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## *Eight-year-old receives Baltimore County Schaefer Helping People Award*



*Tyler Stallings who is on a mission to help homeless veterans received the Donald Schaefer Helping People Award for Baltimore County. Comptroller Peter Franchot presented the award virtually. Courtesy Photo*

Annapolis—

On Monday, July 20, 2020, Comptroller Peter Franchot presented the William Donald Schaefer Helping People Award for Baltimore County virtually to eight-year-old Tyler Stallings, CEO of Kid Time Enterprises, for his work distributing desperately needed supplies to homeless veterans.

Tyler encountered his first homeless veteran when he was four years old, prompting his desire to do something tangible to improve the man's life and circumstances. Hailing from a family of veterans, Tyler could not understand why, after serving our country, these heroes were left to live on the streets. He partnered with nonprofit organizations like the Maryland Center for Veterans Education and Training (MCVET) and Patriot House, writing children's books to raise money for the purchase and distribution of laptops, clothes, hygiene products and other lifesaving supplies to homeless veterans in Baltimore County and beyond. Undeterred by the outbreak of COVID-19, Tyler has stepped up his efforts to provide homeless veterans with critical items like hand sanitizer and face masks to protect them during the pandemic.

"I would like to think the comptroller, Mr. Franchot, and his staff for allowing me to become a 2019 William Donald Schaefer People Helping People awardee for Baltimore County. On behalf of homeless veterans I help support who are in programs here in Maryland, and elders who served who reside in this great state, I thank you all. Receiving this great award will help to raise more awareness about how anyone can honor and assist our veterans in need," Tyler said. "When I asked my mom to start The Give Back to Veterans project, I never imagined that I would be able to help thousands of veterans, and partner with nonprofits which helped them to get on their feet, and return to their families."

# Baltimore restaurants and bars ordered to suspend indoor dining

By Stacy M. Brown

Beginning at 5 p.m., Friday, July 24, 2020, Baltimore restaurants and bars must suspend indoor dining for at least two weeks as the city's health department starts a review of COVID-19 data.

The review comes as the total number of coronavirus cases in the state surpassed 80,000, including a growing number of Baltimore city residents.

City Health Commissioner Dr. Letitia Dzirasa said this week that her department would continuously monitor whether the suspension would continue after two weeks.

She said restaurants could continue serving customers outside, and they could still offer takeout and delivery service.

Further, Dr. Dzirasa said those over the age of two would be required to wear face coverings in Baltimore.

One caveat to face-covering applies to outdoor activities where people cannot engage in social distance.

"These decisions were not easy, nor were they made to punish a particular industry," Dr. Dzirasa stated. "Instead, these decisions are rooted in current data



**Baltimore City bars and restaurants will no longer be able to seat or serve customers indoors per Mayor Jack Young's executive order along with a health order issued by Dr. Letitia Dzirasa requiring face coverings be worn by all residents over the age of 2 whenever they leave the house effective at 5 p.m. Friday, July 24, 2020. (Above) Baltimore City Health Commissioner Dr. Letitia Dzirasa**

**Photo Credit: Baltimore City Health Department**

and trends being seen in COVID-19 cases in Baltimore City and information about the transmission of the novel coronavirus. When considered together, this information warrants the implementation of restrictions to help

halt the further spread of COVID-19."

Through the hard work of the city's clinical staff at the Health Department and at local hospitals, clinics, and pharmacies, Baltimore continues to increase local testing capacity, she said. Health officials noted that the city currently averages over 2,000 tests daily.

"However, we are seeing the number of new cases increase at a rate higher than what we would expect from an increase in testing capacity alone, and have seen an increase for multiple days in a row," Dr. Dzirasa said. "While our fatalities have not dramatically increased, they have not decreased either. Fatalities or

deaths as a result of COVID-19 are usually a lagging indicator of a spike in new cases, and it might not increase until weeks after a spike of positive cases has been identified."

She noted that a little over one month has passed since Baltimore City transitioned into phase 2 of its reopening plan.

"And in this month's time, along with our epidemiologists and data team, I have consistently analyzed and reviewed the data on a regular basis, presenting regular updates to the Mayor and his executive team," she said.

"Two weeks after reopening, on July 4, our average daily case count in Baltimore was 63.4 cases per day. A week later, on July 12, our average daily case count was 109 cases per day—almost doubling in a week's time, and it continues to increase today."

Social distancing continues to be the most effective method of reducing the chances of disease transmission, with the wearing of masks, when social distancing isn't possible, serving as a vital additional layer of protection, according to Dr. Dzirasa.

"We are in this pandemic for the foreseeable future and will have to make tough decisions to protect our community, and our most vulnerable. We remain committed to transparency and open dialog about how best to move forward," she stated. "[This week's] decisions have been made to reduce the chances of further disease transmission, and it remains necessary for us all to stay vigilant to protect ourselves and our loved ones."

## Elaine Simon: Fond Memories of John Lewis

I had the distinct honor and privilege to speak with the late Honorable United States Congressman John Lewis. The date was October 5, 1992—I was one of seven honorees to receive an award, "A Salute to Perseverance," at which time, the Congressman was an honoree.

My fondest memory was during the reception, Congressman Lewis recognized my accent and proceeded to ask me, "What island are you from?" I said the Island of Antigua in the Caribbean. He further asked, "You live in Baltimore?" I said "Yes," and he then mentioned, "I have some friends in Baltimore, Parren Mitchell and State Senator Clarence Mitchell, do you know them?" I told him that in 1976, I started my community involvement in Congressman Parren's office as a volunteer. The gist of that conversation resonated in my mind 28 years later—he appeared to be in awe of me. He then said in an admirable tone of voice, "You understand the struggle." Since then, every time that I saw him on television, those words always echoed in my thoughts.

Rest in eternal peace, "warrior United States Congressman John Lewis."



