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# THE BALTIMORE TIMES

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## West Baltimore native earns valedictorian at Spelman College



*Kendra Grissom from West Baltimore was named the 2020 Valedictorian at Spelman College. Grissom plans to continue her studies at Johns Hopkins University to pursue a Ph.D. in history. Her overall goal is to become a professor at a historically black college or university. (Story on page 7)*

Courtesy Photo/Spelman College



# Mental Health Break: What adjustments do you need to make?

By Charles (Chazz) Scott  
Nucleus Team Member  
Positively Caviar, Inc.

The pandemic has completely modified our day-to-day lives like we never could have imagined. With well over two months since the virus first impacted the United States, it's no surprise that the pandemic has completely reshaped modern life as we know it. Our repetitive, almost instinctive schedules have been modified in ways that none of us were prepared for. We've had to adapt and modify our habits, schedules, and daily routines.

Some of us have even lost jobs and even loved ones during this period unsettling period. It's no question that even a small combination of some of these factors can significantly influence your mental health. It's imperative that we all stop and take time to ask ourselves how we are doing to determine what is supporting you or undermining your mental health needs.

If you haven't had a chance yet, stop and ask yourself how you are feeling. Take time to sit down and consciously think about how the pandemic might've affected you. Have you adapted well? Is there room for improvement? What do you think is working for you or working against you? This is a chance to truly take time to think about the days you've enjoyed vs. the days that could have gone better. Remember our emotions about ourselves are the sum total of our experiences and memories. Although the pandemic may have changed our daily

habits and schedules, humans are extremely adaptable if we take the time to reflect, recalibrate and focus on what our mind, body and soul needs on a continuing basis.

There are many contributing factors that can directly influence your emotional health and mental health. These can include your diet, regular physical exercise, and close connections with friends and family. Do a mental inventory and think about the things that put you in a good mood. If you find some habits that are not working for you—that's ok, at least you've recognized them to make adjustments. For example, if you are a habitual snacker while working from home make an effort to snack on food that is healthy like trail mix or fruit. If you've noticed you are not exercising as much as you would like to, schedule some time for a walk, run or indoor workout to get those feel-good brain chemicals going. Trust me it's not easy to start but I bet you will feel amazing after it's over.

Here are some ways to adjust and monitor your mental health:

**Keep a daily routine**— Our brain loves routines. In fact, our brain is filled with habits that we have instilled overtime. COVID-19 has influenced habits and schedules, which could throw you into confusion. Make sure you take time to eat breakfast, lunch and dinner at the same time every day. Find a morning routine that makes sense that will give you the boost you need to conquer your day. Continuing monitoring your habits and correct the ones that may not sup-



Charles (Chazz) Scott  
Nucleus Team Member  
Positively Caviar, Inc.  
Courtesy Photo

port you. For example, mindlessly scrolling on social media may not be the best for you during this time. Instead pick up a book that feeds your energy and spirit.

**Be proactive in reaching out to family and friends**— Scientists have proven that our connection with others contributes to both our physical health and psychological well being. Moods and behaviors are contagious and in many

ways our happiness is significantly, influenced by those we associate with. Although we may not be able to see our friends and family face-to-face, we can make use of web conferencing apps such as Facetime, Google Duo or Zoom. Reach out to a friend you haven't spoken to in a while. After the call is over you might even feel a rush of feel-good chemicals in your brain.

**Take breaks from social media**— It's easy to fall into the trap of mindlessly scrolling through social media with no apparent objective. Especially during this time it's important to take breaks from social media and news outlets to give your mind a chance to rest. Set limits on your devices if you find yourself overwhelmed or unhappy after scrolling on your social media or news sites.

*Positively Caviar, Inc. is a grassroots nonprofit organization focused on instilling mental resilience by way of positive thinking and optimism. Each month, a member of their Nucleus Team will feature a column focused on mental and physical health tips, scientific studies, nutrition facts and stories that are positive in nature to support a positive and healthy lifestyle. To learn more about how you can support, volunteer, or donate to Positively Caviar, Inc. please visit: [staybasedandpositive.com](http://staybasedandpositive.com).*



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# Guest Editorials/Commentary

## American innovation helps patients beat coronavirus

By Kenneth E. Thorpe

American scientists are working furiously to develop treatments for the novel coronavirus, COVID-19.

No group of patients needs a vaccine more than those with chronic conditions. Patients with just one chronic disease who contract COVID-19 are 80 percent more likely to experience a "poor outcome"— like hospitalization or death— than those without any chronic conditions, according to recent studies.

Fortunately for Americans living with chronic disease, the United States leads the world in medical innovation. As long as policymakers protect this innovation ecosystem, U.S. scientists will surely produce vaccines and treatments relatively quickly— and keep our nation healthy through this crisis and for years to come.

Americans are rightly worried about COVID-19. More than 100,000 Americans have died from COVID-19 and nearly two million have tested positive for the disease.

Patients with chronic diseases are particularly vulnerable. Forty percent of hospitalized COVID-19 patients have some type of cardiovascular or cerebrovascular disease. Other chronic conditions— like arthritis, diabetes and cancer— could make it harder for the body to fight the virus.

But our scientists will rise to this challenge and invent new therapies, just as they have countless times in the past. Heart disease death rates have declined 36 percent since 2000, largely thanks to new and better medicines. Similarly, cancer death rates have declined 27 percent since the 1990s.

Health gains like this come at a hefty price. It takes up to 15 years and \$2.6 billion to develop just one new medicine. And only 12 percent of drugs that begin clinical trials ever make it to pharmacy shelves. Drug companies and their investors will only roll the dice on novel research projects if they have a chance of recouping their development losses and earning a return.

Because the United States fairly values medicines, scientists have a strong incentive to launch research projects here. All told, American firms develop half of the world's new medicines.

