are the poems of 43 of America's most talented African American wordsmiths, including Pulitzer Prize-winning poets Rita Dove, Natasha Trethewey, Yusef Komunyakaa, and Tracy K. Smith, as well as the work of other luminaries such as Elizabeth Alexander, Ishmael Reed, and Sonia Sanchez. Included are poems such as "No Wound of Exit" by Patricia Smith, "We Are Not

Responsible" by Harryette Mullen, and "Poem for My Father" by Quincy Troupe. Each is accompanied by a photograph of the poet along with a first-person biography. The anthology also contains personal essays on race such as "The Talk" by Jeannine Amber and works by Harry Belafonte, Amiri Baraka, and The Reverend Dr. William Barber II, architect of the Moral Mondays movement, as well as images and iconic political posters of the *Black Lives Matter* movement, *Malcolm X*, and the *Black Panther Party*.

RISING TO THE CHALLENGE OF PROVIDING ALL STUDENTS WITH HIGH-QUALITY STEM EDUCATION



By Talia Milgrom-Elcott

Whether it's the pandemic, climate change, food shortages, or economic inequality, almost all of the world's most pressing problems would benefit from STEM-based solutions. Fourteen of the 16 fastest-growing "industries of the future" are STEM industries, and all of the top 25 degrees by pay and demand are in the STEM subjects. By 2025, there will be 3.5 million STEM jobs open in the United States alone.

We could fill those jobs with top talent, but right now, only a tiny fraction of our nation's population has the necessary STEM skills, knowledge, and agency. STEM inequities disproportionately affect young people of color, rural kids, kids in poverty, and girls—and they are magnified for young people who carry more than one of those identities. From our own experience and from reams of data coming out of labs like Raj Chetty's at Harvard, we know that we are missing out on breakthrough innovations from young people who are missing out on the chance to do the kind of STEM that makes those breakthroughs possible.

When schools are the engines of social mobility, it is—more than anything else—because of what teachers do in the classroom. Yet even before the pandemic, schools were struggling to recruit and retain STEM teachers, a challenge that will only magnify if the Great Resignation reaches the schoolhouse.

A MOONSHOT CALL TO RISE TO THE CHALLENGE

Inspired by President Obama and his call to action in the 2011 State of the Union for 100,000 new and excellent STEM teachers, 100Kin10—a nonprofit organization that I founded and continue to lead—was born. Twenty-eight pioneering organizations from myriad sectors stepped up to make commitments to action that first year.

Ten years later, 100Kin10 is now a nationwide network coordinating the efforts of more than 300 outstanding organizations, and together we surpassed the original goal, preparing more than 108,000 STEM teachers over the last decade. According to an independent evaluation by Bellwether Education Partners, "Ten years after 100Kin10 first set out to answer President Obama's call, education leaders describe a STEM education field that has progressed in significant ways."

How? Our vast network co-created a map of the challenge space so that we could collectively see all the impediments to getting and keeping great STEM teachers in our schools. This process elevated bright spots and unearthed who was working on what—making collaboration easier and identifying areas of strength and deserts in need of greater investment. Finally, we developed tools that allowed those pioneers to learn from each other,

adopt strong approaches to their contexts, and mutually develop solutions to shared problems, narrowing in on our role as mobilizers and removers of barriers to collaboration.

HARNESSING COLLECTIVE EFFORTS TO SOLVE THE MOST CHALLENGING PROBLEMS

Two key innovations drawn out in the Bellwether report bear mentioning. First, 100Kin10 preparation programs improved how they recruited highly qualified STEM teacher candidates. In 2011-12, each organization preparing STEM teachers prepared an average of 172 teachers. By 2020-21, the average had grown to 294. In the final two years of the effort, both of them in the pandemic, 100Kin10 partners prepared more teachers than they had in any other two-year period. And this came against a backdrop of the historic decline in total enrollment nationwide in teacher preparation programs since 2010.

As an example of how this was accomplished, a 100Kin10 project team developed an initiative to recruit more university STEM majors into teaching. The resulting Get the Facts Out (GFO) recruitment campaign provided informational materials to professors and undergraduates in STEM majors designed to dispel common negative myths about teaching. In 2021 alone, GFO reported reaching over 5,000 faculty and students at roughly 1,000 institutions across the country. Preliminary data indicate that the GFO approach has had a positive impact on university students who were more likely to report an interest in teaching and that their professors value and encourage teaching, compared against the period preceding GFO.

Second, 100Kin10 partners increased their emphasis on preparing and supporting elementary teachers with STEM skills, particularly in foundational math. Data are clear that the "spark" in math and science tends to come early, and that after grade 5, it is very difficult to recoup losses in math and science learning. Joyful and authentic early math was one of the high-leverage catalysts that we identified early in our strategy mapping; in 2019, we mobilized the network to address it. In just the two years since, 55% of partners reported that they increased their focus on this catalytic area. For example, the Intrepid Sea, Air, and Space Museum in New York City developed Code Together, a program where teachers and students learn basic coding together and explore ways to integrate computer science concepts into other subject areas. This shared learning model is intentionally designed to boost the confidence of teachers who feel unprepared or anxious about teaching STEM subjects—a common mindset among elementary teachers.

Since we launched, nearly 3,000 leaders have contributed to the work of the 100Kin10 network. All this led to Bellwether's conclusion: "100Kin10's success in simplifying a vastly complex problem and galvanizing action across the country accelerated positive shifts in the STEM education field" led to "more teachers and students hav[ing] access to meaningful,

authentic, and rigorous STEM learning via 100Kin10 partners."

LOOKING FORWARD: PRIORITIZING INCLUSION AND STUDENTS' EXPERIENCES

We are at an inflection point, celebrating the end of our first 10-year run and looking ahead to what must come next. Much work is still to be done. Decades of racism and exclusion have left too many of our children—especially our Black, Latino, and Native American young people—from fully participating in the STEM fields.

In the fall of 2021, knowing we were near to reaching our first 100Kin10 goal, we launched the unCommission, a massive experience of storytelling and listening in which 600 young people—80% of whom were people of color—shared stories about experiences in STEM while in K-12. We heard about great hands-on science experiments (mummifying a chicken that the kids dubbed "KFC") and curricula that didn't feel at all relevant. But a deep vein that ran through the stories was the instrumental role that teachers played in creating—or failing to create—environments in which students believed they belonged and could succeed.

One student shared: "And then, the only science class I've ever taken that I really enjoyed would be chemistry in high school, which I took my sophomore year. And the difference in that class was 100%, the teacher, he was just amazing. Teachers that are passionate about what they do, they truly and clearly care. You know, that makes all the difference. And that makes me want to learn."

Another told us: "Having a teacher who finally took the time to sit me down and make me address my gaps and knowledge has set me up for life. I am so lucky to have had someone who cared enough to intervene instead of letting me slowly drown and fall behind."

As an artist working on the unCommission summed it up: "In an ecosystem of belonging, teachers are the keystone species. The keystone species is the species that keep an entire ecosystem in balance. Amidst the turmoil and uncertainty that is growing up, teachers are uniquely positioned to create that sense of belonging and connection for their students."

And so, building on the success of the first 10 years, 100Kin10 is preparing to follow the voices of young people toward a new mountaintop. Our goal is not only preparing and retaining STEM teachers, but it is supporting them to create classrooms of belonging for their students—particularly for students of color. When our teachers are supported to create vibrant STEM classrooms of learning and belonging, the sky's the limit on what challenges our young people will solve.

Talia Milgrom-Elcott is the Founder and Executive Director of 100kin10. This article is from www.brookings.edu.