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# Guest Editorials/Letters

## A select reason to remember John Lewis

By Dr. Ken Morgan

John Lewis succumbed to pancreatic cancer, Friday, July 17, 2020. He was 80 years old. For many reasons, John Lewis' death reverberates in my mind.

No, not because of his tenure in the United States House of Representatives, representing Georgia's 5th congressional district for 33 years.

No, not because he once served as the head of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) as a young man.

No, not because the cops beat, battered and bruised him and other freedom riders to numerous times to remember because of his nonviolent mantra and his ongoing involvement. No, not because he spoke at the historic March on Washington August 28, 1963.

No, not because he led marchers across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama. One of the marches went down in history as Bloody Sunday when Alabama police with guns pummeled and beat unarmed civil rights demonstrators. The first attack almost killed Lewis.

Yes, there was a select reason to remember John Lewis. The day was August 28, 1963—the day of the March on Washington. Five members of the Big 6—A. Philip Randolph; Whitney M. Young Jr.; Martin Luther King Jr.; James Farmer; Roy Wilkins; and John Lewis—the men who put the March together, made a unique request that morning. Bayard Rustin served as a lead national organizer.

They asked John Lewis and other SNCC members that very morning to water down Lewis's speech that he was going to give on the afternoon of August 28, 1963. The SNCC folks did. Still many claimed Lewis's speech remained the most militant of the day.

*Moyers and Company*, an online journal commemorating the March's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary authored by Lauren Feeney, compared the Lewis original draft and the speech Lewis gave in August 2013. Look them up.

The original draft of his speech said, "In good conscience, we cannot support wholeheartedly the [Kennedy] administration's civil rights bill, for it is too little and too late. There's not one thing in the bill that will protect our people from police brutality.

"We won't stop now. All of the forces of Eastland, Barnett, Wallace, and Thurmond won't stop this revolution. The time will come when we will not confine our marching to Washington. We will march through the South, through the heart of Dixie, the way Sherman did. We shall pursue our own scorched earth policy and burn Jim Crow to the ground—nonviolently."

Other draft passages hit the cutting board floor. "We are now involved in a serious revolution. This nation is still a place of cheap political leaders who build their careers on immoral compromises and ally themselves with open forms of political, economic, and social exploitation. What political leader here can stand up and say, 'My party is the party of principles?' The party of Kennedy is also the party of Eastland. The party of Javits is also the party of Goldwater. Where is our party?"

His draft speech, never to see the light was extraordinary. Lewis, regardless, still practiced what he preached. Black lives always mattered. John Lewis thought.

*Dr. Morgan is an activist scholar, retired Coppin State University faculty member, and journalist. He can be reached at kmorgan2408@comcast.net.*

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## Letters to the Editor:

**Editor:**

**Re: Presidential Abuse Of Power**

President Trump has shown how fragile our democracy is when we have a president who abuses his power and threatens the Constitution of the United States.

During protests in June, Trump wanted to deploy 10,000 troops from the 82nd airborne division and other units to Washington D.C. to squelch the protests. The rational thinking and recommendations of Defense Secretary Esper; Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Milley; and Attorney General Barr avoided the deployment.

Trump abused his power when he asked the Ukrainian President to interfere in our election and Trump, was subsequently punished with impeachment by the House of Representatives. Trump

asked China's President, Xi Jinping, to help him in the 2020 election.

Trump commuted convicted criminal Roger Stone's sentence and interfered with the sentencing of other friends. Attorney General Barr said Trump's tweets were interfering with Justice Department cases.

I agree with former Chief of Staff General John Kelly who essentially said we have to scrutinize candidates for the Presidency of the United States to ensure they have the psychological stability, even demeanor and intelligence to assume the office of the President of our great country, and do not threaten our Constitution.

**Donald Moskowitz**

Londonderry NH

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## John Lewis: A True Hero Has Departed

By Harry C. Alford & Kay DeBow

On July 17, 2020, we got the news that one of our few heroes made his transition from earth to Heaven. We are sure that St. Peter used few words when he looked into the eyes of John Lewis. He must have quickly said “Job well done John— welcome!” He is gone now, and we will all miss him. His work made such a difference.

He was born a sharecropper in the heart of Troy, Alabama. It seems like he was born to fight for freedom. In fact, he was one of the original freedom riders making dangerous journeys across the South demanding freedom and facing some of the meanest cops that ever attacked demonstrating Black protestors.

His badge of honor was a split skull he experienced on “Bloody Sunday” when Black demonstrators faced Alabama state troopers while crossing that infamous bridge in Selma, Alabama. It appeared on national television and the entire American audience watched in

horror. From that day on, everyone knew who John Lewis was. He was Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. most loyal and fiercest warrior.

Recently, the White House was able to abolish the NAFTA agreement. This was enacted in 1993. However, John Lewis began fighting against it before the ink dried on the treaty. Recently, his battle was victorious via President Trump. That was Congressman Lewis— he never quit or stopped fighting. Victory would be his eventually.

During his 17 years on the House Ways and Means Committee (Oversight Subcommittee) he remained vigilant in ensuring Black business procurement. His greatest accomplishment was his management of the magnificent Smithsonian Museum on African American History and Culture. If you have not toured this museum yet do it as soon as possible. This was Congressman Lewis’s “Baby.”

Dr. King, Parren Mitchell, Art Fletcher and other Black business advocates must have been smiling down from heaven as Congressman Lewis oversaw the Black business participation. Brick by brick, window by window it was soon accomplished, and the Black participation came in at 66 percent. A true record for such a task! \$600 million at 66 percent. This was the ilk of Congressman John Lewis. I was at a meeting in Atlanta and I asked the audience to stand up and applaud Congressman Lewis for this marvelous accomplishment. He stood up in his classic “stone face style” and quietly said, “Well, this is what we are supposed to do.” We need more persons of his ilk! It was that morning that John Lewis became my hero.