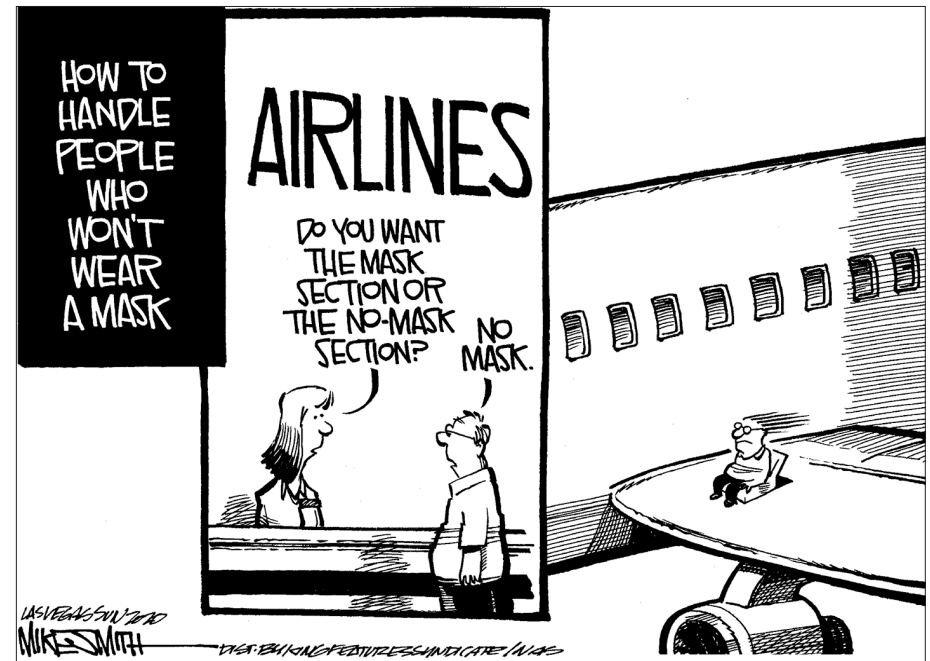
Researchers tend to flee countries whose governments arbitrarily cap prices of new medicines. Consider that in the 1970s, Europe produced more than half of the world's new medicines. But throughout the 1980s, many European countries imposed increasingly strict price controls on drugs. As a result, today Europe produces only 33 percent of all new drugs.

Unfortunately, some lawmakers want to implement similar price controls in the United States. A few members of Congress attempted to slip a price control into one of the first COVID-19 spending packages. The provision would have allowed the government to dictate the price of any COVID-19 vaccine that resulted from the emergency funding.

Congress wisely stripped out that provision, which would have discouraged investments into COVID-19 cures, vaccines, and therapies. Congress' decision is great news for every American hoping for a COVID-19 vaccine, especially those living with chronic disease.

COVID-19 poses an enormous threat to American society -- but our smartest scientists are already on the case. Let's hope our policymakers don't put any stumbling blocks along their path to a cure— whether for coronavirus or any other dangerous disease.

*Kenneth E. Thorpe is a professor of health policy at Emory University and chairman of the Partnership to Fight Chronic Disease*



## Community Affairs

### Baton Rouge Area Foundation opens entries for 14th Annual Gaines Award

Baton Rouge, La. – Entries for the 14th annual Ernest J. Gaines Award for Literary Excellence will be accepted through August 31, 2020. Information on criteria and entrance forms for the award, which includes a \$15,000 cash prize, is available at [www.ernestjgainesaward.org](http://www.ernestjgainesaward.org).

Presented by the Baton Rouge Area Foundation, the Gaines Award was created to honor outstanding literary work from rising African-American authors while recognizing Louisiana native Ernest Gaines' extraordinary contribution to the literary world. The upcoming Gaines Award will honor outstanding fiction— novels or short-story collections— published in 2020. Galleys for 2020 publications are also accepted.

A native of Pointe Coupee Parish, Ernest J. Gaines' critically acclaimed novel, "The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman," was adapted into a 1974

made-for-TV movie that received nine Emmy awards. His 1993 book, "A Lesson Before Dying," won the National Book Critics Circle Award for fiction. He was Writer-in-Residence Emeritus at the University of Louisiana-Lafayette before his death in 2019.

The Gaines Award winner is chosen annually by a panel of professional writers and academics.

The award has found promising writers early in their careers. For instance, two previous Gaines Award winners have later won the \$50,000 Whiting Award. Another was chosen a MacArthur Fellow, a \$625,000 award given over five years.

Previous winners are Bryan Washington, Jamel Brinkley, Ladee Hubbard, Crystal Wilkinson, T. Geronimo Johnson, Mitchell Jackson, Attica Locke, Stephanie Powell Watts, Dinaw Mengestu, Victor Lavalle, Jeffery R. Allen, Ravi Howard and Olympia Vernon.

The Ernest Gaines Award event will be held Thursday January 28, 2021 at the Manship Theatre in downtown Baton Rouge.



## Joe Biden attacks freethinking black Americans while President Trump empowers them

*Exclusive to BlackPressUSA By Paris Dennard, Senior Communications Advisor for Black Media Affairs at the Republican National Committee*

A bigot is defined as "a person who is intolerant toward those holding different opinions." By that definition, Former Vice President Joe Biden is a bigot.

At the end of a recent interview on the very popular radio show, "The Breakfast Club," Joe Biden said, "If you have a problem figuring out whether you're for me or Trump, then you ain't black."

For a man who claims to have graduated with honors from so many elite schools, and is married to an educator, it is surprising that he would say "You ain't black." Maybe that is how he speaks on a regular basis, or maybe that is how he speaks when talking to black people.

The last thing that any freethinking, civically engaged black person needs in 2020, is a 77-year-old white man from Delaware "whitesplaining" blackness to us.

I was born black; still live the black experience as a black man in America every single day. My family comes from

the South, and we have experienced discrimination, racism, bigotry, and survived Jim Crow. My Papa was a proud member of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, founded by Dr. King, and still knowing my history, I am a black man voting for Trump.

Try as they might, the one thing Joe Biden and his liberal friends can't take away, define, or critique is my blackness because I am voting for Donald Trump.

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***"I was born black, still live the black experience as a black man in America every single day. My family comes from the South, and we have experienced discrimination, racism, bigotry, and survived Jim Crow. My Papa was a proud member of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, founded by Dr. King, and still knowing my history, I am a black man voting Trump."***

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In 2016, President Trump looked at the conditions and statistics of many predominantly black cities in America and saw that despite being led by Liberal lawmakers, our communities were faced with high crime, high unemployment, and poor public schools. Real estate values were down and there were not as many opportunities to advance, as there should have been. He asked us to trust him, listen to his plans and vote Donald J. Trump because at that point he said: "What do you have to lose?"

In response to Joe Biden's bigoted comment, Charlemagne the God said, "It don't have nothing to do with Trump, it has to do with the fact I want something for my community." At the end of the day, that is exactly what the black vote is about in 2020, our community. Identifying who has the record and resolve to get things done for the black Community. I have worked most of my adult life advocating, promoting, and defending my community inside the Republican

Party at all levels and have seen many results. However, I have seen the most results for my community under the Trump Administration.

Joe Biden asked The Breakfast Club audience to look at his record. That was not a gaffe—he was serious. For 44 years Joe Biden has been either MIA or on the wrong side of history when it comes to fighting for the black community. Let's start with his record on jus-

tice. We all know Joe Biden was the architect of the infamous 1994 Crime Bill that literally locked up thousands of men that look just like me. Biden was proud of his record on mass incarceration of black men that destroyed communities, dismantled families and stifled black wealth for generations.

How many strikes do we give Joe Biden until we say enough is enough, you are out? Out of touch; out of the mainstream; outside what black Americans need in leadership.

Thankfully, black people can look at the record of Donald Trump on the issue of Criminal Justice Reform and see the thousands of people who went home because of his bold advocacy of the First Step Act righting Biden's wrongs in just under, four years.

In 2012, Joe Biden told a predominantly black audience in Virginia, "They're gonna put y'all back in chains," referring to Republicans.