BIDEN SIGNS BILL MAKING LYNCHING A FEDERAL HATE CRIME



Photo from Washington Post



By Amy B. Wang

President Biden on Tuesday signed into law the Emmett Till Antilynching Act to make lynching a federal hate crime, in a historic first that comes after more than a century of failed efforts against racial violence.

“Hundreds, hundreds of similar bills have failed to pass over the years,” Biden said at a ceremony in the Rose Garden after he signed the bill at the White House. “Several federal hate crime laws were enacted ... But no federal law expressly prohibited lynching. None until today.”

The new law amends the U.S. Code to designate lynching a hate crime punishable by up to 30 years in prison. More than 4,000 people, mostly African Americans, were reported lynched in the United States from 1882 to 1968, in all but a handful of states. Ninety-nine percent of perpetrators escaped state or local punishment.

“For a long time, lynching was pure terror to enforce the lie that not everyone, not everyone belongs in America, not everyone is created equal,” Biden said. “Innocent men, women and children hung by nooses from trees, bodies burned and drowned and castrated. Their crimes? Trying to vote, trying to go to school, trying to own a business or preach the gospel. False accusations of murder, arson and robbery. Simply being Black.”

Lawmakers tried, and failed, to pass anti-lynching bills nearly 200 times. The earliest such attempt came in 1900, when Rep. George Henry White (R-N.C.), then the country’s only Black member of Congress, stood on the floor of the House and read the text of his

unprecedented measure, which would have prosecuted lynchings at the federal level. The bill later died in committee.

Years later, Rep. Leonidas C. Dyer (R-Mo.) introduced an anti-lynching bill that passed the House but was filibustered in the Senate by Southern Democrats, many of whom opposed it in the name of “states’ rights.”

The Emmett Till Antilynching Act was introduced in 2019 by Rep. Bobby L. Rush (D-Ill.) in the House and Sens. Cory Booker (D-N.J.) and Tim Scott (R-S.C.) in the Senate. It is named for the 14-year-old Black boy whose brutal torture and killing in Mississippi in 1955 sparked the civil rights movement.

On Tuesday, Biden paid tribute to the Till family for finding “purpose through your pain” — and also emphasized that the law was not just about past crimes but about those who remain victims of racial hatred.

“Racial hate is an old problem. It’s a persistent problem,” Biden said. “Hate never goes away. It only hides, it hides under the rocks. Given just a little bit of oxygen, it comes roaring back out, screaming.”

Biden and Vice President Harris both also paid tribute to Ida B. Wells, a Black investigative journalist who in the late 1800s and early 1900s documented the barbaric nature of lynching in extensive detail. (In 2020, Wells was posthumously awarded a Pulitzer Prize special citation for her work.)

Michelle Duster, Wells’s great-granddaughter who spoke at the ceremony Tuesday, noted that Wells had visited President William S. McKinley at the White House in 1898 to urge him to make lynching a federal crime,

though efforts to enact such legislation would fail for 124 more years.

Shortly after she stepped up to the podium, Duster said she needed a moment to take everything in.

“We finally stand here today, generations later, to witness this historic moment,” Duster said. “We are here today because of the tenacity of the civil rights leaders and commitment of members of Congress who are here today.”

Harris, who was a co-sponsor of the legislation when she was a senator, said they were gathered Tuesday to do “unfinished business” to declare that lynching is and always has been a hate crime. The victims of lynching were business owners, teachers, activists, Harris said — and for their families, the stories of those crimes were “not lines in a history book, but vivid memories.”

“As we recognize them, as we recognize our history,” Harris said.

Earlier this month, more than three years after its introduction, the Senate passed the Emmett Till Antilynching Act unanimously. Booker said in a tweet that he was “overjoyed” by the legislation’s passage.

“The time is past due to reckon with this dark chapter in our history and I’m proud of the bipartisan support to pass this important piece of legislation,” he said.

In a statement, Rush called lynching “a long-standing and uniquely American weapon of racial terror that has for decades been used to maintain the white hierarchy.”

Amy B. Wang is a writer for the Washington Post. This article is from www.washingtonpost.com.



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PRIMARYONE HEALTH RECEIVES GRANT FOR COLUMBUS CITY SCHOOLS-NORTH INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL BASED HEALTH CENTER

Columbus, Ohio – As part of Gov. Mike DeWine’s \$25.9 million funding for 136 new or expanded SchoolBased Health Centers (SBHC) throughout Ohio, PrimaryOne Health in partnership with Columbus City Schools were awarded a SBHC grant totaling \$1,306,331.

The grant, School-Based Health Centers (SBHC) - Removing Barriers to Care is designed to develop new SBHC service sites in schools, expand services in existing sites, extend hours/days of operation, add services and increase populations served.

“PrimaryOne Health has a history of providing access to quality medical care to individuals and families including immigrant and refugee residents in need,” said PrimaryOne Health Chief Executive Officer Charleta B. Tavares. “This School Based Health Center will eliminate barriers to quality health care like transportation and provide primary care including dental and vision services for the school children and communities’ families,” added Tavares.

North International Global Academy located at 4007 Karl Road in Columbus, Ohio (Formerly Brookhaven High School) it will include a renovation project providing comprehensive SBHC services including



primary care, oral health, behavioral health, substance use disorder, comprehensive vision, vision/hearing/health screenings, community health workers, social workers, health education, language interpretation, mobile health care. Services will be provided to students, families, staff, and community members, at the SBHC through face-to-face and/or telehealth visits.

School-Based Health Centers (SBHC) have emerged as effective models in improving student access to health care and closing the

gap experienced by racial, ethnic and cultural communities experiencing health inequities. Delivering essential preventive and primary care services in the school setting eliminates many barriers to obtaining care such as transportation, missed time at work, lack of a provider or medical home and time out of the classroom.

The project is estimated to begin in March 2022 and be completed by March of 2023.

WILL SMITH'S UNEXPECTED PERFORMANCE AT THE 2022 OSCARS



By Suzanne Parks, MEDL

Will Smith did not just laugh, he guffawed over the joke Chris Rock delivered at the expense of his wife Jada Pinkett-Smith during the 2022 Oscars. In contrast, Jada looked distressed, when Rock joked about her baldness caused by her alopecia areata. It was obvious Smith enjoyed the barb. Until he did not. What happened next left everyone trying to make sense of something that was senseless.

I did not know about Pinkett-Smith's diagnosis. I thought she was rocking the bald look, like a cultural statement. To my mind, baldness is a beautiful look in women with African DNA. What is more magnificent than beholding someone exuding power, courage, discipline, and confidence as the Dora Milaje, the all-female special forces in *The Pink Panther's* mythical country, Wakanda? Jada, with her perfectly chiseled features, is undeniably beautiful, embodied all of those characteristics.

Yet, hair loss due to disease or treatment from an illness is devastating for women. Women are left with choosing between covering up the missing locks of hair or boldly shaving their heads completely, thus embracing their new look. There is no right or wrong decision. It is a matter of personal choice. Society dictates that we are to accept personal choices.

Did Chris Rock respect Pinkett-Smith's personal choice? Not really. Was he cruel? I think he was. He did what comics do best. Their schtick is to poke fun at others. Once again, there is no boundary for how far they should go, until public opinion takes offense. Instead, all the attention is focused on what Will Smith executed after he himself laughed at his wife's look. Immediately laughing, he strolled up on the stage without missing a beat and delivered an open-handed slap across Rock's face. Then he walked back to his seat.