I have a question or challenge for the

current members of the Congressional Black Caucus. Will the next John Lewis please step forward and take the “reigns?”

It’s time for the Congressional Black Caucus to focus on Black procurement with the federal government. Minority procurement in federal contracts has fallen from 8 percent in the Bush administration to 1.3 percent as of March 31, 2019. Some departments didn’t award minority businesses even one federal contract.

According to the Small Business Administration (SBA): “The federal government’s goal is to award at least five percent of all federal contracting dollars to small disadvantaged businesses each year.”

Here are the program benefits: “To help provide a level playing field for small businesses owned by socially and economically disadvantaged people or entities, the government limits competition for certain contracts to businesses that participate in the 8(a) Business Development program.”

“Disadvantaged businesses in the 8(a) Program can: Compete for set-aside and sole-source contracts in the program. Form joint ventures with established businesses through the SBA’s mentor-protégé program. Receive management and technical assistance, including business training, counseling, market assistance, and high-level executive development programs, as they apply.”

The above program was the brainchild of the late, great Parren J. Mitchell while he was the Chair of the House Small Business Committee and his staff— led by NBCC Board Member Anthony W. Robinson. It is, without debate, the most

successful minority business program in the history of federal procurement. No normal program has made more Black millionaires than this program. Despite this, it needs to be updated and reinforced.

Having a five percent minority business goal for the federal government is pittance. The Black population percentage of our nation is over 14.6 percent alone. Hispanics have a percentage of 17.0 percent. That amounts to 31.6 percent without other ethnicities.

Here is our strategy to increase the numbers:

\*Contact each agency head and inform him/her of their procurement level status. Suggest increased utilization of the SBA 8a program on a recurring basis. Encourage our members to apply for 8a status.

\*Make quarterly updates on Black procurement status for each agency and follow-up with correspondence to agency heads.

\*Worldwide marketing and publicity. Garner Trump administration support.

Let’s get busy turning this atrocity around. If Black firms could attain at least five percent in procurement contracting with the federal government that would mean \$25 billion dollars annually infused into our economic base.

*Harry C. Alford is the Co-Founder, President/CEO of the National Black Chamber of Commerce®. Kay DeBow is the Co-Founder, Executive Vice President of the Chamber. To contact Harry Alford, email: [halford@nationalbcc.org](mailto:halford@nationalbcc.org) and to contact Kay DeBow, email: [kdebow@nationalbcc.org](mailto:kdebow@nationalbcc.org). For more information visit [www.nationalbcc.org](http://www.nationalbcc.org)*

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# 2020: Year of Vision?

By Jasmine Garland

When this year started, the collective perspective was that 2020 would be the year of vision. We entered this new decade with a renewed sense of hope, excitement and confidence.

However, the last seven months have felt more like a smoky haze of sadness and frustration—for a variety of reasons which tend to change day by day—than anything resembling clarity and growth. Our visions seem to be clouded by the onslaught of national news stories all highlighting destruction and universal angst and, to top it off, we have been unavoidably stuck with ourselves, and with our pain—most of which is not new pain, just old pain we used to be able to escape from using a variety of distractions that were, effectively, destroyed over the last few months.

You might ask why I am reminding you of things you already know and probably would prefer not to think about, but I have a thought: 2020 has given us more clarity than we could have ever prepared for.

Let's consider the reality of 2020 so far, shall we?

Before the year began we spent a lot of time and money distracting ourselves from the realities of our own existences. We tolerated a lot of pain—we even found comfort in its consistency. We spent hours commuting to jobs we didn't love; we spent very little time with people we do love; and when we did find time for fun it often required us to spend money we didn't have.

Beyond that, we spent whatever “free time” we had left, vegetating on our couches and dreaming up ideas to get us out of the routine that felt like a slow creep towards death.

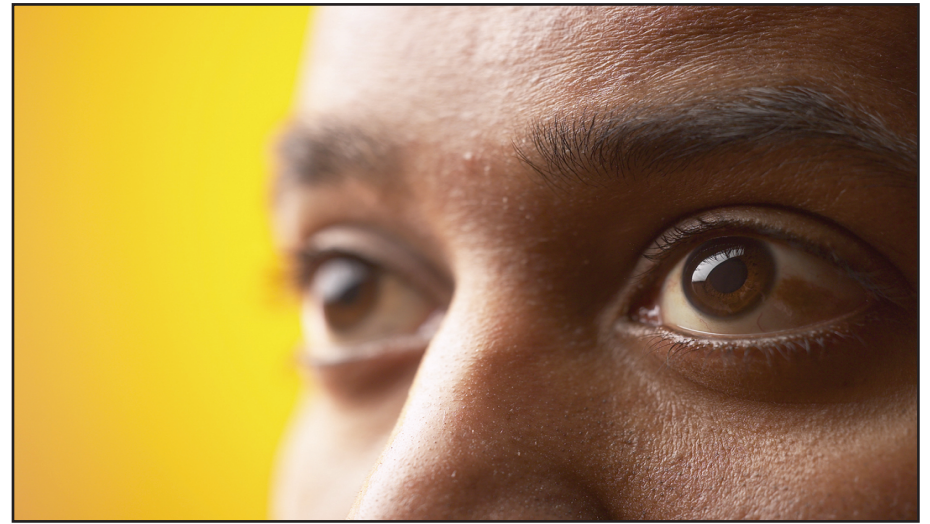
2020 wasn't really shaping up to be much different; we lost Kobe Bryant and his beautiful daughter, we lost the impeachment, Mercury was in retrograde (whatever that means) and corona virus began its invasion. Boom: quarantine.

The thing about the quarantine is when it forced us inside—it really forced us inside in every way possible. We were living incredibly external lives focused on money and business, and keeping up with the Jones.' After we went into quarantine, and the Netflix binges lost their appeal, we accidentally—maybe even reluctantly—started the process of self-reflection. Some of us started watching documentaries instead of Living Single reruns; we began opening books; we started practicing meditation, praying and even working out. Our step counters didn't recognize us anymore!