Joe Biden can't accept that the Republi-

can Party has historically been and currently is the party of freedom, and opportunities for everyone, especially the black community. We have a Republican President and candidate in Donald Trump, and an entire party that believes in school choice. We believe giving all parents the ability to place their children in better performing schools no matter your socio-economic background, color and zip code is the right thing to do. But Joe Biden only sees color and class saying, "poor kids are just as smart as white kids."

The media needs to stop calling these statements gaffes because they are not. Call them dog whistles, call them bigoted, call them offensive and call them racist.

In 2020, there is a clear choice to be made for the black community. We should examine the records of both Joe Biden and Donald Trump and vote our interests. By all objective measures, President Trump remains the champion for the black community in this election. His record of support for Historically Black Colleges and Universities, school choice, opportunity zones, criminal justice reform, minority businesses, kidney health, and direct aid and support to underserved communities during this global pandemic makes him worthy of our vote in November. Black people are signing up for "Black Voices for Trump" because he has kept his promises to our community.

The bigoted statements and damaging policies of Joe Biden need to remain quarantined with him in his Delaware basement.

*Paris Dennard is a GOP political commentator, strategist, and Senior Communications Advisor for Black Media Affairs at the Republican National Committee. Follow him on Twitter at @PARISDENNARD.*

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# Parents: Do these five things before returning to child care

By Ann Gadzikowski, Executive Editor of Britannica for Parents

As stay-at-home orders are lifted, many working parents are returning to their jobs and many child care programs are reopening. Parents need to know how the COVID-19 crisis has impacted their child care programs. Here are five tips to help families with young children transition back to child care routines:

**1. Pay your bill**— Parents, you were probably asked to pay at least a portion of your fees while your child care program was closed. While it may seem unfair to pay for care while your child is home with you, charging fees to reserve a child's space is standard practice for child care centers and it is essential for keeping programs running. The center's expenses continue even when children are not present. Facility costs like mortgage or rent payments must still be met. Most importantly, staff must be paid. Retaining skilled and experienced teachers and caregivers is one of the biggest challenges in the field of early childhood care and education. Paying your child care fees while your center is closed will help ensure that the staff will be there to welcome your child when they return.

If your family is not yet ready to return to child care and you have an opportunity to pay to hold your spot, do it. The current economic crisis means many child care centers are closing permanently, and it will likely only get harder for families to access early childhood care and education in the future. Do what you can now to retain your family's relationship with a quality child care program. If your financial situation makes it difficult to pay your fees, contact the director of the program and explain your situation. They may be able to refer you to assistance programs in your community.

**2. Practice wearing masks at home**— Child care centers are now adapting their health and safety practices to pro-



vide as much protection as possible against the spread of COVID-19. In most centers, the staff and parents will be required to wear masks, at least during drop off and pick up. In some centers, children over the age of two will also be required to wear masks. Seeing people in masks and wearing a mask may be difficult for many young children. You can help your child adjust to this new normal by practicing wearing masks at home.

First, offer your child a simple explanation for why people wear masks. For example, "A mask is something people wear that covers their nose and mouth. Wearing a mask helps keep people from getting sick." Let your child touch and hold your mask before you put it on. Children learn through play, so include masks in silly "peek-a-boo" games or in pretend play. Make little paper masks for your child's stuffed animals or dolls. Allow your child to pick out or decorate their own masks and let them practice

putting them on and taking them off all by themselves.

**3. Prep extra supplies**— Most child care centers will now have stricter rules for keeping children's supplies clean. This means that parents can anticipate the need to bring more items from home to the center each day, as well as the need to bring those items home and wash them more frequently. Check with your child care center to find out what new guidelines are in place, but keep in mind that you will likely need to prep individual meals and snacks, to provide more changes of clothing and extra diapers and wipes, and to more frequently swap out and wash blankets and nap items.

**4. Thank your child care teachers and staff**— Professionals working in early childhood care and education were already underpaid and overlooked before the COVID-19 pandemic. While some policy makers and leaders are now recognizing the importance of child care

services in rebuilding our economy, your child's teachers and caregivers have not received the recognition and appreciation they deserve. Be sure to take a moment to tell them how much they mean to your family and thank them every day for their commitment to your child.

**5. Contact your legislators**— To ensure that quality care and education is available to all young children, make sure your legislators are making child care a top priority. Advocacy organizations like the National Association for the Education of Young Children and Zero to Three provide guidance for reaching out to legislators and speaking up about the importance of investing in child care and other early childhood services.

To learn more about "The COVID-19 Child Care Crisis: What Parents Need to Know," visit <https://parents.britannica.com/the-covid-19-child-care-crisis-what-parents-need-to-know/>.

*"Nothing in life is to be feared, it is only to be understood. Now is the time to understand more, so that we may fear less." —Marie Curie*



# West Baltimore native earns valedictorian at Spelman College

By Stacy M. Brown

Through hard work, determination and balance, Kendra Grissom has excelled and achieved high honors during her academic career. Now, Grissom, a native of Baltimore, can add Spelman College valedictorian to her long list of academic achievements.

The history major says people have discounted her and made assumptions about her abilities because of her origin— West Baltimore.

Being named valedictorian confirms for her that how one begins does not determine how one ends, Grissom said in a statement released by the college.

“I am incredibly proud of my Baltimore roots and I hope this moment serves as evidence that inner city youth should not be underestimated,” she said. “As a first-generation college student, I am incredibly blessed to have a village of amazing mentors, teachers, family members, friends, neighbors, professors and church members who have sup-



ported me throughout my life’s journey. I would not be where I am today without them, and this honor is as much theirs as it is mine.”

Michelle Hite, Ph.D., associate professor of English and director of the Honors Program, is one of those mentors, according to Spelman officials. Even though Grissom was never one of her students, Dr. Hite’s mentorship helped

shape her intellectual life at Spelman.

“Kendra sought me out after hearing me speak and wanted to learn more about my intellectual journey and how to build a life rooted in ideas,” Dr. Hite said. “Through Kendra’s example, students can observe the intellectual sovereignty that serious academic work demands. Though no instructor gave Kendra an assignment to seek me out or

to create rich and meaningful intellectual experiences for herself, she did it anyway. Grad school is built for just such a renegade. I’m proud of her and look forward to having her as a professional peer one day soon.”

The recipient of the Clio Outstanding History Graduating Senior Award, Grissom is a member of the Phi Alpha Theta and Phi Beta Kappa Honor Societies and a UNCF Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellow.

She served as a mentor in the Ford First Gen Scholars Program, was an ambassador of the Spelman College Museum of Fine Art and worked with the Spelman College Glee Club.

Following graduation, Grissom plans to continue her studies at Johns Hopkins University, where she plans to pursue a Ph.D. in history. Her overall goal is to become a professor at a historically black college or university, “making history more accessible while actively working to impact change in public education,” Grissom said.