Rock did not fight him back.

The attendees of the Oscars also laughed raucously at Rock's joke. After the slap, came their stunned silence. And then the rapid reaction of those who were in the cheaper seats of the viewing audience started wondering what had just happened.

This was followed by a social media explosion of opinions and Smith's tearful apology during his acceptance speech for winning the Best Actor category for his performance in *King Richard* to everyone except his wife and Rock.

Anger slowly builds or it explodes into a rage. What one does with anger is important to note. How people react to seeing anger in someone else leads to critical speculation and judgment.



Was Smith justified in slapping Rock? I honestly could not find the justification even though some viewed it as protecting his wife. First, and to me this is key, Smith laughed before he slapped. Every time someone defends Smith's actions, I cannot help but go back to that important distinction. Nor can I accept that he had a second thought and decided to defend his wife by using violence. Pinkett-Smith was not in any imminent danger of being physically harmed. Using violence to defend her wounded feelings is assault. Smith could have defended his wife in other ways. For example, instead of turning the Oscars into a potential brawl, he could have taken her hand and apologized to his wife for laughing at her expense. He could have defended her when he got the mic.

Remember, he laughed at the joke. He was blameworthy of her harm. Using the excuse, he defended his wife as an explanation for being violent when the self-imposed punishment was not parity to the crime, is just wrong.

Why are Black women always put into the position of having to be defended in the first place? The Oscars were supposed to showcase Black women including Regina Hall, Wanda Sykes, and Araina DeBose, who won the Best Supporting Actress category. DeBose is the first Afro-Latina who is openly queer to win a nod from the Academy. She is an amazing talent.

Yet, we are not talking about their triumph, much like we are not talking about the nomination of Ketangi Brown Jackson to the Supreme Court.

Instead, we are abuzz with men in addition to Smith, Senators Ted Cruz, Josh Hawley, Tom Cotton, et al, for behaving badly. They literally stole these women's thunder. In one scenario, they kept pushing dangerous and false accusations. In the other scenario, one was denied the use of her already established platform to defend herself. Women have voices and are capable of speaking for themselves when allowed.

This brings me back to Smith's tearful, 'I want to be a river for my people' acceptance speech. He apologized but not to Rock and more importantly not to his wife for his role in her public humiliation. He made the whole incident about him. He shamelessly uplifted himself. He reminded me of Brett Kavanaugh's angry-crying when he boo-hoo'ed in self-pity for having been accused of something he did, instead of taking responsibility for his actions.

To make matters worse, Smith compared himself to the character he played in the movie *King Richard* who according to Smith also defended his family. But let us keep this real. Both men defended their families, not because they were in any physical danger. When they defended their families, it was to appease their over-inflated egos. Moreover, Williams was an abusive man toward his family.

Smith did not defend his wife when it became public that she had had an affair with a much younger man and she was being skewered by the court of public opinion. He was supportive since he joined her and together they went through their public healing process on *Red Table Talk*. While she was apologetic for her actions, I remember wondering why the public was not as equally critical of his marital indiscretions. I wondered why did he not remind everyone that he had basically done the same thing to her. That for me is the patriarchal double-standard.

The Smiths have made a living putting their private lives on display. This willingness to be completely transparent is one of the dynamics of their marriage. You cannot lay your dirty clothes on the ground and then kick the dog because it pees on your outfits. You have to acknowledge that on some level, you issued the invitation.

If we are going to debate whether or not Will Smith or Chris Rock went too far, we must first examine if they were being good role models, especially for our youth who display impulsive acts of cruelty through teasing or violence. How can we teach our children to use their words first when pop culture personalities do not?

We must also note, that Ye [Kanye] West was banned from attending the Oscars because of his impulsive erratic behavior. I find it unfortunate that Smith and Rock used the Oscars to basically act the way many had assumed West would behave.

When asked by the Los Angeles Police Department if he wanted to press charges against Will Smith, Chris Rock declined. The Academy of Motion Pictures and Sciences, as of the writing of this piece is considering whether or not to revoke Will Smith's award. Jada Pinkett-Smith was praised for her dignity at the Oscars. To date, she has not issued a formal statement. Sound familiar?

Suzanne is a contributing writer for the news journal.

CENTRAL STATE PLANS \$65 MILLION EXPANSION



By London Bishop

Central State University is looking to invest \$65 million in infrastructure projects over the next few years in an initiative titled Project Innovation, to include an expansion of student housing, a health and human services complex, and a recreation and wellness center.

Central State officials say they have increased current enrollment to about 2,000 traditional students, with a targeted enrollment of 3,000 students in the fall, and with that growth has come a need for more student housing.

“As we grow and expand, we sit in an opportunity zone,” said vice president for administration and finance and university CFO Curtis Pettis. “We’re experiencing tremendous growth and we’re building infrastructure not just physically, but with what we’re doing with populations and partnerships in the last 12 months,”

The university’s board of trustees will vote on the project March 1.

Central State has already begun construction on an Honors Hall and Administrative Complex, expected to be completed by Fall 2022. The \$15 million building will house 119 students and will contain 65 apartment-style units, as well as meeting spaces, a tutoring area, and administrative offices.

The university has completed two honors residential halls, and the third building will serve as the Honors College headquarters, the establishment of which was among university President Jack Thomas’ priorities when he took office in 2020.

“The president wanted an Honors College, to attract the best and the brightest, while remaining committed to our overall student population,” said vice president of institutional advancement Zillah Fluker. “We’re moving in the research field, doing a lot of research, and that attracts a lot of students — and faculty — that want to be part of a research institution.”

The university’s fourth and final Honors Hall Building, to be completed in the fall of 2024, is the last installment of the university’s honors housing. At 24,000 square feet and 48 units, the \$8.8 million building will house 96 students.

All told, the university will have capacity for 419 Honors students. Currently, 280 students are enrolled in the honors program at Central State.

Central State will construct a new Residential Hall East, for \$10.1 million, that can house 146 students. The building will overlook the football stadium and include a second dining hall, which Pettis anticipates will be a “highly selected location for new students.”



CSU's new 42,000 sq ft Recreation and Wellness Center

“Two years ago, we built Marauder Pride Community One (the new residence hall’s sister facility),” Pettis said. “Before the building was complete, it was full. It was all students who are juniors and seniors, and we maintained a waiting list for those units. We knew that was our test case.”

The university drives an economic impact of over \$2 million, Pettis said. With the demand for apartment-style living, Central State’s on-campus student population could “easily” jump from 60% to over 80%.

“CSU is going to be the destination. We are not an urban center, but we’re going to build in our own little city those opportunities for our students,” Pettis said.

Central State is also renovating the historic power plant on its site into a Health and Human Services Complex for \$5.5 million. Built in 1926, the plant was one of the few original structures on campus that wasn’t destroyed by the 1974 tornado, and renovation of the 15,600-square-foot building will include new fitness areas and classrooms, and the building will house health and human services research.

The university’s proposed Recreation and Wellness Center has two parts. The first involves the renovation and expansion of an existing 14,000-square-foot facility into a wellness center, and the second is constructing a new 42,400-square-foot recreation center for \$10.7 million.

The wellness center will have a fitness area and climbing wall, and will house exercise and wellness research. The recreation center features an indoor track, basketball court, and tennis court, with the buildings connected through a walkway. This building is expected to be completed in spring 2023.

“We’re expanding university access and indoor space for intramural activities, as well as practice for other sports in inclement weather,” Pettis said. “It’s an important piece of the university’s community activities.”