Moreover, as we shed tears waiting to be released and forgave ourselves for our past mistakes, we began to empower ourselves with a new sense of appreciation for our lives. Our focus became the families we didn't have time for before and the dreams that seemed unattainable. Not to mention we were emotionally and physically available to face the issues surrounding race in our country.

We started questioning everything we thought we knew before. Thoughts crept into our minds such as: Can I make a difference? Why am I the way that I am? Do I enjoy the things I thought I enjoyed or did I use those things to distract me from my pain? Is that person really my friend? Am I sure about my marriage? How can I stay at this job? What is my passion? Where am I in life—where am I going? Who am I really? Am I happy?

The answers to these questions often landed uncomfortably on our egos,



which really doesn't appreciate change. However, we've started to understand the truth about who we are and what matters to us.

So, so far 2020 kept its promise, didn't it? Our vision is, in fact, expanding in many directions and as the world begins to open back up, we have to prepare for the challenge of cherishing this new vision while old distractions tempt us back to old comforts.

If we want the new vision we've been given to manifest in our lives, we will

have to experience a ritual sacrifice of our old selves and old ways with the faith that the reward will be an elevated, happier life. The problem with clarity is it starts with painful reflection and ends in a battle of determination. Now that you know so much about yourself, you have to be determined to stand by your new beliefs. Now that you know, there is no going back to not knowing. 2020 is giving us vision in its own, slightly annoying way. The question is and always has been: what do we plan to do with it?



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# George E. Mitchell dead at age 65

## Park Heights Community loses a GIANT

By Ursula V. Battle

Christopher Crockett, a longtime Park Heights resident, has lived in the community for over 50 years. He talked about the legendary work of a man who dedicated his life to helping people in the area. That man's name is George E. Mitchell.

"George was really dedicated to uplifting the community," said Crockett. "He wanted to see us get on our feet. He led by example by opening up different avenues for black men and black women. But his primary focal point were the kids. He was passionate about them."

Mitchell died on Tuesday, July 14, 2020 at the age of 65. His passing reportedly was the result of complications from surgery. A public viewing will take place Saturday, August 1, 2020 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at March Funeral Home, 4300 Wabash Ave. A Memorial Service will be held Sunday, August 2, 2020 from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. at Langston Hughes Community, Business, and Resource Center, 5011 Arbutus Avenue. The service will be held outside on the field. Social distancing and masks are required.

Mitchell served as president and CEO of the Langston Hughes Community, Business and Resource Center, which houses three libraries, a computer lab, and other resources to help children in the Park Heights community. He also served as president of Neighborhoods United, a unified group of Neighborhood Associations, which act as one body with definitive objectives for the achievement of physical, social, financial and health improvements in Park Heights.

Crockett is Outreach Coordinator for Neighborhood United. He also serves as president of the SDKG (Springhill, Derby Manor, Keyworth and Greenspring) Neighborhood Association.

"I think George's legacy is the way he lived," said Crockett. "He cared about feeding people and the children. His love for the black community was outstanding. He was a worker for the rights of black people. If it was right, he would fight for it."

Crockett said Mitchell's mother Earles R. Mitchell, was also a fierce community advocate.

"I have known George for a long time, but met his mother first," said Crockett, "His mother also had strong roots in the community, and fought for what was right.

"You could not buy George. You could not offer him money and think he would go against what he believed. Because of George, the whole community is better because of what he stood for."

Pamela Curtis is the founder of Pushing the Vision Outreach Inc. a multicultural organization that caters to underserved communities. She also serves as Community Outreach Coordinator for Park Heights Renais-



**George E. Mitchell was a 2019 Baltimore Times "Positive People Award" honoree. File Photo**

sance, Inc. and is the president of the Park Circle Community Association. Curtis called Mitchell, 'Uncle George.'

***"I think George's legacy is the way he lived. He cared about feeding people and the children." — Christopher Crockett***

"He always said this is our community and responsibility," recalled Curtis. "Our seniors, our men, our youth, our responsibility. The way he promoted generational wealth was by first addressing our brokenness. He was all for diversity, but felt that before we connected with other people, we first needed to repair our brokenness. He fed hundreds, offered free Spanish classes, and gave away free furniture. He taught us about community relationships. The way that he gave was so amazing."

Mitchell was the recipient of numerous awards and honors. He was a 2019 Baltimore Times "Positive Peo-

ple Award" honoree. The awards are given to individuals who work to uplift and celebrate the human spirit and the power within all people to improve their quality of life and that of their community. Curtis, who was also honored, shared fond memories of her and Mitchell at the event, which was held November 13, 2019 at Horseshoe Casino.

"We were each other's cheerleader," she said through tears. "When his name was called to receive his award, I yelled out 'Go Uncle George!' And when my name was called, he yelled out for me."

She added, "He was big on Black Media, and was honored to be honored by The Baltimore Times.

He often spoke about The Baltimore Times, and encouraged businesses to have the paper in their stores and on their stands."

Curtis said Mitchell will be greatly missed.

"If he told you a story of hardship, it was not to be negative," said Curtis. "He told stories of triumph. I am honored to have had the privilege to grow because of him. He put in a lot of work to help others. This is a tremendous loss."

Mitchell was born October 14, 1954 in Florence, South Carolina. After staying in Florence until a little after his first birthday, his mother moved to Baltimore, Maryland. He graduated from Lexington Terrace Elementary, Pimlico Jr. High, and Mergenthaler Vocational Technical High School, respectively.

He entered Morgan State University (formerly College) in 1972, and became a two-time MEAC wrestling champion, a member of the Morgan State University football team and a member of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity in which he was elected as the Associate Eastern Regional Director. He graduated from Morgan in 1976.