## If I could do one thing, I'd make sure we stay healthy.

If you could do one thing for your community, what would it be? More walk-in clinics? More funding for health services closer to home? Completing the 2020 Census is a safe and easy way to inform billions in funding for hundreds of services and programs in your community. **Respond online, by phone, or by mail.**

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# Mayoral Candidates respond to questions from Baltimore Times readers

The Baltimore Times extended the opportunity to Mayoral candidates to address questions from our readers. Three candidates responded by press time.

1. Unemployment and safety for workers remain significant issues in Baltimore. The Coronavirus-19 layoffs make it worse. What will you do individually in the short, intermediate, and long-run to fix or to help to fix these problems regarding employment, unemployment insurance, mortgage, rent, and the \$15 an hour minimum wage?



Sheila Dixon

*I will re-establish the Baltimore Economic Recovery Team and charge them with bringing together the best ideas for putting Baltimore back to work. We need all our brightest minds working together in unison to serve our city in its hour of need. As mayor, I will use major lessons we learned from the recession of 2008, in which I effectively led the city through. Unemployment insurance will help to fill the gap for many who have lost their jobs, and the just-passed stimulus bill gives a major incentive to bring employees back on the payroll through grants and loans. Those fortunate enough to have received Paycheck Protection funding will find themselves with unexpected debt with no corresponding increase in revenue.*

2. The Blueprint for Maryland's Future bill is in jeopardy, because of Gov. Hogan's veto, and now the pandemic virus outbreak. Teachers remain forced to work at home online with BCPS students. What will you do or specifically get involved in to improve student attendance, the quality of education, and resources to address students' needs?

*While we wait to resume traditional in-person schooling, something that has become abundantly clear during this pandemic is the importance of having internet access at home. Too many children in Baltimore lack the resources to learn. Detroit has moved quickly to get \$23 million worth of computer tablets and high-speed internet to K-12 public school students. Baltimore should follow suit. I support immediate funding that would provide students in need with an at-home internet connection and a device on which to complete schoolwork. We cannot expect students to excel if they do not have the tools necessary to learn in the 21st century, both during distance learning and in the future when classes resume in-person.*

3. Street crime, specifically around illegal drug use, continues as a problem. Aerial observations, police-community relations, and the U.S. Justice Department's consent decree have not so far, reasonably deterred street crime or police brutality or recidivism. What are your short-term, intermediate-plan, and long-term solutions?

*Even during the pandemic, violent crime has continued to rise. I am the only candidate in this race that has a record for reducing crime. Effective policing is a necessity now more than ever. We must enhance our police presence and make sure our community knows there are resources there to help them. This means more foot patrols and more coordination of Baltimore Police, Maryland State Troopers, and MTA Police. We also have to convene all of our public safety entities to work collaboratively to determine where our weaknesses are. I will be committed to putting systems and infrastructure in place so that we will not continue to have the same issues with crime year after year.*

1. Unemployment and safety for workers remain significant issues in Baltimore. The Coronavirus-19 layoffs make it worse. What will you do individually in the short, intermediate, and long-run to fix or to help to fix these problems regarding employment, unemployment insurance, mortgage, rent, and the \$15 an hour minimum wage?



*We need a strong safety net while we focus on fostering a citywide economic revival.*

*Short Term: Fully access all state and federal aid for short-term city budget support and advocate for unemployment benefits extension.*

*Intermediate: Declare a public transit fare holiday for the rest of 2020 as our city gets back on its feet and continue other areas of relief.*

*Long-Term: Create a diverse Economic Recovery Team of citywide leaders to create inclusive growth using this crisis as an opportunity to come back stronger with living-wage jobs.*

*My plan for recovery is here: <https://electmarymiller.com/issues/the-miller-plan-for-baltimore-recovery-investment-and-inclusive-growth>*

2. The Blueprint for Maryland's Future bill is in jeopardy, because of Gov. Hogan's veto, and now the pandemic virus outbreak. Teachers remain forced to work at home online with BCPS students. What will you do or specifically get involved in to improve student attendance, the quality of education, and resources to address students' needs?

*One of the grievous inequities and governance failings the coronavirus has exposed in Baltimore is the "Digital Divide." I would use this moment to provide the necessary technology to all families and close the Internet Gap to give all residents access to the digital economy.*

*The governor's veto was a mistake. The need for the Kirwan Recommendations has never been clearer. I'm grateful for our strong delegation in Annapolis that will do what needs to be done to fix this and make the needed investments in our students, teachers, and school infrastructure.*

*My plan to strengthen education is here: <https://electmarymiller.com/issues/strengthen-our-education-system>*

3. Street crime, specifically around illegal drug use, continues as a problem. Aerial observations, police-community relations, and the U.S. Justice Department's consent decree have not so far, reasonably deterred street crime or police brutality or recidivism. What are your short-term, intermediate-plan, and long-term solutions?

*Crime in Baltimore is compounded by corruption, structural racism, politicization, mismanagement, and lack of economic opportunity. I will take accountability and bring everyone together to finally start delivering better results.*

*Short Term: I will give Commissioner Harrison the support he needs and hold him accountable to scale proven strategies.*

*Intermediate: I will hold BPD accountable to implement the Consent Decree and measures to restore trust with communities.*

*Long-Term: I will grow economic opportunity and attack structural racism so residents have a path away from crime.*

*My crime plan is here: <https://electmarymiller.com/issues/make-baltimore-safe-for-everyone>*



1. Unemployment and safety for workers remain significant issues in Baltimore. The Coronavid-19 layoffs make it worse. What will you do individually in the short, intermediate, and long-run to fix or to help to fix these problems regarding employment, unemployment insurance, mortgage, rent, and the \$15 an hour minimum wage?



*As Mayor, I will create public private partnerships with institutes of learning and small businesses to create a business-friendly climate to create good paying jobs our residents are qualified for organically. As a candidate, I have met with several small business owners and have heard their challenges pre-COVID and their current fears regarding doing business in the city. I have also met with foundations ready to step into the breach and be a part of the solution. Our current leadership has been derelict in their duties to safeguard and protect our small business communities. As Mayor, I will continue the work, I have already started. My administration will put a moratorium on all development deals requiring TIFS and PILOTS and will focus all our resources on redevelopment and infrastructure repairs to improve the quality of life for the residents we have, and stop squandering resources to chase new development at the expense of our current residents. Doing so will create jobs for our residents now. My administration will work to rehab our abandoned property stock using a low-income homeownership model giving our residents an opportunity for homeownership at a rate lower than most rent. Doing this will create good self-sustaining jobs.*

2. The Blueprint for Maryland's Future bill is in jeopardy, because of Gov. Hogan's veto, and now the pandemic virus outbreak. Teachers remain forced to work at home online with BCPS students. What will you do or specifically get involved in to improve student attendance, the quality of education, and resources to address students' needs?