The university is also investing in off-campus suite housing on Shorter Avenue, tearing down an abandoned building on the property and building two apartment-style buildings with 40 units. Investing in off-campus housing, which will cost \$9.5 million, and is scheduled to be completed in late fall of 2022, also allows the university to serve more nontraditional students.

“Right now, a student with a family can’t live on campus, but we see our population growing,” Pettis said. “Those housing units can attract nontraditional students, and those with additional housing needs can attend CSU.”

In December, Central State applied for and then withdrew a request for a zoning variance on the Shorter property, after modifying the project so the variance was no longer needed.

Officials are focusing heavily on student housing because there are already more students who want to live on campus than can fit.

“Looking at the needs of the community, this area is low on the amount of housing, and there’s a tremendous gap in growth next year of 500 beds,” Pettis said. “We’re already enduring a full academic semester of being over capacity. Most students would like to be close to campus and be able to walk to campus.”

The university will also build a new 19,000-square-foot campus logistics center for \$5.5 million.

The developer is University Housing Solutions, with whom the university has contracted in the past to build their other residence halls. Officials said the project will not mean tuition increases for either in-state or out-of-state students, and will be funded through university partners and increased enrollment. Construction on several facilities will begin as soon as possible after the vote is confirmed.

“It’s going to be a fast ride. We’re going full speed about what we want to do,” Pettis added.

London Bishop is writer for the Journal-News. Article from www.journal-news.com.

OHIO SURVEY DETAILS VIEWS ON RACIAL BIAS IN HEALTHCARE SETTINGS



By Julie Washington

CLEVELAND, Ohio — Yvonka Hall hoped a nutritionist could provide answers about her unexplained weight gain despite her healthy eating habits.

But the nutritionist was more focused on his computer than her. He didn't ask questions; just gave his opinion. Stop drinking Pepsi, and you'll lose weight.

"I'm sitting there thinking, is he talking to me?" recalled Hall, who doesn't drink soda, or eat pork or beef, but does have thyroid disease. "I said, 'Is there something in my chart that says I have an addiction to soda?'"

Hall's experience was far from unique, according to a new statewide survey on bias in health care commissioned by a group of organizations promoting antiracism.

People of color — especially women — said they often felt disrespected.

Nearly 60% of Black women and 52% of white women reported their symptoms had been dismissed, as compared to 41% of Black males and 20% of white males.

Many respondents said they skipped follow-up doctor appointments because of perceived unfair treatment.

The informal survey, conducted by four Ohio health equity nonprofits, was shared through newsletters, email and social media

with whoever might be interested. Surveys were also collected at community festivals in Toledo.

"Now we had the validation of what we knew," said Hall, executive director of the Northeast Ohio Black Health Coalition, a social justice organization. "People were saying — particularly African-American women — that I feel discriminated against when I go into medical settings."

National studies reinforce the findings of the Ohio survey. Blacks reported being discriminated against or unfairly judged by health care providers almost three times more often than whites, and twice as often as Hispanics, according to a 2021 analysis by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

Hall and other leaders of Ohio health equity organizations recently met with representatives from University Hospitals, the Cleveland Clinic, MetroHealth System and Southwest General Health Center.

The health systems were asked to support the goal of eliminating bias in healthcare settings, Hall said.

Local healthcare systems said they are trying to do better, by implementing diversity, equity and inclusion training and taking steps to diversify their workforce. The meeting participants agreed to future talks.

But a recently published Cleveland Clinic study suggested there were no significant differences in rates of mortality or length of ICU stay between racial or ethnic groups hospitalized for COVID-19 at Clinic facilities.

As a Black woman Dr. Tosin Goje, a Clinic OB/GYN, said she empathizes with patients who feel disrespected. But, sometimes patients might not appreciate the excellent care they received because of how they were treated, she said.

Goje and other Clinic employees recently took part in unconscious bias training. During one activity, participants were shown a photo of a Black woman wearing shorts and a T-shirt, and a white man with tattoos. Participants were asked for their first thoughts about these images.

Later, it was revealed that the Black woman was an entrepreneur, and the tattooed man was a NASA scientist. Some participants admitted that they jumped to negative conclusions about the people in the images because of implicit bias.

"Sometimes you need to learn that you don't just allow your brain to make a decision for you, based on how somebody looks," Goje said. "Instead, listen to that person, not just what your brain flashes."

'Now we had validation'

The start of the COVID-19 pandemic prompted several Ohio organizations to talk about inequities in health care, and their causes.

MetroHealth System earlier declared racism as a public health crisis. And last year, Black infants died at a higher rate than white infants, according to preliminary 2021 Cuyahoga County numbers.

Continued on Page 34

Continued from Page 33

The informal survey was conducted by the Cleveland-based Northeast Ohio Black Health Coalition, and three Columbus-based organizations -- UHCAN Ohio, the Ohio Unity Coalition and the Multiethnic Advocates for Cultural Competence.

The informal online and paper survey collected responses from about 1,000 people starting in June. About 600 responses came from people contacted by the Northeast Ohio Black Health Coalition, Hall said. A report based on survey findings was released Jan. 13.

Here are additional findings:

* About 42% of Black respondents said they were denied care or received inferior care.

* Black females (61%) and Black males (59%) reported race as the most common perceived reason for discrimination, while white females (7%) and white males (10%) rarely reported race.

* About 20% of Black males reported, "People act as if they are afraid of you" in medical settings."

Enlightened Solutions co-founder Chinenye Nkemere was struck by how closely the health equity organization's findings mirrored the bias found in her nonprofit's report. "Project Noir: Cleveland is Failing Black Women" collected stories from 450 Black women in Northeast Ohio about harassment, discrimination and abuse in health care, education and the workplace.

"It is good to have studies that really explore the serious, urgent healthcare problems that specifically our region is experiencing, and that black women in general are experiencing," Nkemere said about the health equity organization's survey.

Nkemere understands why people who feel disrespected choose to not to return for follow-up care.

"If you get poor service at a restaurant, you absolutely will not go back to that restaurant," she said. "Why would we think that somebody that has chronic healthcare problems would want to go back to the same exact doctor, the same exact health care system, to receive the same exact terrible, dismissive and racist care?"

Hospitals taking steps to address bias

Area hospitals that met with members of the health equity nonprofits said they are taking steps to tackle racial disparities in health care, address the social determinants of health, and recruit and train a diverse workforce.

MetroHealth launched systemwide unconscious bias training and created two positions focused on diversity and health equity.

MetroHealth also developed toolkits to enable more diverse and inclusive hiring. As a result, 30% of new doctors, dentists, physician assistants and nurse practitioners hired last year were from underrepresented minority communities, the hospital system said.

Southwest General staff participates in cultural competency training to help them understand and respect patients, regardless of race, faith, ethnicity, gender or socioeconomic status, and develop effective communication skills.

At UH, about 2,000 employees have participated in an everyday bias workshop that explores how assumptions impact patient care, hiring, promotion and organizational culture.

The Clinic joined more than 20 Greater Cleveland organizations in a declaration to address racism as a public health crisis, and joined the OneTen Coalition. The Coalition's goal is closing the opportunity gap for Black Americans by encouraging the hiring of one million Black Americans over the next 10 years.

Racial differences in treatments, descriptions

National studies have looked into racial differences in how health care is delivered.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recently found Hispanic (58%), Black (22%) and Asian (48%) patients were offered monoclonal antibody treatments for COVID-19 less often than white patients by those percentages.

Black people accounted for 13% of the U.S. population but 40% of people with HIV in 2019, according to recent CDC estimates.