Mitchell is survived by sons George E. Mitchell Jr., and Travis Mitchell, daughter, Nicole Neale, and granddaughter Sidney Rogers.



July 30, 1924 - July 17, 2020

## Legendary Civil Rights Icon C.T. Vivian Dies at 95

By Stacy M. Brown,  
NNPA Newswire Senior Correspondent  
@StacyBrownMedia

The Rev. C.T. Vivian, the legendary civil rights activist who marched alongside Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., has died. Rev. Vivian was 95.

Vivian's daughter, Denise Morse, confirmed her father's death and told Atlanta's NBC affiliate WXIA that he was "one of the most wonderful men who ever walked the earth."

Vivian reportedly suffered a stroke earlier this year, but his family said he died of natural causes.

"He has always been one of the people who had the most insight, wisdom, integrity, and dedication," said former Atlanta Mayor Andrew Young, a contemporary of Vivian who also worked alongside King.

"The Reverend Dr. C.T. Vivian was one of my strongest mentors in the Civil Rights Movement," National Newspaper Publishers Association President Dr. Benjamin F. Chavis, Jr., stated.

"Rev. Vivian, like Martin Luther King, Jr. and Joseph Lowery was a visionary theologian, genius, and a leading force in the tactical and strategic planning of effective nonviolent civil disobedience demonstrations. C.T. has passed the eternal baton to a new generation of civil rights agitators and organizers."

In a statement emailed to BlackPressUSA, the NBA's Atlanta Hawks expressed their condolences.

"The Atlanta Hawks organization is deeply saddened by the passing of Civil Rights Movement leader, minister, and author, Dr. Cordy Tindell "C.T." Vivian. The City of Atlanta and the entire world has lost a distinguished icon whose leadership pushed the United States to greater justice and racial equality for African Americans," team officials wrote in the email.

"To inspire the next generation, Vivian founded the C.T. Vivian Leadership Institute in Atlanta, with the intent to create a model of leadership culture in the city that would be dedicated to the development and sustainability of our communities."

They continued:

"Vivian also started Basic Diversity, one of the nation's first diversity consulting firms, now led by his son, Al, who has been a great partner to our organization. We are grateful for Dr. Vivian's many years of devotion to Atlanta and thankful that we had the opportunity to honor and share his legacy with our fans. The entire Hawks organization extends its most sincere condolences to the grieving family."

Rev. Vivian was active in sit-in protests in Peoria, Illinois, in the 1940s, and met King during the 1955 Montgomery bus boycott — a demonstration spurred



**C.T. Vivian addressing the annual convention of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History in Atlanta, September 27, 2015.**

Photo Courtesy: The Black News Channel

by Rosa Parks' refusal to give up her seat to a white rider. The 13-month mass protest drew international attention.

***"Some thoughts on the Reverend C.T. Vivian, a pioneer who pulled America closer to our founding ideals and a friend I will miss greatly," Former President Barack Obama wrote in a statement. "We've lost a founder of modern America, a pioneer who shrunk the gap between reality and our constitutional ideals of equality and freedom."***

Rev. Vivian went on to become an active early member of the group that eventually became the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, according to his biography.

Like King, Vivian was committed to the belief that nonviolent protests could carry the day.

"Some thoughts on the Reverend C.T. Vivian, a pioneer who pulled America closer to our founding ideals and a friend I will miss greatly," Former President Barack Obama wrote in a statement. "We've lost a founder of modern America, a pioneer who shrunk the gap between reality and our constitutional ideals of equality and freedom."

Rev. Vivian was born in Boonville, Missouri, on July 30, 1924. He and his late wife, Octavia Geans Vivian, had six children.

With the help of his church, he enrolled in American Baptist Theological Seminary in Nashville in 1955.

That same year he and other ministers founded the Nashville Christian Leadership Conference, an affiliate of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, according to the National Visionary Leadership Project. The group helped organize the city's first sit-ins and civil rights march.

By 1965 Rev. Vivian had become the director of national affiliates for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference when he led a group of people to register to vote in Selma, Alabama.

CNN memorialized Rev. Vivian, noting that, as the county Sheriff Jim Clark blocked the group, Vivian said in a fiery tone, "We will register to vote because as citizens of the United States we have the right to do it."

Clark responded by beating Vivian until blood dripped off his chin in front of rolling cameras. The images helped galvanize more comprehensive support for change.

Vivian also created a college readiness program to help "take care of the kids that were kicked out of school simply because they protested racism."

"I admired him from and before I became a senator and got to know him as a source of wisdom, advice, and strength on my first presidential campaign," Obama stated.

"I'm only here to thank C.T. Vivian and all the heroes of the Civil Rights generation. Because of them, the idea of just, fair, inclusive, and generous America came closer into focus. The trails they blazed gave today's generation of activists and marchers a road map to tag in and finish the journey."



# John Robert Lewis 1940-2020

## The World Mourns A True Icon and Freedom Fighter

By Stacy M. Brown,  
NNPA Newswire Senior Correspondent  
@StacyBrownMedia

Somewhere it's raining. Somewhere the heavens have opened up, reflecting the tears that are falling across the globe as news of the death of civil rights icon Congressman John Lewis (D-GA) spreads.

The legislator, freedom fighter and justice warrior, who was famously beaten, bloodied and arrested in Selma, Alabama—and in other cities across the Jim Crow South— during the struggle for civil rights and racial equality, was 80.

His death came just hours the passing of another civil rights icon, Rev. C.T. Vivian, who was 95.

National Newspaper Publishers Association (NNPA) President and CEO, and comrade in arms with both Rev. Vivian and Lewis, expressed the devastation he and the world felt at the loss of the two revered giants.