*Education was already in a bad place. COVID has merely made that more evident. As Mayor, I will use this as an opportunity to re-evaluate the condition of the buildings themselves, curriculum and resource allotments getting to the classrooms to support our teachers. My administration will do a full fiscal and performance audit. We will prioritize making our schools someplace teachers want to teach, and students want to learn and can learn. For far too long Baltimore schools have been missing the mark in making sure our students graduate ready to continue their education or pursue a trade. Until the time that Baltimore schools are able to do that, my administration will work through an alliance with neighboring states to allow our students to attend an online tuition free public school. And they will be allowed to continue to attend those online schools until our schools are up to standard on a building by building basis.*

3. Street crime, specifically around illegal drug use, continues as a problem. Aerial observations, police-community relations, and the U.S. Justice Department's consent decree have not so far, reasonably deterred street crime or police brutality or recidivism. What are your short-term, intermediate-plan, and long-term solutions?

*As Mayor, I will work to make sure we are as hard on crime as we can legally be as we work to fix the opportunity problem that leads to some of the crime. We will work to fix the gaps in our communities that lead to crime so that we can hate the crime yet heal the criminal from a holistic perspective. We will also remove the roadblocks and create an atmosphere for restorative justice where we can reunite families and cut recidivism rates for those that have served their time and want to be a part of our community again. My administration will make it crystal clear crime will not be tolerated. If you are convicted of a crime, once your sentence is served you will be required to spend an additional period in a halfway house probation program. Upon successful completion, you will be afforded the opportunity to be made whole through our restorative justice initiative. Under my administration, if you fail to complete either part, it will be looked at as a violation of your probation.*



## JUNE 2, 2020

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Ballots must be postmarked **no later than 8:00 pm June 2** in order to be counted, but voters are encouraged to return them earlier if possible.

In addition to returning ballots by mail, voters may also choose to return their ballots using secure drop boxes .

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# Baltimore-based community land trust among leaders in affordable housing movement

By Demetrius Dillard

Long-standing housing discrimination and inequalities have put countless Baltimore City residents at major disadvantages. Hence, the need for the North East Housing Initiative (NEHI), an organization that advocates for the rights of homeowners while ensuring that permanent affordable housing is also available.

With unfair housing practices, including gentrification permeating so many of America's major inner cities, the affordable housing movement has played a crucial role in making homeownership possible for underserved communities.

Garrick Good, executive director of NEHI, works tirelessly with his colleagues and partners to serve communities throughout the quadrant of Northeast Baltimore.

Since its inception in 2014, NEHI, a community land trust, is dedicated to providing permanent affordable housing for low-income individuals or families at 80 percent AMI (Area Median Income) and below.

The current focus of NEHI is on housing in the four-by-four community off Belair Road. A 'four-by-four community' is a section of homes spanning four blocks horizontally and four blocks vertically, which in NEHI's case makes up about 600 homes—more than 50 of which are abandoned.

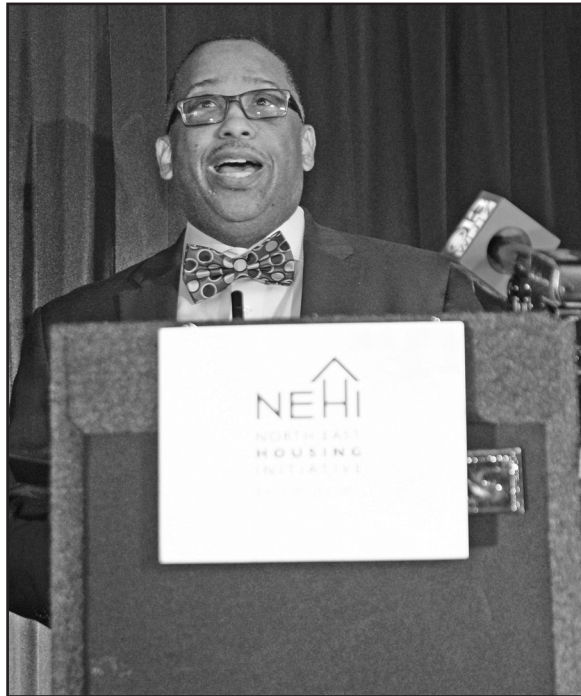
"We chose the four-by-four community because in Northeast Baltimore it seems to be the forgotten community," Good said.

NEHI works through a partnership with the City of Baltimore to acquire as many of those properties through receivership as possible.

In January, NEHI announced a five-year plan to obtain 200 homes to be used for permanent affordable housing. As it currently stands, two homes are on the market, and five are under construction for lease or sale sometime this summer, according to Good.

Even in the midst of a public health crisis in Baltimore City, NEHI's services did not stop.

"It has affected our organization like most others in the community. We are still focused on our housing strategies, but we are also focused more now on our stewardship component," said Good.



*The North East Housing Initiative is a nonprofit organization focused on changing and revitalizing Baltimore. (Above) Garrick Good, Executive Director of North East Housing Initiative.*

Courtesy Photo/NEHI

NEHI has expanded its stewardship program to help targeted families be better prepared for housing both pre and post sale.

"We've identified a lot of prospective homeowners, and so we've worked with them in getting food as well as snacks for students that are a part of the families, [and] we've worked with giving referrals to families on an as-needed basis to ensure that they get the assistance they need," Good said. "We had a number of families that had children that didn't have sufficient Internet for their homes, so we worked with them to get Internet in their homes so the students can continue to learn."

In addition, the Affordable Housing Trust Fund made it possible for the NEHI to secure funding that allows the organization to provide affordable housing to families and individuals who qualify.

"The average family is able to get a three or four bedroom home for less than \$600 a month. Some of the clients that we've been working with in looking for housing are paying twice that and have substandard housing," Good remarked. "And so what we're doing is a game changer, that will allow families to have a new home with new appliances and new systems, and be able to focus on other things that will continue to make them productive citizens in the community and give them disposable income to do other things."

NEHI's partners include PNC Bank; Fulton Bank; and Belair-Edison Neighborhoods, Inc., which helps NEHI with recruiting families, housing counseling and selling the homes.

Furthermore, the NEHI offers available subsidies that lead to price reductions that ensures housing costs are no more than 30 percent of a family's budget, Good highlighted.

"That number and the subsidies change from family to family, depending on what the household looks like," Good said. "But what we're doing is we're working to really understand families' needs, and then work with them post-purchase of their homes to look at other things that they can do to start being really active in the community and change the dynamic in communities like the four-by-four."

The Baltimore City Department of Housing & Community Development and commissioner Michael Braverman work closely with NEHI to assess strategies that best meet the needs of Baltimoreans.

"The HCD (Department of Housing & Community Development) has a commitment to providing housing stock. They see where community land trusts can be one of the tenants in achieving that goal," Good noted. "They work with us in a number of ways in ensuring that we're prepared and that we break down barriers that arise in preventing families to become homeowners."

If you or someone you know is interested in affordable housing and would like to discuss the possibility of obtaining a community land trust home, contact the NEHI directly at 410-488-4857 or visit the NEHI website at <https://www.nehihomes.org/>.