In another new study, researchers found that Black patients were more than twice as likely to be negatively described as "resistant," "noncompliant," or "agitated" as compared to white patients in electronic health records.

Tips for taking charge of your health care

Here are ways that patients can advocate for themselves, from Hall and Becker's Hospital Review:

* Write down questions before the visit, and be sure they are all addressed.

* Do your own research on your condition, but be sure you are looking at trusted sources.

* Express healthy skepticism about your diagnosis, as diagnostic errors are common.

* Tell your doctor about your use of herbal supplements or vitamins.

* Ask questions about medications.

* Follow instructions for prescriptions and home care.

* Frequently review your own medical records, and follow up on test results.

* Transfer to a different physician if you feel that rapport is lacking.

* Take a family member or friend to doctor visits.

* If you feel that you were treated poorly or disrespected, file a complaint with the hospital's ombudsman office.

Julie Washington is a writer for cleveland.com.



BREATHE EASY: ADDRESSING AIR POLLUTION IN URBAN COMMUNITIES



By Niel Jurist

Over the past few years, the COVID-19 global pandemic, coupled with social and environmental injustice have renewed the focus on long-standing inequities, particularly as it relates to historically marginalized and underserved communities. Sadly, many of these communities have experienced a disproportionate burden on overall health, mortality rates, and chronic diseases.

One issue that is top of mind for many scientists, policymakers, healthcare providers, and organizations like the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC) has been air quality. In particular, the unequal distribution of air pollution in lower-income and minority communities.

Researchers have found that those who live in predominately Black communities suffered at a greater risk of premature death from particle pollution – a combination of tiny solid and liquid particles that remain suspended in the air. This issue has been attributed to past racial segregation and the practice of redlining, resulting in Black people being placed in neighborhoods with high exposure to harmful pollutants and susceptible extreme heat from the effects of climate change.

A study conducted in 2018 by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) found that Black Americans, despite their income and wealth, were still subjected to higher levels of air pollution than their white counterparts. The study also found that Black Americans were exposed to higher rates of air pollution, which have been linked to facilities located in predominately Black and disadvantaged communities.

In addition to environmental factors, existing health conditions, or pre-deposed conditions like heart and lung disease and asthma, which disproportionately impact Black communities, place some vulnerable populations at greater risk from air pollutants.

Two pollutants posing the greatest threats to human health are ground-level ozone and particle pollution. MORPC is addressing this critical health and environmental issue by monitoring air pollution levels and issuing air quality forecasts and alerts for ozone and particle pollution levels.

These alerts help individuals plan and take steps to limit their exposure. MORPC uses the Air Quality Index (AQI) to report daily forecasts and air quality alerts. The AQI tracks pollution levels in the air to determine if the air is healthy to breathe. Compared to other geographic regions, Central Ohio is experiencing an overall improvement in regional air quality. Still, there are gaps in the data regarding evaluating air pollution at the neighborhood or household level.



MORPC, in partnership with Franklin County Public Health, is taking the first step toward understanding air-pollution exposure and inequities by deploying small, agile monitors throughout Columbus and Franklin County. The information gathered will provide a better understanding of air-pollution levels and inequities across neighborhoods, which will lead to creating strategies to improve the quality of life for everyone in the region.

To evaluate air quality conditions, MORPC issues an annual report to summarize air quality in the Columbus region each year. Earlier this year, MORPC released its end of the year report. The report summarized air quality data from November 2020 to October 2021 and focused on ground-level ozone and particle pollution, which are public health concerns and regulated by national standards.

One of the report's key findings was that air quality in central Ohio is improving, which impacts the quality of life. For the first time since record-keeping began in 1980, central Ohio did not experience any high ozone pollution days, considered Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups (USG) Air Quality Index (AQI) days for ozone were observed during the ozone forecast season.

Another key finding of the report focused on the impact of wildfire smoke that traveled to the Columbus region from Canada in July 2021. The report found that the smoke contributed to 10 of the moderate AQI days for PM2.5 experienced during that timeframe. This number represents the highest number of Moderate AQI days recorded in July for PM2.5 since 2015. PM2.5, or fine particle pollution are composed of solid or liquid droplets that can get into the lungs and bloodstream. Sources include diesel trucks, power plants, and wood burning.

Overall, most days in central Ohio were in the Good Air Quality Index category. For ozone, PM2.5, 87% of all days were in the Good AQI category. For ozone, 85% of summer days were in the Good AQI category.

The good news is that central Ohio is making significant progress toward improving air quality for everyone in the region. Over the past few years, there has been a considerable improvement in air pollution levels. This decline resulted from the COVID-19 global pandemic, which resulted in fewer vehicles on the road and fewer planes in the sky, particularly with the transition to working from home.

For nearly 30 years, the high number of days with high ozone has generally declined, driven chiefly by emissions reductions from vehicles. This improvement is primarily due to lower emission levels and federal and state policies. These efforts have resulted in better pollution control technology and gains in fuel efficiency. Combined with regional investments in electrifying fleets and expanding sustainable mobility energy options, these efforts have contributed to better air quality in our region. Along with these actions, there are additional steps that everyone can take to ensure better air quality:

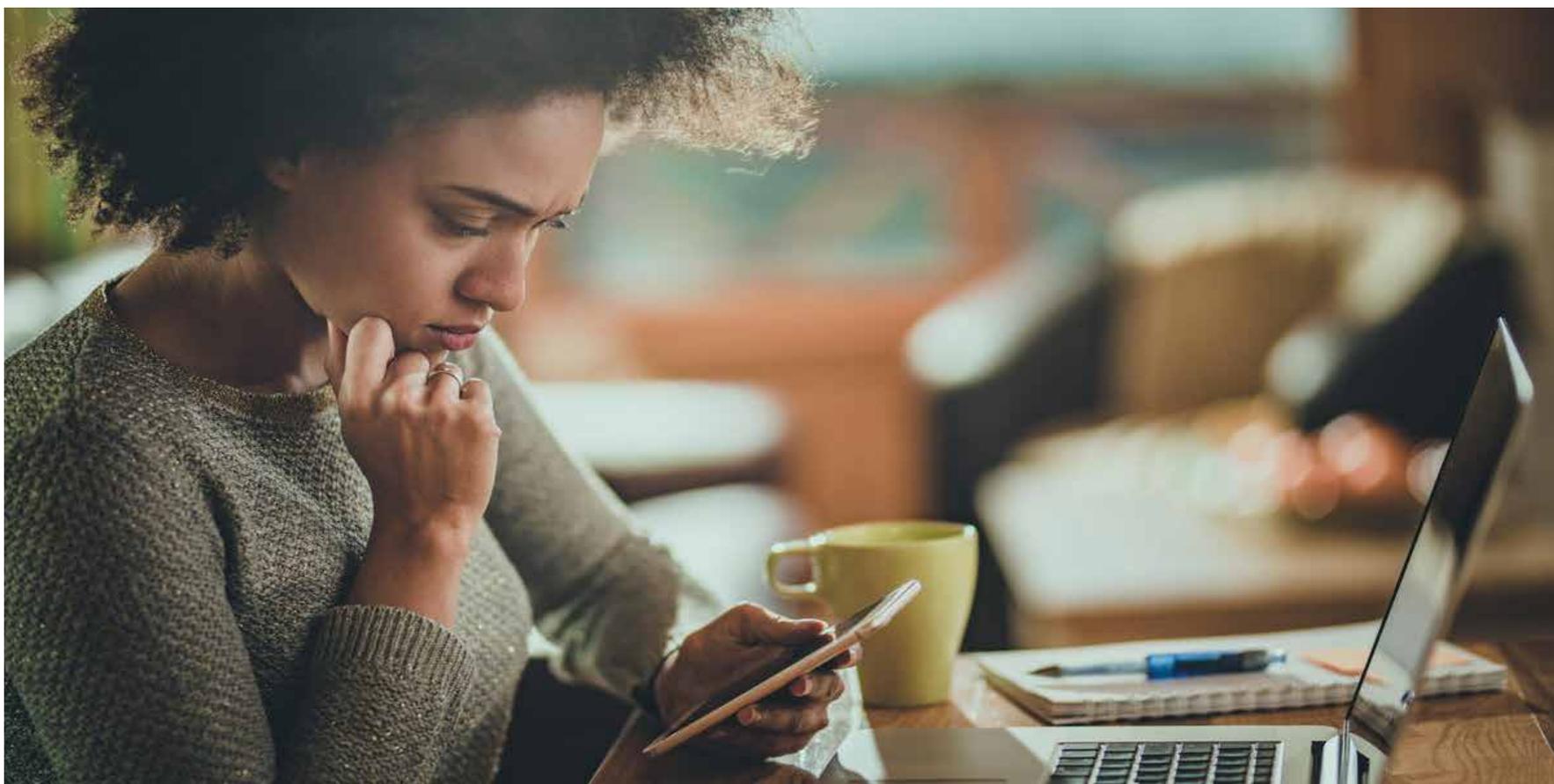
- Stay Informed. Sign up for MORPC's Air Quality Alerts at www.morpc.org/airquality to stay healthy and plan accordingly.
- Rethink your ride. Try carpooling, vanpooling, combining trips, riding the bus, biking, walking. Visit www.gohiocommute.com/morpc to plan a trip.
- Walk or bike for short trips. Use the Columbus Metro Bike Map at www.morpc.org/bikemap to plan a trip.
- Turn the key; be idle-free. Turn off the car engine instead of idling to reduce harmful air pollution.
- Refuel after 8 p.m. Filling up your car after 8 p.m. and avoiding topping off the tank minimizes pollution. Gas fumes combined with warm temperatures during the day can create ground-level ozone.
- Use greener lawn equipment. Replace gas-powered equipment with electric or hand-operated options.
- Save energy. Start with an audit to identify ways to live more comfortably and spend less money. Call MORPC at 614.621.1171.