Chavis, like Vivian and Lewis, worked with and was a disciple of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. He said the world would miss Lewis' "good trouble," quoting Lewis' famous call to arms. "The Honorable John Lewis was a longtime master freedom fighter who set the eternal example of how and why we all should fight for the freedom and equality of all humanity," Chavis remarked. "May Lewis now have his rest in peace. As for those of us who worked with him and [those] who marched with him, we must keep fighting for freedom and equality with renewed vigor, courage and energy. Black Lives Matter."

During the NNPA's 2020 Virtual Annual Convention earlier this month, attendees were treated to a free screening of the documentary, "John Lewis: Good Trouble," provided by the Census Bureau. Lewis was also a strong advocate for Census registration.

As he'd done earlier to honor Rev. Vivian, former president Barack Obama expressed his sorrow.

"John Lewis— one of the original Freedom Riders, chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, the youngest speaker at the March on Washington, leader of the march from Selma to Montgomery, member of Congress representing the people of Georgia for 33 years – not only assumed that responsibility, he made it his life's work," Obama observed. "He loved this country so much that he risked his life and his blood so that it might live up to its promise. And through the decades, he not only gave all of himself to the cause of freedom and justice but inspired generations that followed to try to live up to his example."

The former president recalled his last meeting with Lewis:

"It's fitting that the last time John and I shared a public forum was at a virtual town hall with a gather-



*Lewis announced late last year that he had Stage 4 pancreatic cancer. However, stalwart in his resolve to fight until the end, he refused to quit the struggle. "I have been in some kind of fight — for freedom, equality, basic human rights — for nearly my entire life. "I have never faced a fight quite like the one I have now."*

Photo Credit: Lorie Shaul/Wikimedia Commons

ing of young activists who were helping to lead this summer's demonstrations in the wake of George Floyd's death. Afterward, I spoke to him privately.

"He could not have been prouder of their efforts— of a new generation standing up for freedom and equality, a new generation intent on voting and protecting the right to vote, a new generation running for political office," Obama recounted. "I told him that all those young people – of every race, from every background and gender and sexual orientation – they were his children. They had learned from his example, even if they didn't know it. They had understood through him what American citizenship requires, even if they had heard of his courage only through history books."

Rep. Maxine Waters (D-Calif.), who served more than three decades in Congress with Lewis, declared Lewis' death as one of the saddest days in American history.

"He dedicated his entire life to what became his signature mantra, making 'good trouble.' Despite being one of the youngest leaders of the Civil Rights Movement, John Lewis galvanized and inspired hundreds of his peers to join in the fight for equal rights," Waters said. "Very few people could have been harassed, arrested more than 40 times, beaten within inches of their lives, and still espouse Dr. King and Mahatma Gandhi's teachings of nonviolence, peace, and love. However, these principles were core philosophies to John Lewis, and our nation

is forever indebted to him for his humble sacrifices."

Lewis routinely credited King and Rosa Parks for inspiring his activism, which he famously called "good trouble, necessary trouble." He also referred to his participation in the civil rights movement as a "holy crusade."

Lewis joined a Freedom Ride in 1961, organized by the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE). He suffered one of many beatings at the hands of authorities when he and other CORE members attempted to enter a whites-only waiting room at a bus station in Rock Hill, South Carolina.

"If there was anything I learned on that long, bloody bus trip of 1961," he wrote in his memoir, "it was this — that we were in for a long, bloody fight here in the American South. And I intended to stay in the middle of it."

Lewis was the last surviving speaker from the famed 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. The world also will remember Lewis for leading hundreds of people in one of the most famous demonstrations for civil rights ever – Bloody Sunday.

On March 7, 1965, as Lewis and others journeyed across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama, a mob of state troopers clad in riot gear attacked.

The authorities began their onslaught on Lewis and the other marchers using tear gas before brutally escalating the assault to bullwhips and rubber tubing that had been wrapped in barbed wire.

One of the cops attacked Lewis with a nightstick, fracturing his skull and knocking him to the ground.

In the aftermath of the police killing of George Floyd, Lewis praised this generation of freedom fighters. "This feels and looks so different," he said of the Black Lives Matter movement and other ongoing demonstrations.

"It is so much more massive and all-inclusive. There will be no turning back."

Lewis announced late last year that he had Stage 4 pancreatic cancer. However, stalwart in his resolve to fight until the end, he refused to quit the struggle. "I have been in some kind of fight — for freedom, equality, basic human rights — for nearly my entire life," he said, "I have never faced a fight quite like the one I have now."

"So, I have decided to do what I know to do and do what I have always done: I am going to fight it and keep fighting for the Beloved Community. We still have many bridges to cross," Lewis said during one Sunday in late December of 2019.

Dr. King once said that, "Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter." In words, deeds, actions, thoughts, influence, practice, and conscience John Lewis was rarely silent about the things that matter. For this reason, and for so many others, his legacy will remain alive forever.

## Voices of Carmen

# A Youthful New Twist on an Old Opera Classic

By Ursula V. Battle

An award-winning actress/director/choreographer has brought a youthful, modern-day flavor to a century-and-a-half old opera classic. CJay Philip, Artistic Director of Dance & Bmore, a multidisciplinary Baltimore based ensemble, is the creator of “Voices of Carmen” (VOC), a musical adaptation of the opera Carmen.

Set in a high school, the VOC musical brings a contemporary spin to this iconic story that’s filled with fresh, yet familiar renditions of George Bizet’s compositions, as well as a dozen original Pop, Hip Hop and R&B songs, written and arranged by Philip, and her husband Winston Philip.

A virtual performance of excerpts through the Enoch Pratt Library premiered July 20, 2020, and an outdoor “Carmen Concert” will take place July 30, 2020 at Eager Park.

“I’m very excited to continue this program for our young people who had so much of their lives cancelled this year already,” said Philip. “Despite the state of the world, we felt that the show must go on and have been figuring out how to produce a virtual/video production that I think will be groundbreaking for a musical.”