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# Ravens re-open training facility

By Tyler Hamilton

The NFL recently showed signs of climbing out from the COVID-19 pandemic that has impacted the country. As more states begin to open up, various NFL teams are re-opening their facilities.

The Baltimore Ravens recently received notice from Maryland Governor Larry Hogan that they are cleared to re-open their facilities with Phase 1 restrictions.

A drive past the Under Armour Performance Center or M&T Bank Stadium will no longer result in seeing an empty parking lot. The buildings won't see the return of all team employees however. Phase 1 permits up to 75 team employees to be allowed in the building.

Each NFL team opening their facilities are required to implement an Infection Response Team. The team is made up of the following:

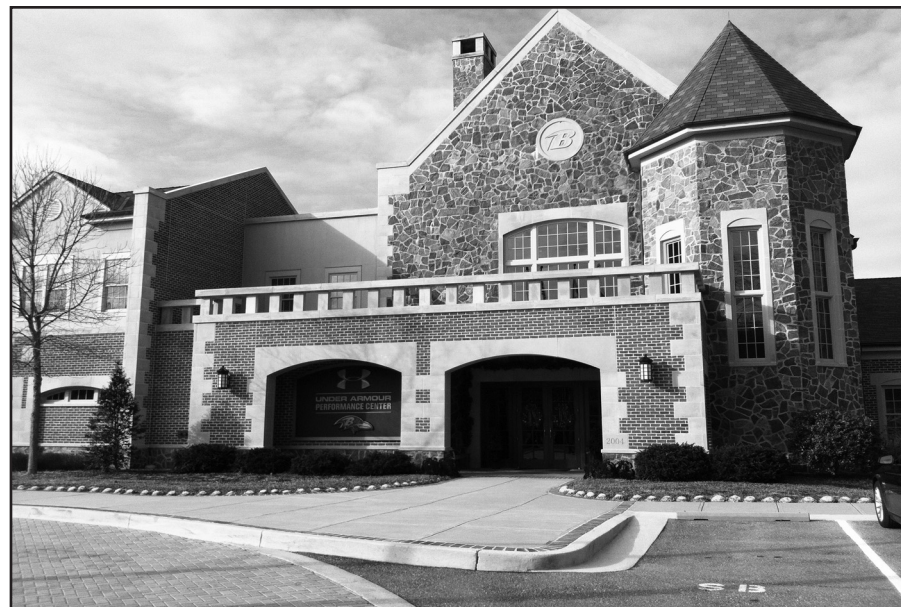
- A local physical with expertise in common infectious disease principles
- The club infection control officer

- Team athletic trainer
- Team head physician
- HR Director
- Chief of security
- Team mental health physician
- Member of club operations staff

The 75 employees don't include players or coaches. Players that reporting to the facility for rehab before it closed in March are permitted to continue to go to the building. If the strength and conditioning coach was working with the players during their rehab process before the facility closed, he/she is able to continue to do so during Phase 1.

Members of the football administration staff, football operations staff, personnel staff, medical staff, equipment staff and nutritionists are permitted in the building. Any employee entering the building must first undergo COVID-19 safety and hygiene training.

Like other teams that are re-opening, the Ravens will require employees to wear masks and practice social distancing. There will also be temperature checks before entrance into the facility is granted.



*The Under Armour Performance Center, the Ravens' training facility in Owings Mills, Maryland.*  
Courtesy Photo/BaltimoreRavens.com

Although the future schedule is uncertain, this is a step in the right direction towards revisiting some form of continuation into the next part of the offseason.

The next phase of the reopening plan calls for coaches to return to the building. but Ravens team President Dick Cass hinted that it will be kind of a wait and see approach.

"If the infection rate is really low, as I expect it will be by late summer, and we have adequate testing, and people are careful when they leave the building, I think there's a really good shot that we'll be OK," Cass said via the Ravens team website.

The goal is to at least have a full training camp leading into the regular season. According to Yahoo Sports, June 15 and June 27 are dates earmarked as possibili-

ties for full-squad minicamps. None or that is possible without signoff from the NFLPA.

As of Wednesday, there is no agreement in place regarding the players' role in the reopening plan. Cleveland Browns offensive lineman and NFLPA president JC Tretter released the following statement on social media on Tuesday:

"Our union has not agreed to any reopening plan. Any reports about coming back to work are hypothetical. You will hear from the NFLPA when there are new developments."

Miami Dolphins owner Stephen Ross told CNBC earlier this week that he fully expects an NFL season to take place. However, Ross admitted that he was uncertain as to whether or not fans will be in the stands.

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# Rambling Rose

*Memorial Day Was a Salute,  
Remembering With Love*



*Rosa Pryor Trusty*

Hello everyone, I know when you look at these photos you may think that the “Rambling Rose” column has changed into an obituary column. No fear, I promise that is not happening. It was Memorial Day weekend, and since it is impossible for me to name all of our friends and your friends and family members that we have lost in the recent months and days, I thought I will stick with the entertainment side. Entertainment is really my professional thing, so I want to acknowledge some of the people/artist, who we know you may be familiar with who has recently passed away.

To all my readers and followers who have lost someone since this terrible coronavirus pandemic started, please know that you and your family are in my prayers. Hopefully we can get pass all of this terrible situation and began to smile and just remember your loved one in a positive way, remember the good times; think of something about them that will put a smile on your face.

Even though some of our counties and our state has opened in some situations, the Covid-19 has still caused the cancellations of jazz and music festivals that we would normally attend this time of the year. It's disappointing news for the state of Rhode Island. The Newport Folk and Jazz Festival that was set to take place at Fort Adams this summer, has been canceled. All ticket holders for this festival have the option of a 100% full refund if desired. The Newport Jazz and Folk Festivals were created by George Wein (now 94 years old) in 1994 and 1959 respectively. These festivals are two of the largest running music festivals in history.

The 2020 Hampton Jazz Festival known for bringing the best of jazz,

blues, soul, and R&B to Hampton Roads has announced that it is also canceled due to the coronavirus pandemic and has been postponed until June 2021. Refunds will be issued automatically for those purchased online through Ticketmaster. Refunds for tickets purchased at the box office can be obtained by returning the purchased tickets once the office opens up to the public.

The 28th Annual Capital Jazz Fest, originally scheduled for June 5-7, 2020 at the Merriweather Post Pavilion in Columbia, Maryland has been postponed. This is one of my favorite festivals. Each year in early June, tens of thousands of music lovers from throughout the country flock to the suburbs of Washington, D.C. to attend “the jazz festival with soul”; The Capital Jazz Fest started in 1993, this multi-day multi-stage outdoor music festival, which attracts music lovers nationwide, is more than just a concert, it's an event! It's a place to people-watch, eat drink, shop, mingle, relax, soak in the rays, make new friends, and of course hear some of the coolest jazz and soul music on the planet. In-between musical sets, enjoy fine art and crafts at the Festival Marketplace, culinary treats at the food court, and meet & greet the artists. Hopefully next year we all can be there.