To learn more about the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission, view MORPC's Central Ohio Air Quality End of Season Report or sign up to receive free Air Quality Alert notifications, visit www.morpc.org.

Niel M. Jurist is the Sr. Director of Communications & Engagement for the Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission (MORPC). She is the chief spokesperson for the organization and in her role, she oversees the diversity, equity and inclusion, communications, marketing, events/sponsorship, engagement, and outreach efforts.

MORPC is Central Ohio's regional council with nearly 80 members comprised of counties, cities, villages, townships, and regional organizations. We take pride in bringing communities of all sizes and interests together to collaborate on best practices and plan for the future of our growing region.

IS IT TIME FOR A TECHNOLOGY RESET?



By Cecil Jones, MBA

- You have been praying for the lessening of COVID during this past 2+ years+ of the pandemic.
- You have gone through changes and still there are some unknowns in your life.
- Your plans shifted for your family, friends, work, school, travel and even how you close you should stand next to other people.
- You were affected by the 'Great Resignation' (you left a job or other people changed jobs, for whatever reason).
- You have spent many hours each day on your computer/laptop and cellphone (your mobile computer that is also a phone).

Does the above describe you?

Is it time for a reset? Is it time for a technology reset?

Spending Hours on the Web leads to Poor Physical Health

The Social Work in Public Health organization published: *Sedentarism: The Effects of Internet Use on Human Obesity in the United States*. They purport that "the more individuals use the Internet, the more they increase their risks of becoming obese. The explanation is that Internet use may cause sedentarism..." (https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/19371918.2011.542998?casa_key=qpIwHhDN9D0AAAAA%3AExqRdK-XxyJWqTyT9dZhb8Ni1AOK7kFtj7ZT20ezE1IAE1e5WwtGaY4sfYXRvjDd2mbT7zjlujsA).

Is it time for a technology reset?

Spending Hours on the Web leads to Poor Social Skills, Poor Emotional Intelligence

Our young people (and I believe many 'not so young' people) are missing social and emotional intelligence skill building opportunities. One can read online about talking and communicating with others; however, the real growth in this area comes from actually in-person interacting with others, sharing ideas and learning from each other. The New York Health organization shares that "22% of teenagers log on to their favorite social media site more than 10 times a day and more than half of adolescents log on to a social media site more than once a day"

"A large part of this generation's social and emotional development is occurring while on the Internet and cell phones. All the time that children and teenagers spend on the web and more specifically social media sites, takes time away from face-to-face communication and in-person activities". (<https://www.newyorkbehavioralhealth.com/the-impact-of-social-media-use-on-social-skills/>)

Resetting Ourselves

My pastor, Dr. Howard T. Washington, Second Baptist Church, 186 N. 17th St. Columbus, Ohio 43203 shared that we are in a "season for resetting" while giving us an inspiring message, Time to Reset. View <https://youtu.be/51bt0MdJv-g> for a great service. You will be blessed.

We use technology most hours of our day. Students take online classes. When they are in face-to-face classes, they use computers and other web connected technology to read and complete their assignments. The number of social media posts are exploding. Many corporations and other organizations are working online from home or in a hybrid mode (some days in the office, some days working from home).

Is it time for a technology reset?

Freedom from Technology Addiction – Please Reset

- Are you slowly getting 'out of the house' more? This helps in getting away from technology. Have you seen your relatives and friends recently? Ensure that you know their masking and distancing requirements. Is it time to pay them a visit?
- Is it time to do spring cleaning at home? This gets other work completed and gets us away from being online. It will also put a smile on your face.
- Do you step away from your computer system each hour? Eye health professionals and general physicians often recommend that pause each hour. It may have positive impacts upon your attitude, energy and mental health.

Let's get Started!

You have been carrying a lot over the last two+ years. You have been supporting others. You may have been a bit isolated due to the pandemic restrictions and rules. You deserve a reset.

The sun is shining a little longer each day, now. Temperatures are going up a bit. You are doing OK, considering all that has occurred recently. Are you ready to reset? Let's take that next step. Let's deliberately take breaks from our technology each hour.

Ready, Set, Reset!

Are you looking for a technology networking group to help you get smarter? What new technology or process have you learned this month? Need advice on how to look for that technology position? Are you considering technology education (courses, certificates or degrees) and need information? Do you have a business, process, project management, personnel or technology question? Please let me know. admin@accelerationervices.net Cecil Jones MBA, ABD, PMP, CCP, SCPM, FLMI, Lean Professional, 614-726-1925.

HON. GRADY L. PETTIGREW: LAWYER, JUDGE AND COMMUNITY SERVANT



By Rodney Blount, Jr., MA

Spring is in the air reminding us of growth and new beginnings. Reflecting on the current events around the world, people are affected by so many things including the Russia's war with Ukraine, higher prices for commodities (food, gas, clothing, etc.), continued attacks against voting and other rights, and the lingering effects of COVID-19. However, there is hope and faith for a more positive future. The nomination of Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson is historic as she is slated to be the first African American woman on the United States Supreme Court. The two-time Harvard grad has decades of experience as an attorney and a judge. She has inspired millions as she battles through confirmation hearings. Her brilliance, humility and power as a legal giant is reminiscent of the Hon. Grady Lee Pettigrew, Jr. He has served as a legal professional for over 50 years, including as a Judge of the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of Ohio. He is also recently retired after several years of service on the Civil Service Commission of the City of Columbus. Below is a citation from the commission honoring Hon. Grady Pettigrew's achievements in his profession and in the community.