Carmen is an opera by Georges Bizet based on an 1845 novella by French dramatist Prosper Mérimée. The title character, a wild Spanish gypsy, is unscrupulous in matters of the law and of the heart. Carmen is an enduring story of passion, lust, jealousy, obsession, and revenge.

“Twelve years ago, I wrote this adaptation of Carmen,” said Philip. “I wrote the script and we had a summer program in the hills of Switzerland. We had lines wrapped around the block to see the show. I wanted to do the show in the U.S. All I needed answered was the ‘when?’ and ‘why?’ My husband and I moved to Baltimore in 2010. As soon as I met the young people in Baltimore, I was like ‘OMG, these young folks are really talented.’ That answered the ‘when?’ and ‘why?’ In 2018, I formed



*An outdoor “Carmen Concert” will be held in Eager Park, located on N. Wolfe Street on July 30, 2020 at 6:30 p.m., Courtesy Photos*

the Carmen Youth Council.”

She added, “I gathered around the Youth Council, and in February we started doing workshops. I asked them if they thought the story of Carmen was too far-fetched. They said it was happening everyday at school. The production was an opportunity to look at the emotional health of our youth.”

The piece examines escalating conflict among young people, and hopes to serve as a catalyst for community dialogue and improved emotional health and awareness, while providing resources for conflict resolution. VOC has 34 young people, 26 cast members and eight crew members mentored by a staff of eight adults.

“There are 19 zip codes and 20 schools represented,” said Philip. “Before the shutdown happened due to COVID-19, we wanted youth to have a voice inside this musical. We give them a lot of leadership. I am so blown away by our young people. They are so creative. I am so excited.”

In addition to rehearsals, every Wednesday special guests present workshops in job training and professional de-



*CJay Philip, Artistic Director of Dance & Bmore, is the creator of Voices of Carmen*

velopment for the cast and crew. There are also workshops on three social emotional components that build on each other – Emotional Intelligence (reading, video, and written reflection); Restorative Practices workshop led by Restorative Response Baltimore; and a teen workshop on Intimate Partner Abuse by the House of Ruth.

“VOC premiered in Baltimore in July of 2019,” said Philip. “Looking at 2020, we had every expectation to do this live. We partnered with the House of Ruth working with young people. I wanted to do something for people who feel they are at the edge. The theme for our show is ‘Crossroads.’ You can make a decision that can change the trajectory of your life.”

Philip, who has performed in several Broadway productions, has directed and choreographed hundreds of musical and performance events around the world including “The Who’s Tommy,” and the Emmy Award-winning NBC broadcast of the “McDonalds Gospel Fest.” She teaches Interdisciplinary Collaboration at Baltimore School for the Arts, and Musical Theater at Baltimore Centerstage.

“Carmen is fiery, but substantive,” she said, noting the production was submitted and chosen by several theater festivals. “One of the other important things about this show, is that it can be duplicated. Schools don’t have to cancel their musical. They can still be fully engaged.”

According to Philip, VOC is being made available for production at schools and regional theaters across the country. Included in the production package are best practices for collaboration between students and faculty: safe space guidelines, collaborative language, and youth leadership roles developed by the Carmen Youth Council.

On July 30, 2020 at 6:30 p.m., an outdoor “Carmen Concert” will be held in Eager Park, located on N. Wolfe Street. The event is free, but attendees are asked to register through Eventbrite at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/voices-of-carmen-outdoor-concert-tickets-114354027976>.

On August 13-14, 2020 at 8 p.m., VOC will hold a drive-in “Carmen Concert” performance in partnership with Motor House on W. North Ave. On August 27, 2020, a movie musical live-stream of VOC will premier at 7 p.m. on Voices of Carmen YouTube Channel, followed by a VIP virtual After Party with the cast.



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# Nonprofit helping people of color land high-paying tech jobs

By Stacy M. Brown

African Americans in Baltimore have suffered as much as anyone because of the coronavirus pandemic. To add to all the other stressors, many haven't been able to work remotely.

One local nonprofit is bringing hope to Baltimore, by providing free training in coding and tech fundamentals, helping them launch careers in technology.

NPower, a nonprofit that creates pathways to economic prosperity by launching digital careers for military veterans and young adults from underserved communities, continues to recruit Baltimore residents for its next remote learning semester that begins in September.

The organization noted that nearly 90 percent of NPower graduates had found full-time employment after completing a six-month program.

Kendra Parlock, NPower's executive director, said young adults, minorities, and women of color can apply for these tech training programs that have led to jobs with companies like Amazon, Under Armour, and the Department of Defense— helping to turn their lives around in less than a year.

"There's a lot of training and a whole list of programs where we match students with mentors who provide professional development. Also, people can graduate and receive top pay," Parlock said, adding that NPower, is funded by corporations, grants, and foundations who are trying to bring more diversity to technology. "Students don't pay for anything, and are placed in paid internships for training."

Students who enter NPower's six-month program, earn industry-recognized certifications and graduate with



*NPower is a nonprofit that creates pathways to economic prosperity by launching digital careers for military veterans and young adults from underserved communities. NPower is recruiting Baltimore residents for its next remote learning semester that begins in September. (Above) NPower Executive Director Kendra Parlock*

Courtesy Photo/NPower

the competencies of an IT professional with one to two years of experience.

NPower also places students in paid internships with corporate and nonprofit organizations. About 90 percent of NPower graduates get a full-time job or

continue their education.

"Not only are we changing life trajectories for individuals from vulnerable communities, but we are also strengthening the overall competitiveness of U.S. businesses hamstrung by today's limited pool

of IT talent," added Parlock, who has more than 20 years of experience helping businesses rebuild and expand.

NPower's mission to bring more diversity to the tech industry by empowering and offering men and women of color, the opportunities, and resources to succeed was boosted in 2018.