The 2020 French Quarter Festival and Satchmo Summerfest have also been officially canceled. Satchmo Summerfest, a celebration of the legacy of New Orleans native Louis “Satchmo” Armstrong, is generally the first week of August at the Old U.S. Mint. The free French Quarter Festival, which draws hundreds of thousands of attendees every year with a program consisting almost entirely of south Louisiana musicians.



*Kevin Barnes, a member of Jimmy Briscoe & the Little Beavers passed away May 14, 2020. Kevin sang baritone for the famous recording group. The group members were Jimmy Briscoe, Stanford Stansberry, Kevin Barnes, Maurice Pulley, and Robert Markins were the original Jimmy Briscoe & the Little Beavers. Bobby Finch replaced Markins in 1977. Condolences to his family.*

We try not to ever miss the New Orleans Festivals. My “Boo-Boo” and I go every year to these festivals to cover the exciting events for my “Rambling Rose” column. . We love New Orleans, it is always full of life, fun, live entertainment on every street corner and happy people. Now, the new 2021 dates for the festivals are April 8-11 for French Quarter Festival and July 30-August 1, 2021 for Satchmo Summerfest. The French Quarter Festival followed the same path as the New Orleans Jazz & Heritage Festival, the Essence Festival of Culture and the Buku Music + Art Project.

Oh well, I know I should be trying to put a smile on your face and talking about something positive, but this were the cards I was dealt. So in the meantime, stay strong, safe and healthy. And remember, if you need me, call me at 410-833-9474 or email me at rosapryor@aol.com. UNTIL THE NEXT TIME, I'M MUSICALLY YOURS.



*Whit Williams, another friend and musician passed away May 21, 2020. He was such a gentlemen. He was a legendary saxophonist, educator, composer and arranger. He lived in Baltimore and was a part of the jazz scene for many years. In 1981, he founded the “Whit Williams’ Now’s the Time Big Band” and the group performed with Aretha Franklin and the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra. In 2008, he released the album, “The Whit Williams Now’s The Time,” featuring Slide Hampton and Jimmy Heath. My condolences to his family and his music family.*



*Betty Wright, a soul and R&B singer best known for her 1970's hit “Clean Up Woman,” passed away Sunday, May 10, 2020 from cancer. She was 66 years old. Born Bessie Regina Norris, adopted her stage name when she was just a kid. She began singing in a gospel group, called the “Echoes of Joy” at age 2 and released an album in 1956 when she was three. She switched from gospel to R&B at 11 years old, and the rest is history.*



## Roots Tonic: Jamaica's Cure All Drink

# Documentary Digs Deep into Ethnomedical Heritage

By Ursula V. Battle

“Pharmaceuticals treat you, but the roots and the herbs cure you.” These are the words of Corey ‘Ras Stimulant’ Davis. The Vegan Chef’s words set the stage for *Roots Tonic: Jamaica’s Cure All Drink*, a documentary which explores Jamaica’s ethnomedical heritage of making Roots Tonics.

Linton Hinds, Jr., is the director of the documentary. According to Hinds, Root Tonics are herbal remedies made with herbs, roots, and plants. He highlighted that Roots Tonics are said to heal everything from cancer to erectile dysfunction.

“The goal of the documentary is to put information out there,” said Hinds. “We want people to be more accepting and appreciative of traditional medicine. We also want people to utilize traditional medicine. They absolutely do work. We are groomed to use synthetic medicine, but unfortunately they have a lot of side effects.”

Hinds was born to Jamaican parents, and raised in Newark, New Jersey. He is a graduate of Loyola University, where he played basketball.

“In 2013, I stopped eating meat, and started eating different herbs,” said Hinds who lives in South Jersey. “I am more fit at age 35 than I was at 18 or 21. I also have a lot of energy.”

Hinds says that the roots and herbs he uses are Chaney Root, Moringa, Guinea Hen Weed, Strong Back, and Sour Sop Leaf.

“Things are out there,” said Hinds. “Many products don’t heal. They just treat because they are looking for long-term customers. The goal is to put you on those products for the duration of your life. Then you are paying for it for the rest of your life. When you eat right, you don’t have to worry about that. You can just take the root and eat that. You also have to exercise. That’s why I felt it was important to do this documentary.”

Hinds teaches U.S. history to 11th grade students at Thomas Mastery High School in Philadelphia, PA. He also owns and operates [KonciousT.com](http://KonciousT.com), an



*(Left) The documentary, “Roots Tonic: Jamaica’s Cure All Drink,” explores Jamaica’s ethnomedical heritage of making Roots Tonics, herbal remedies made with herbs, roots and plants. (Right) Loyola University graduate Linton Hinds, Jr., directed the documentary.*



Courtesy Photos

e-commerce apparel store. The educator also hosts “I Never Knew Radio,” a show that airs Sundays, 9 a.m. until 11 a.m. on WLOY LOYOLA RADIO. Hinds says his YouTube Channel, “I Never Knew TV,” has drawn over nine million views. On April 24, 2020, Hinds posted *Roots Tonic: Jamaica’s Cure All Drink* on YouTube. The documentary has already garnered 9,000 views.

In addition to ‘Ras Stimulant’ Davis, the documentary also features Dr. Sylvia Adjoa Mitchell, a Senior Lecturer at the Biotechnology Centre, UWI Mona, Jamaica, and Gregory Rutty, owner of Sunsplash Caribbean Bakery in East Orange, NJ. Rutty is also a manufacturer of Roots Tonic. Hinds’ wife Deborah did the voiceover for the documentary.

“I wanted viewers to see a lead doctor,” said Hinds referring to Dr. Mitchell. “I didn’t want them to believe the documentary was some mumbo jumbo. Dr. Mitchell has studied Jamaican and ethnic culture. Every culture understands what plants can do, and the benefit of plants.”

Dr. Mitchell who is Caucasian, is the Group Leader of the Medicinal Plant Biotechnology Group. She has over 32 years of experience in plant tissue culture, and has undertaken several

research and development projects in plant tissue culture, bioactivity screens and product development.



*The film’s cinematographer Ryan Hohn, lives in Kingston, Jamaica.*

Hinds, said a total of five people were interviewed for the documentary, and it took five months to complete. He noted he has no formal training in film, but shot half the documentary. The film’s Cinematographer Ryan Hohn shot the other half. Hohn resides in Kingston, Jamaica and shot the interviews that were conducted in the region.

“It was a real privilege working on this documentary,” said Hohn. “I live in

Jamaica, and Linton lives in America, but we are on the same path. It’s about getting information out there so people will see it. This whole movement is about people being healthy, conscious of themselves and to stop being programmed. Nature is still around. It has everything we need.”

Hohn, who owns a company called Yardreel, says he also does directs, produces, and does photography.