Civil Service Retirement

We are proud to recognize the retirement of The Honorable Grady L Pettigrew from Civil Service Commission of City of Columbus.

A decorated Army Veteran, Judge Pettigrew served his community as a Federal Judge, an educator, and was named one of the "Best Lawyers in America" many times during his career. The Honorable Grady L. Pettigrew, Jr. has served as a Judge of the United States Bankruptcy Court for the Southern District of Ohio, has been a member of the Bankruptcy Faculty of the Federal Judicial Center in Washington, D.C. and the legal profession as an adjunct professor at the law schools at Ohio State University and Capital University, and as author of two books on bankruptcy law. Also, he distinguished himself as an Ohio State University law student when he and his partner won the National Moot Court Championship.

Judge Pettigrew is retiring as the President of the City of Columbus Municipal Civil Service Commission. His passion for law and education blends into a lifetime of community service. He has a history of service to Columbus from appointment to the Police Chief Review Commission by Mayor Buck Rhinehart. He was appointed to the Civil Service Commission by Mayor Michael Coleman. Mayor Anthony Ginther continued his service up to his retirement.

This Jefferson Award Nominee has a professional career and history of pioneering and serving with distinguished legal service as well as generous civic and community



(L to R) Lt. Gen. Michael Ferriter and his wife, Gen. Colin Powell and wife Alma Powell, Hon. Grady L. Pettigrew and wife Dr. Carolyn Landers Pettigrew

service. He was awarded medals for military service as a combat medic in Vietnam and as Battalion Aid Station Officer in First Air Cav Division. This dedicated family man began his adult life by serving his country in the US Army, where he received two Bronze Stars, Air Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, Combat Medical Badge 1st Award and the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Ribbon.

A passionate proponent of community service, Judge Pettigrew has volunteered his time to help the community in numerous ways. A graduate of The Ohio State University and The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law, Judge Pettigrew served as a Trustee for Columbus State Community College and as the President and as a Trustee of Columbus Urban League. He has also served on the Board of Governors for the Columbus Bar Association, in the House of Delegates of the Ohio Bar Association, as a Trustee of Interprofessional Commission of Ohio, and as a Trustee of the Martin Luther King Performing Arts Complex. He chaired a project for health and wellness in the Columbus urban community for many years.

Our Retiree's entire life has been distinguished by his service to others, including teaching Law and Legal Studies at the Law School of Capital University, The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law and the Federal Judicial Center. An active leader in his Church, Judge Pettigrew has served as a Trustee on the Board of United Church Homes, in order to provide housing for those in need. Serving his community as a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Sigma Pi Phi Fraternity, The Simultaneous Revival Mass Choir throughout the various phases of his life, further demonstrates Judge Pettigrew's strong devotion to uplifting his community and helping people in every area of his life and career.

Civil Service Commission wishes our Retiree well as he continues his community service. In retirement, he will direct Project Jubilee, a non-profit charity that provides community education about legal topics, economic, empowerment, spirituality, health and wellness. We thank Judge Pettigrew for his service.

I have had the pleasure to interview Hon Grady L. Pettigrew and discovered so many great facets about his life and his commitment to service. He consistently mentioned the importance of fairness, faith, and opportunity. He concluded his interview by stating the following:

"I went to Miami University to speak about 3 years to a group of students (90% of whom were students of color), some of whom wanted to go to law school. The theme was pioneering is hard work. I considered the students as pioneers. In so many instances when you find yourself out there first, then you are a pioneer (e.g. being the first black person in an organization/occupation). It is hard work and it is something I experienced my entire life and yet I know it is something that must be done. My experience has shown that these people deserve to be there. Service is the price you pay for occupying this space on earth. My family of origin has believed in that to the nth degree. I have tried to do that in my everyday life. The important thing is to render service when the opportunity to comes up."

Rodney Blount is an Educator and Historian. He received two Bachelor of Arts degrees from Ball State University and a Masters of Arts degree from The Ohio State University. His work has been featured in several publications. Rodney is a native of Columbus, Ohio and is a member of several organizations.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Columbus, Ohio

COLUMBUS EVENTS

Note: Included below are a few selected events for Minority Health Month. For a full listing of events, see the calendar of events posted by the Ohio Commission on Minority Health at mih.ohio.gov.

April 12, 2022

African American Collection Spotlight: King Arts Complex presented by the Columbus Metropolitan Library. Join African American Special Collections Librarian Nicole Sutton for this month's afternoon talk about Black History in Columbus. We will have a conversation with a Jevon Collins from the King Arts Complex about photographs and materials from the library's digital collection, My History, to give context to the past. Jevon Collins is the Performing Arts Program Director at The King Arts Complex in Columbus, Ohio. His main duties include developing, organizing, and facilitating Performing Arts programming. He currently serves on the Board of Directors for the National Performance Network, Vice President for The Ohio State University - Black Alumni Society and the Cbus Libraries Board.

Location: Columbus Public Library

Address: Virtual

Time: Noon

Admission: Free

Contact: https://www.crowdcast.io/e/spotlight-2/register?utm_source=profile&utm_medium=profile_web&utm_campaign=profile

April 13, 2022

Teen Panel Discussion on COVID-19 and Mental Health. The National Coalition of 100 Black Women, Ohio Chapter will present a webinar on Teens, COVID-19 and mental health. Special guest speaker will be Franklin County Public Health Assistant Commissioner Theresa Seagraves. A panel of teens will also present. Additional sponsors are: Franklin County Public Health and the Columbus Public Health Center for Public Health Innovation.

Location: Virtual

Address: Link TBD

Time: Noon-2 p.m.

Admission: Free

Contact: Delores Richardson 614-813-1066 or deloresrichardson@franklincountyohio.gov

April 21, 2022

Minority Health Month Interfaith Prayer Event. Broad Street Presbyterian Church will host an interfaith virtual prayer event to share prayers of hurt, hope, peace, love, thanksgiving, unity and action. The focus is twofold; to offer interfaith prayers to celebrate our shared faith, and religious holidays and to bring together our diverse community by bridging our cultural practice of prayer, to inspire action and create unity.

Location: Virtual

Address: [youtube.com/c/ BroadStreetPresbyterianChurch/ videos](https://www.youtube.com/c/BroadStreetPresbyterianChurch/videos)

Time: Noon – 1 p.m.

Admission: Free

Contact: Regina Bronson at 614- 645-6911 or Rebronson@columbus.gov.

Dayton, Ohio

DAYTON EVENTS

Note: Included below are a few selected events for Minority Health Month. For a full listing of events, see the calendar of events posted by the Ohio Commission on Minority Health at mih.ohio.gov.

April 10, 2022

A Dunbar 150th Celebration Program. The Dunbar Literary Circle meets on the second Sunday of the month. Each month we touch on a different topic. This month's topic is Dunbar's Poetry. The program will start and end with Paul Laurence Dunbar's poetry, providing an opportunity for sharing and dialogue of various poetry and its content. The program is hosted by Omope Carter-Daboiku of the Paul Laurence Dunbar branch of ASALH, Inc. and Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historical Park. The Paul Laurence Dunbar House Historic Site is located at 219 West PL Dunbar Street, Dayton, Ohio. Please enter through the Visitor Center entrance on Edison Street (around the corner from the Dunbar House).