That's when Citi Foundation awarded NPower a \$1.64 million, two-year grant in 2018 to increase enrollment of young women of color in their training program to 40 percent by the year 2022 and to increase the onboarding for women of color to their instructional team to 40 percent. The "40 by 22 Initiative" was an intentional effort to deploy new strategies and share best practices on attracting and preparing women of color for a career in technology, the organization said in a news release.

As of January 2020, NPower's 40 by 22 Initiative has increased the enrollment of young women in their program 105 percent. They have helped 378 women of color launch tech careers. With close to half of young women unemployed before the program, the average salaries of young women after completing their fundamental training reached \$42,500. In contrast, women taking advanced offerings earn \$77,000.

"We are targeting people who come from non-traditional paths, so in many cases, they're coming with some major hurdles," Parlock said.

To enter the program, individuals at least must have earned a GED and are between 18 and 24.

Because of the pandemic, the fall semester will take place virtually.

To learn more about NPower, visit [www.npower.org](http://www.npower.org).

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## Fans not permitted at Ravens training camp

By Tyler Hamilton

The Covid-19 pandemic has turned just about every facet of life upside down. Like everything else, National Football League (NFL) training camps are not immune to the effects. Fans of the Baltimore Ravens won't be permitted to attend training camp practices this year.

Closing training camp to fans is a joint decision between the NFL and the National Football League Players Association (NFLPA). The league's mandate supersedes any state decisions that may allow large gatherings.

For many Ravens fans, heading to the Under Armour Performance Center braving the dog days of August to get an up close look at their favorite team was an annual occurrence. Due to the expensive costs for tickets to games, training camp was the only opportunity for the average fan to see the Ravens in person.

The bleachers that surround the practice fields at the Under Armour Performance Center can hold up to 2,000 fans according to the team site. On any given day, those bleachers were full of fans in previous years.

The Ravens are one of the most popular teams in the NFL. The franchise has a unique bond and connection to the community.

A lot of the players normally have football camps for the underprivileged youth in the Baltimore area. These camps weren't able to take place this year because of the pandemic.



**Baltimore Ravens quarterback Lamar Jackson Photo Credit: AP**

The team is aware of how much the fans love the Ravens. But they're wisely taking a safety first approach.

"It is critically important that we protect the well-being of our players, coaches, staff, fans and overall community," Ravens President Dick Cass explained via the team site. "Health and safety will always be a top priority, and while we are disappointed that fans will not attend training camp, we believe this decision is in the best interest of the public and our organization. We look forward to welcoming back fans in the future when we can safely do so."

It's unfortunate that so many fans won't get that up close look at the Ravens but it's more important to do everything possible to limit the spread of Covid-19.

## CCBC students awarded Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarships for study abroad

Baltimore County, Md— Community College of Baltimore County (CCBC) announced that two CCBC students have been awarded Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarships for study abroad in 2021. Imani Stewart and Jagatvir Singh both received the maximum award of \$5,000. They plan to use their award to study abroad in a Spanish university program that offers courses in business and Spanish language.

Stewart, a business major and talented artist with a 4.0 GPA, plans to use the award to support her pursuit of multinational accreditation in accounting and also to provide her with new perspectives and inspiration for her work in the visual arts.

A trilingual business major, Singh looks forward to studying alongside European and other international students to develop his knowledge of international business and business law and to gain core skills in Spanish, which will be his fourth language.

The Gilman program is one of the U.S. Department of State's initiatives, which aims to increase U.S. student participation in education abroad. The program awards scholarships on a competitive basis to outstanding undergraduate Pell Grant recipients who might not otherwise have the opportunity to study abroad.

"We are so proud of Imani and Jagatvir for being selected for this international award," said Dr. Rebekah de Wit, CCBC's director of global education. "They are excellent examples of students who take advantage of all the



*Imani Stewart is one of two students from CCBC awarded Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarships for study abroad in 2021. She is a business major and talented artist with a 4.0 GPA, plans to use the award to support her pursuit of multinational accreditation in accounting and also to provide her with new perspectives and inspiration for her work in the visual arts.*

Courtesy Photo/CCBC

resources CCBC offers to reach their goals. They will certainly be effective ambassadors of the college and the U.S. while they study abroad."

Many CCBC students are eligible to apply for Gilman scholarships to support their participation in study abroad— or, if travel restrictions persist, in virtual or other U.S.-based cross-cultural learning experiences that offer similar outcomes. With the Gilman scholarship, study abroad can become extremely affordable and even free. Students can visit [ccbcmd.edu/global](http://ccbcmd.edu/global) and email [StudyAbroad@ccbcmd.edu](mailto:StudyAbroad@ccbcmd.edu) to learn more.

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# SUPPORT

# LOCAL NEWS

## SUBSCRIBE. DONATE. ADVERTISE.

During times of crisis, crucial information about your community comes from local reporters.

Access to high quality information is essential. Especially local information. And especially now. What's happening in our communities? What's the impact? How are our local leaders responding? For answers to these questions, we rely on the hard work of our local reporters. As a result, readership of local news outlets has reached record highs.

But due to COVID-19, most local news publications are losing money, fast. Advertising has plummeted during the crisis and readers aren't subscribing fast enough to fill the void. This has led to thousands of local reporters being laid off. Just as our society faces numerous, urgent challenges.

Millions of people are in danger of losing access to the authoritative

local information they need to stay informed. That's why the Local Media Association and the Local Media Consortium are working with local news providers to build a strong future for local journalism. And that's why our long-time partner Google is purchasing ads like this in local publications across the country, as well as providing a Relief Fund to help struggling local news outlets. But those actions alone aren't enough.

Please consider supporting the local news organizations you rely on. Subscribe to them. Donate to them. And if you have a business that's able to, advertise with them. **Your support is critical to sustaining the dedicated journalists serving your communities.**

Our local news outlets help keep us safer. Let's help keep them open.

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