“We have gotten a lot of positive feedback about the documentary. It shows another option of how to live. Roots and herbs boost your immune system. We are at a turning point in history now. We have been building up to COVID-19. Every year, it was something different. There was SARS, and H1N1. If you paid attention, you knew COVID would happen. It was really no surprise. Those who took care of themselves were ahead of the game.

“We have to preserve ourselves. Not kill one another, or kill our own selves with food. It’s about self-preservation.”

*Roots Tonic: Jamaica’s Cure All Drink*, is just over 16 minutes long and can be accessed by the following link: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mYBz7\\_4f2BY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mYBz7_4f2BY)



# Tulsa organizations launched campaign to memorialize Tulsa race massacre

Tulsa, Okla.— The Black Wall Street Memorial committee and Tulsa Community Remembrance Coalition launched the “10,000 Brick Campaign” throughout May to build a memorial to Black Wall Street in honor of those lynched during the 1921 Race Massacre.

Beginning May 1, the month-long campaign will allow individuals to personally take part in building this powerful space and to raise funds for these important organizations. Individuals are encouraged to purchase one of 10,000 commemorative bricks that will surround a memorial. The brick will feature the purchaser's name, business or quote.

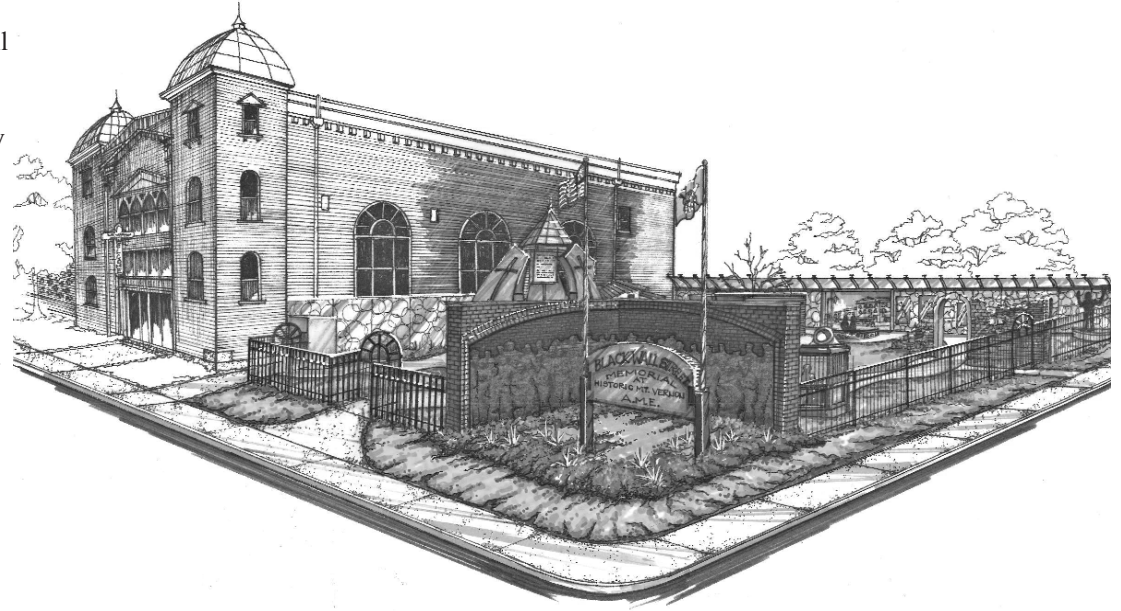
“Tulsa, Oklahoma has a legacy that we have been silent about for too long and it is time to end the silence,” said Dr. Tiffany Crutcher, the founder of the Black Wall Street Memorial committee. “Our coalition is committed to ensuring that the legacies of hundreds of African Americans murdered at the hands of racial violence is permanently woven into the scrolls of American history.”

Black Wall Street was a thriving hub of black entrepreneurship, and was bombed and burned to the ground between May 31 and June 2, 1921. Scores of white mobsters came from the southern part of

the city in trucks and airplanes to carry out the violence. The Black Wall Street Memorial will honor the history and legacy of the community and all those who lost their lives in the massacre.

“I am so proud of this community for coming together during this uncertain time to pay homage to the souls we lost to the 1921 Race Massacre,” said Benjamin Crump, national civil rights attorney and National Legal Consultant for Black Wall Street Memorial Committee. “We must never let America forget.”

Over the course of the past year, the Tulsa Community Remembrance Coalition has also worked alongside the Equal Justice Initiative in Montgomery, Alabama, to honor the history and the lives of this sacred land through a series of soil collections. Each soil collection serves to



*The Black Wall Street Memorial will honor the history and legacy of the community and all those who lost their lives in the massacre. (Above) Rendering of the Black Wall Street Memorial.*

Courtesy Photo

memorialize the life of a 1921 Tulsa Massacre lynching victim. The jars of soil will be housed inside the Historic Vernon AME Church on N. Greenwood as a part of the memorial.

For more information about the memorial and the process for purchasing a

brick, visit the Black Wall Street Memorial website, <https://blackwallstreetmemorial.com/> and Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/blackwallstreetmemorial>.

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## Relief: Tools And Resources To Navigate Today's Financial Crisis

In the face of so much uncertainty what many of us need most are answers to our most pressing questions, and a plan to help determine our next moves on the road to recovery. Wells Fargo is committed to providing information necessary to help address your unique financial needs and concerns, starting with the tools and resources to find relief.

### How can I protect my credit report if I can't keep up with my loans?

The best way to protect your credit report is to make arrangements directly with your lender. Try asking your bank/lender about deferring payments and interest on your loans/credit lines and having fees waived. On a case-by-case basis, Wells Fargo is offering fee waivers, payment deferrals, and other expanded assistance for credit card, auto, mortgage, small business lending, and personal lending customers who contact us.

### Can I apply for a credit limit increase for disaster relief?

In this time of crisis, increasing the limit on your credit card could be a way to help alleviate some financial strain and increase your purchasing power. We're currently reviewing credit card line increases on an individual basis over the phone. To find out your options, reach out to your bank directly.

### What are some programs that can help me get by?

The government has designed programs to provide support and relief to those in need during this time. Here are some highlights of the CARES Act that may impact your finances:

### Unemployment

There have been temporary changes made to unemployment eligibility. Today, workers who are furloughed, but haven't been fully laid off, are eligible. This special program also extends to those who are typically self-employed and/or part of the gig economy.

### Paid Leave

The Families First Coronavirus Response Act is now covering up to 12 weeks of family leave for families who have faced school/daycare closure because of the pandemic and must stay home with their children.

### Small Business

Wells Fargo is committed to helping as many small business customers as possible through programs like the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) established by the CARES Act. Wells Fargo mobilized thousands of employees and introduced new automation to rapidly process as many PPP applications for submission to the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA).

Wells Fargo is with you as you embark on your road to recovery. To learn more about our COVID-19 relief efforts visit [wellsfargo.com/heretohelp](https://wellsfargo.com/heretohelp).



The  
Road To  
Recovery