Location: Paul Lawrence Dunbar House

Address: 219 W. PL Dunbar St. Dayton

Time: 2-4 p.m.

Admission: Free

Contact: <https://www.ohiohistory.org/events/dunbar-literary-circle-at-the-dunbar-house-2/>

April 23, 2022

Community Health Fair – Carnival Style. The Urban Minority Alcohol Drug Abuse Outreach Programs (UMADAOP) is sponsoring a carnival style community health fair. In addition to health information, the fair will offer blood pressure and Lupus screenings. Area vendors and health related activities will round this fun-filled event.

Location: UMADAOP /Oak Street Health

Address: Westown Shopping Center, 4271 W. 3rd St. 45417

Time: 10 a.m. – 2p.m.

Admission: Free

Contact: Paris Sheperd, 937-979-3757 or 937-276-2176; www.umadaopfdayton.com

April 26, 2022

Living a Cancer Prevention Lifestyle. In this workshop, participants will learn cancer prevention strategies. Included will be an overview of how to adopt a healthier lifestyle by to reduce the risk for certain cancers. The workshop is sponsored by the American Fitness Health & Wellness Institute.

Location: American Fitness Health & Wellness Institute

Address: 643 Troy St. Dayton 45404

Time: 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Admission: Free

Contact: 937-275-3770

April 30, 2022

Proactive Prevention & Recovery from Addictive Behaviors. Participants will learn the symptoms of heroin, alcohol, smoking and other addictive behaviors. Also taught will be the signs of an overdose, various treatments, medicines and behavior therapies that are effective in helping people over their addictions. This event is sponsored by the American Fitness health & Wellness Institute.

Location: American Fitness Health & Wellness Institute

Address: 643 Troy St. Dayton 45404

Time: 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.

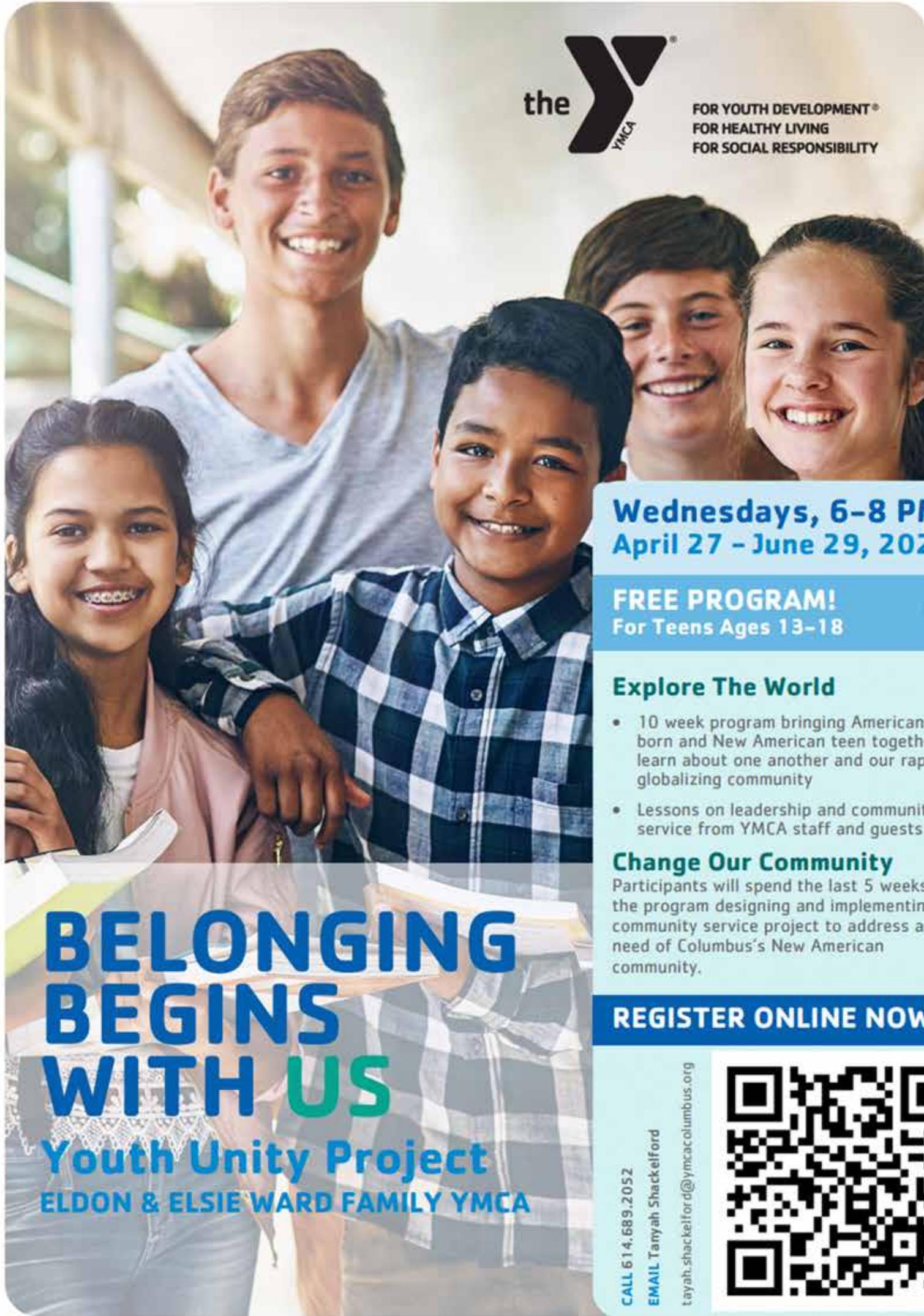
Admission: Free

Contact: 937-275-3770

Please note: Information for this section is gathered from multiple community sources. The Columbus & Dayton African American is not responsible for the accuracy and content of information. Times, dates and locations are subject to change. If you have an event that you would like to feature in this section, please call 614-826-2254 or email us at editor@columbusafricanamerican.com. Submissions are due the last Friday of each month.



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



Wednesdays, 6-8 PM
April 27 - June 29, 2022

FREE PROGRAM!
For Teens Ages 13-18

**IN
PERSON!**

Explore The World

- 10 week program bringing American-born and New American teen together to learn about one another and our rapidly globalizing community
- Lessons on leadership and community service from YMCA staff and guests

Change Our Community

Participants will spend the last 5 weeks of the program designing and implementing a community service project to address a need of Columbus's New American community.

REGISTER ONLINE NOW

BELONGING BEGINS WITH US

Youth Unity Project
ELDON & ELSIE WARD FAMILY YMCA

CALL 614.689.2052

EMAIL Tanyah Shackelford

tayah.shackelford@ymcacolumbus.org



The Ohio Commission on Minority Health

SAVE *the* DATE

APRIL IS MINORITY HEALTH MONTH!

**The 2022 Virtual Statewide
Minority Health Month Kickoff Ceremony**

Tuesday, March 29, 2022

9am-12pm

Celebrating 35 years of Service

Register for our 2022 Virtual Statewide Minority Health Month
Kickoff and Awards Ceremony at: <https://ocmh.mjvirtualevents.com>

Sponsors to Date: Bronze Level: CareSource

Pewter Level: Buckeye Health Plan, Humana Molina and Promedica,

Copper Level: Nationwide Children's

***The statewide listing of events can be accessed at www.mih.ohio.gov
on March 11, 2022***

This virtual event is Free and Open to the Public

Mike DeWine, Governor | Representative Sykes, Chairperson | Angela Dawson, Director